

The Latin American History Exposition in the Higher Education Press Version *World History (Modern History Volume)*

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Received 12 January 2016; accepted 18 March 2016

Published online 26 April 2016

Abstract:

This article analyzed the Latin American history exposition in the *World History (Modern History Volume)*, which was the new textbook in modern history of the world pressed by the Higher Education Press in 2007 December for the history major undergraduate in Chinese university. This article had full recognition in this college textbook for undergraduate to study modern history of the world compared to the previous college textbook for undergraduate to study modern history of the world have great progress, and also pointed out that it had some problems. This article would list some problems associated with the Latin American history in this new textbook. These problems mainly include the following aspects: historical distortion, biased discusses, contradictory formulation, different translation, and inaccurate translation, elaborated indistinct and word error etc. This article would discuss these problems associated with the Latin American history in accordance with the Independence of the Haiti, the Independence of the Mexico and the Mexico-U.S. Relation, in order to help the mend of the *World History (Modern History Volume)*, and provide a more accurate and interesting college textbook on modern history of the world for the later undergraduate to learn and think.

Key words: Higher education press version; *World history (modern history volume)*; Textbook; Latin American history exposition; Problems

Lan, J., & Yang, Y. (2016). The Latin American History Exposition in the Higher Education Press Version *World History (Modern History Volume)*. *Higher Education of Social Science*, 10(4), 1-4. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/hess/article/view/8400>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/8400>

INTRODUCTION

Recently, the author had read the new undergraduate textbook for history major, *World History (Modern History Volume)*, which was published by higher education press in December 2007. This new textbook was national planning textbook for higher education, was the second volume of the four volumes “world history”, and edited by Professor Liu Xincheng and Professor Liu Beicheng. This textbook has 407 pages and 440 thousand words, divided into thirteen chapters. This is the first edition of this textbook. Because most of the universities in China had adopted this textbook, so the quality of this textbook was particularly eye-catching. The author believed that compared with the old textbook for world history (Modern History Series) which was published by higher education press in March 2001. This new textbook substantially compressed space, from two volumes 835 page and 770 thousand words into one volume 407 pages and 440 thousand words, and had consulted many latest foreign world history textbooks and many other books, and had absorbed a large number of academic research achievements, and had introduced the view of global history, then the structure and narrative mode also had adjusted greatly, and had enhance the rationality and the time spirit of this textbook. The formulations of a lot of problems in this textbook were more objective and comprehensive, more in line with international standards. All these showed that this new textbook had significant progress. The Latin American history exposition in this

textbook also had great progresses; the exposition was more objective and fair than the textbooks before. But from the requirements of Chinese universities history major students in the twenty-first Century need a higher quality and a better textbook on the modern history of the world, from the organic unity of scientific, knowledge and readable to measure, the Latin American history exposition in the new textbook also needs some improvement. In line with the principle of seek truth from facts, and to reflect the history facts of Latin American history in the modern history of the world as true as possible, and to give students the real knowledge, meanwhile gradually revised for new textbook, and to bring forward the deficiencies in the new textbook and the corresponding suggestions for improvements, are the ineluctable responsibilities of the history teachers in universities, and this also accord with the desires of new textbook editors expressed in the preface of this new textbook.

In this article, the questions discussed in Latin American history of the *World History (Modern History Volume)* were classified according to countries. This article would divide Latin America history exposition into the independence of Haiti, the independence of the Mexico and the Mexico-U.S. relation to discuss. Of all the listed questions, there are historical distortions, jaundiced discusses, inconsistent formulations, different translation, inaccurate translation, unclear discusses, wrong words etc..

1. THE EXPOSITION ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE HAITI

The new textbook page 242 to page 243 had pointed out:

Haiti is locating in the western part of the Hispaniola Island (The Haiti Island). The Hispaniola Island is in the Caribbean Sea. Haiti was a colony which the French won from the hands of Spain. At that time, Haiti was known as Santo Domingo owned by the French. The eastern part of the Haiti Island was known as the Santo Domingo owned by the Spain. And it is today's Dominica.... In 1801, Toussaint L' Ouverture had occupied the Santo Domingo owned by the Spain, so he had unified the entire island of Haiti, and then he had established a new government.... But in 1802, Napoleon had sent a strong expeditionary force about 20,000 soldiers to restore French rule on the entire island of Haiti. Toussaint L' Ouverture was victimized by a scheme of French. Toussaint L' Ouverture had come to the camp of the French expeditionary force for negotiations with French expeditionary force Commander. Then Toussaint L' Ouverture was arrested by the French expeditionary force. Toussaint L' Ouverture was sent to the France, and at last, Toussaint L' Ouverture was died in the prison of the France. In 1804, Haiti had formally declared its independence. The new born country Haiti had used the name of a high mountain "Haiti" in the Hispaniola Island as the name of this new born country. (X. C. Liu & B. C. Liu, 2007, pp.242-243)

The new textbook had pointed out that the Haiti currently only occupies the western part of Haiti Island, and in 1801, Toussaint L' Ouverture had unified the entire

island of Haiti, but did not explain the territory of the Haiti in 1804 when the leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines had formally declared the independence of the new born country Haiti. So all the students in universities would face status in quo which the Haiti and the Dominica have occupied the entire Haiti Island. The students in universities had known that in 1801 the new born country Haiti had occupied the entire island of Haiti. The students in universities of course would like to find out whether the new born country Haiti in 1804 when it had formally declared independence also had occupied the entire Haiti Island. But the new textbook did not explain this to the students in universities. This is not conducive to the learning of all students in universities. "The Cambridge History of Latin America" written by Leslie Bethel had pointed out:

The landowners which were belonged to the east area of the Haiti Island owned by the Spain had rather supported French troops sent by Napoleon to restore the slavery in the east area of the Haiti Island owned by the Spain. They were unwilling to accept the rule of Santo Domingo Black people military commanders led by Paul L' Ouverture. And Paul L' Ouverture was the younger brother of Toussaint L' Ouverture. As a result, in order to expel the people of Haiti from the east area of the Haiti Island, the Dominicans had cooperated with the French army led by Leclair. However, the Dominicans are doomed to pay a heavy price for the cooperation with the French Army and the expulsion to the people of Haiti from the east area of the Haiti Island. Once the war in the western part of the Haiti Island had ended with the new born country Haiti had declared its independence in 1804, Jean-Jacques Dessalines and their subordinates would punish the enemies of the revolution in the region ruled by the Spain, and then expelled the French who were retreat to the Santo Domingo. After more than one year, Jean-Jacques Dessalines had invaded the Santo Domingo. Because before launched into the new campaign, Jean-Jacques Dessalines needed some time to consolidate his position and to organize his own new country. (Bethel , 1994, pp.246-247)

So, it is very obvious that when the new born country Haiti had formally declared independence in 1804, this new born country Haiti only had occupied the western part of the Hispaniola Island, the editor of the new textbook should mention this to the readers.

2. THE EXPOSITION OF ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE MEXICO

The new textbook page 244 to page 245 had pointed out:

In the morning of September 16th 1810, Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla had led some people to arrest the Spanish in his town, and then ring the bell of the church, and called on the Indian to join the armed uprising in the name of the Spanish King Ferdinand VII and the Catholic Church. (X. C. Liu & B. C. Liu, 2007, pp.244-245)

It is very clearly that this description is "Grito de Dolores".

World History (Modern History Series) the First Volume written by Liu Zuochang and Wang Juefei had

pointed out: "On September 16th 1810, Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla and other people had released the prisoners in the prison, and had arrest all the Spanish in the town, and then ring the bell of the church as usual". After several thousand of Indians who lived in neighborhood had gathered in front of the church, Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla had told all these Indians what had happened, and asked them in louder voice: "Do you wish to become free man? Three hundred years ago, the hateful Spanish had taken away the land from our ancestors. Do you wish to retake the land from the Spanish?" Suddenly, the crowds had raised their arms and shout "Hang these Spanish robbers!" Then Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla led the crowds shouted: "Long live America!" and "Beat down the bad government!" This is the famous "Grito de Dolores" in the Spanish history." (Liu & Wang, 2001, p.406) The problem is, from the past high school history textbooks to university history textbooks all had clearly pointed out that Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla at that time had used the anti Spanish as the vocation of the uprising. But why the uprising led by Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla also in the name of the king of Spain Ferdinand VII. This contradiction would make it difficult for all the students to understand.

The Outline of Mexico Modern History: 1810-1945 edited by Albinovic and Lavrov had pointed out: "In 1808, the metropolitan state Spain occur some events. These events had directly spurred the upsurge of the liberation movement in Spanish colony including Mexico." The French army had invaded Spain, but the ruling clique of Spain was very passive to the invasion of French army. This made the blow up of public indignation. Because a revolution had begun in the Spain, on March 19 1808, King Charlie IV was forced to abdicate. The son of King Charlie IV was proclaimed as King Ferdinand VII. A few days later, the French intervention army had come into the capital of the Spain, Madrid. At the beginning of May, an uprising had broken out in Madrid by local people and against the French intervention army. This uprising was ruthlessly suppressed by the French occupiers. Under the pressure of Napoleon, Ferdinand VII had to abdicate on May 19th, 1808. After less than one month, the brother of Napoleon, Joseph Bonaparte was declared as the King of Spain.... Not only the administrative authorities in the colonies of the Spain, prelate, landlords and merchants of Spain and a small part of the native white upper strata who had some relationship with them, even other representatives of possessing Class in the local residents also urged loyal to Ferdinand VII. The latter in oral in favor to uphold the 'legal' Bourbon regime, the reason was that since the suzerain Spain in fact was ruled by Joseph Bonaparte, so nominally acknowledged Ferdinand VII could make Mexico actually gained its own independence." (Albinovic & Lavrov, 1974, pp.88-89) Besides this, *The Outline of Mexico Modern History:*

1810-1945 edited by Albinovic and Lavrov had also pointed out:

After the failure of Valladolid conspiracy, priest Miguel Hidalgo, senior Captain Ignacio Allende and the Doctor in the Catholic Church law Manuel Yturria were the most outstanding persons in the main leaders of the revolutionary movement. Iturriaga had consulted with Allende and Miguel Hidalgo, in February 1810, they had made a plan which planed to establish revolutionary committees in all the major cities in the whole Mexico. The tasks of all the revolutionary committees were secret propaganda against Spanish rule. And when the armed struggle began, the revolutionary committees should trigger uprisings in their local area. The Revolutionary Committee also had responsibility for the following tasks: Take over the administration of the colony, the arrest of wealthy Spaniards, the confiscation of the property of wealthy Spaniards. This plan had stipulated that administrative power of the Mexico would be handed to a committee which composed of the representatives of each province. This committee would conduct activities in the name of Ferdinand VII, but the Spanish rule should be completely finished. (Albinovic & Lavrov, 1974, pp.96-97)

The Cambridge History of Latin America written by Leslie Bethel had pointed out:

In the morning of September 16, 1810, Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla had delivered his speech "Grito de Dolores", called upon the native Indians and the Mestizos gathered in the Sunday fair to participate in the uprising. The purpose of this uprising was to defend the religion, and to shake off the bondage of "the Peninsula people". The representative of "the Peninsula people" was the people who should be responsible for annul Iturriaga Ray's position. The purpose of this uprising also included end the shameful mark such as tribute and taxes, and other marks which makes local people suffered humiliation. The revolution began under the name of King Ferdinand VII. Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla had declared the Virgin of Guadalupe (Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe) was the defender and patron saint. And the Virgin of Guadalupe (Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe) was the supreme symbol of Mexican godliness. (Bethel, 1994, p.64)

It is not difficult to conclude that, Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla only used King Ferdinand VII as a symbol for the vocation of the uprising. Because King Ferdinand VII had already been uncrowned by the French, and in fact King Ferdinand VII did not master the Spanish regime at that time. The aim of Miguel Hidalgo Y Costilla to do this was to fight for the independence of Mexico.

3. THE EXPOSITION ON THE MEXICO-U.S. RELATION

The new textbook page 325 had pointed out: "By the means of the War between the Mexico and U.S. from 1846 to 1849, U.S. had seized a vast land from the New Mexico to the California (nearly 2.4 million square kilometers)." (X. C. Liu & B. C. Liu, 2007, p.325) But the new textbook page 340 also had pointed out: "It was under the guise of this principle, America had launched territory nibble for vast areas to the neighboring Mexico." (Ibid., p.340) The problem is, even we do not calculate the territory of the U.S. had annexed from the Mexico in other

times, only by the war between the Mexico and U.S. from 1846 to 1849, U.S. had seized Mexico nearly 2.4 million square kilometers in a few years. To describe such a rapid and large scale expansion behavior as nibble seems very inappropriate, even with a qualifier in “large area”, also exists a very big gap with the fact of the history. I want to advise the editors change his exposition to “It was under the guise of this principle; America had annexed vast territory from the neighboring Mexico.”

The new textbook page 325 to page 326 had described the process of American external expansion according to the time sequence:

In 1783, the new born America had got large tracts of territory between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River, along with the original 13 colonies. The proportion of the new born America was more than 2 million square kilometers..... Later, American had purchased the Alaska from the Russia empire (one and a half million square kilometers) for \$7.2 million in 1867, and had annexed Hawaii Kingdom on the Pacific Ocean in 1898, and thus formed the nowadays America territory. (Ibid., pp.325-326)

The problem is, the editor omitted the most important part of the American external expansion course. And it was the America had annexed the Texas. In 1835, the America had instigated the American immigration who had moved to Texas established “the lone star Republic” in the Texas of Mexico, and had merged the Texas into the twenty-eighth state of America in 1845 (Wang, 1995, pp.340-342). The annexation of America to the Texas was the most important page in the external expansion history of the United States; the editor could not omit this important page without any words.

The new textbook page 326 had pointed out: “The Southern neighbor of the United States, Mexico was to go off with half of its territory by the United States.” (X. C. Liu & B. C. Liu, 2007, p.326) But the problem is, the description “half of its territory” was too rough, did not accord with historic reality. *The Exposition on the American Social Economic History* written by Huang Annian had pointed out: “From the annexation of Texas by the United States to the purchase of Gadsden, the United States had captured 944,825 square miles (about 2,447,000 square kilometers) from the hands of the Mexico (Huang, 1993, p.74). Since 1853, the territory of Mexico did not have any change. The territory area

of Mexico in nowadays is 1,970,000 square kilometers. So, we could cipher out the United States annexation of Mexican territory equivalent to more than 55% of the territory of Mexico. Therefore, the representation of the new textbook was not precise enough. I suggest the editor change this exposition to “The Southern neighbor of the United States, Mexico was to go off with the United States more than 55 percent of the territory.”

CONCLUSION

Needless to say, to compile a high quality, rich of the times flavor, and meet the requirements of modern world history textbook in the 21st century university is very difficult. To bring forward a Latin America history exposition which has both strong technicality and intense readability is more difficult. But in order to train the new century talents which have world vision and truth-seeking spirit, we have to grasp the nettle, and continuously improve the quality of textbooks. While improvement of the textbook’s quality is never get things done once and for ever, need to keep thinking, exploration and improvement, need to constantly absorbing the new scholarship. As a history teacher in teaching first-lines of university, find and point out problems in the use process of textbook, make a little effort for the gradual improvement of textbook, which is the purpose of writing this article.

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