

# **A Comparative Study of the "Late Qing History" Text System in Chinese and American High School History Textbooks**

## **-- Taking the Compulsory Textbook of the Unified Edition and the McGraw-Hill Edition as an Example**

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**Abstract.** As the most important vehicle of knowledge in history teaching, the history textbook is the basis and prerequisite for successful history education. As the foundational structure in history textbooks, the text systematically presents a complete as well as comprehensive overview of the historical process, reflecting important events, people, and phenomena in the development of history. It defines the depth and breadth of the content of history instruction in order to safeguard the goal of teaching history as a nurturing and developing subject. In both countries, the history of the late Qing Dynasty has a relatively important place in high school history teaching, but the selection of knowledge points and the presentation of ideas in the content of the history of the late Qing Dynasty have their own distinctive characteristics. Therefore, this paper aims to present the differences between the content of the two editions of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" through a comparison of the content selection and presentation of historical events in the Chinese and American textbooks, and to touch upon the root causes behind the differences.

**Keywords:** Comparison of Compulsory Textbooks; McGraw-Hill Edition; High School History and Textbooks.

### **1. A Comparison of the Content Selection of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" in Chinese and American Textbooks**

History textbooks are the main vehicle through which people can empathize with the fate of their country and nation, so it is particularly important that the content of history textbooks be written in such a way that the selection of knowledge points and the expression of historical concepts are based on the developmental stance of the country, government, or society, so as to better strengthen young people's sense of family and national identity. The selection of knowledge points in history textbooks reveals both the writers' views on this history and the importance they attach to it. By studying the characteristics of history textbooks on the late Qing Dynasty in China and the United States, we can see that the selection of history content is influenced by national educational philosophy and mainstream national thinking.

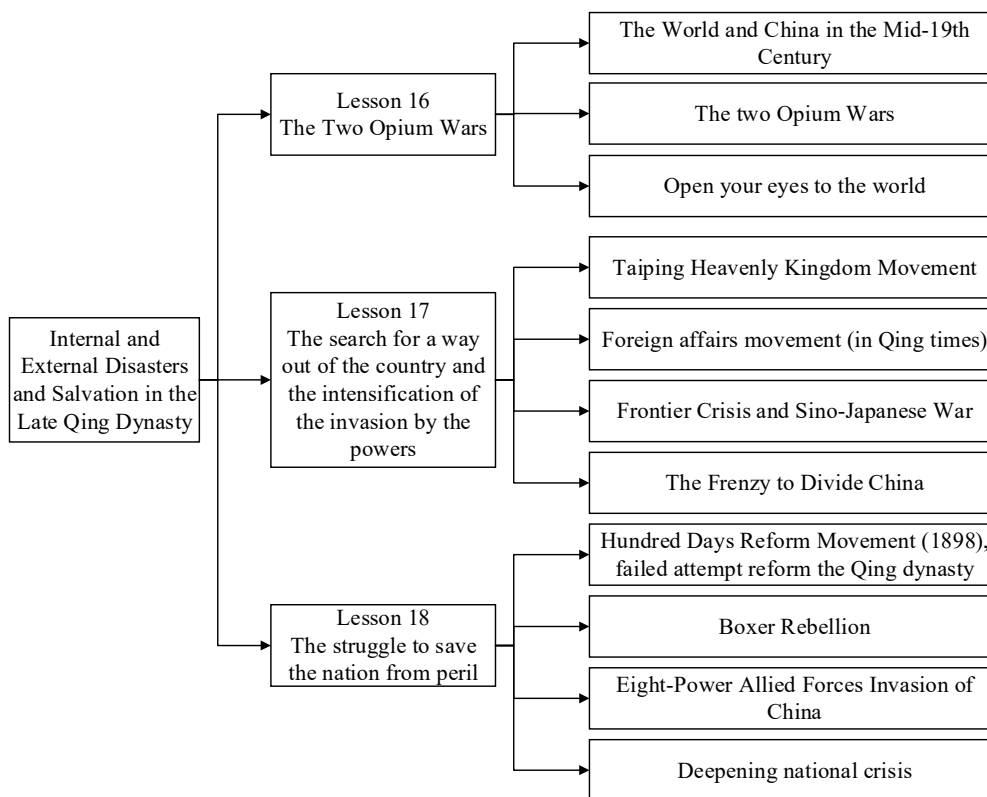
#### **1.1 Comparison of the Selection of Knowledge Points of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" in the Two Editions**

Both the Chinese and American editions of the textbook define the history of the late Qing dynasty in the same way, focusing on the history of the Qing dynasty from its decline to its downfall from the 19th to the early 20th century. At the same time, since China played an important role in the political landscape of East Asia in modern times, and the history of the late Qing Dynasty is an integral part of China's modern history, both countries consider the history of the late Qing Dynasty to be an important component of China's modern history.

##### **1.1.1 Selected Knowledge Points of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" from the Compulsory Textbook of the Unified Edition**

In 2019, the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition of China places the content of the "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" in the part of teaching modern Chinese history, and the main part is located

in the fourth unit of the "Outline of Chinese and Foreign History (above)", which is divided into four lessons on the historical content of the period from the mid-19th century to the 20th century, and the specific knowledge structure is shown in the figure below.



**Fig 1.** Knowledge structure of the compulsory textbook "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" of the Unified Edition [1]

From Figure 1, we can see that the selection of knowledge points in the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition is mainly based on the sequence of the general history of modern China and then developed in the form of small topics. It is easy to see from the title of the unit "The Internal and External Troubles of the Late Qing Dynasty" that the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition condenses the development of the historical society of the period and distills the development trend of Chinese society in the Late Qing Dynasty, thus indicating that the teaching and education activities should focus on two aspects of knowledge: "internal and external troubles" and "saving the country". The textbook also shows that the teaching and education activities should focus on two knowledge points: "internal and external troubles" and "saving the country and trying to survive". In addition, the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition has a strong integration of the topics of each lesson, so that the central clues and knowledge points to be emphasized in each lesson can be seen from the topics. First, in Lesson 16, since the term "Opium War" usually refers to the "First Opium War," the text includes not only the "First Opium War," but also the "Second Opium War". However, the content of the text does not only include the "First Opium War", but also the "Second Opium War". Therefore, by integrating the content of the text, the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition has set the topic of Lesson 16 as "The Two Opium Wars", which precisely expresses the core of the text and highlights. The two Opium Wars were a major factor in China's development, and the two Opium Wars were a major factor in China's development. Lesson 17 integrates the contents of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Movement, the Foreign Affairs Movement and the Sino-Japanese War, and summarizes the title as "The Search for a National Way Out and the Strengthening of the Aggression of the Powers", highlighting that in the process of education and teaching, the relevant knowledge points of "the search for a way out" and "the strengthening of the aggression" should be emphasized. In the process

of education and teaching, the relevant knowledge points of "exploration" and "strengthening of aggression" should be emphasized, not only to see the difficult international social environment of China and the deep degree of semi-feudalism and semi-colonization, but also to pay attention to the attempts made by China in modern industry in order to explore the way out; Lesson 18 will The title of Lesson 18 is "The Hundred Days Reform, the Boxer Rebellion, and the Eight-Power Allied Forces' Invasion of China", which is a condensed version of "The Struggle to Save the Nation", highlighting "save" and emphasizing the relevant knowledge points about the Hundred Days Reform Movement. The title is "The Struggle to Save the Nation", highlighting "Save", emphasizing the relevant knowledge points of the Hundred Days Reform Movement, and focusing on the role of the Hundred Days Reform Movement in promoting the modernization of China. In general, the selection of knowledge points of the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition on "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" not only reflects the characteristics of the times when China explored the path of modernization in the late Qing Dynasty in a tortuous manner, but also reflects the distinctive general history style of the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition.

The unified version of the compulsory textbook "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" also reflects the characteristic of focusing on comprehensive analysis in the selection of knowledge points. The "general history + subtopics" approach of the compulsory textbook allows for the inclusion of aspects of the same historical period in one lesson. Take Lesson 16 "The Two Opium Wars" as an example, the first sub-topic emphasizes the gap between the economic base of the late Qing Dynasty and the world, while the second sub-topic elaborates on the inevitable political consequences of such a gap - the two Opium Wars, the end of which led the intellectuals of the late Qing Dynasty to start a change in their thinking. In this way, Lesson 16 covers the economic, political, ideological and cultural aspects of the late Qing Dynasty in a single lesson, which requires the development of students' comprehensive analytical skills. Under the influence of this style of writing, the knowledge points covered in the compulsory textbook "Outline of Chinese and Foreign History" of the Unified Edition will appear to be relatively comprehensive. But at the same time, because the orientation of the compulsory textbook of the unified version is to outline, there is only a general framework for the narration of historical events, and many details and logic need to be added in the process of education and teaching to sort out.

### 1.1.2. A Selection of Knowledge Points from McGraw Hill's Version of "the History of the Late Qing Dynasty"

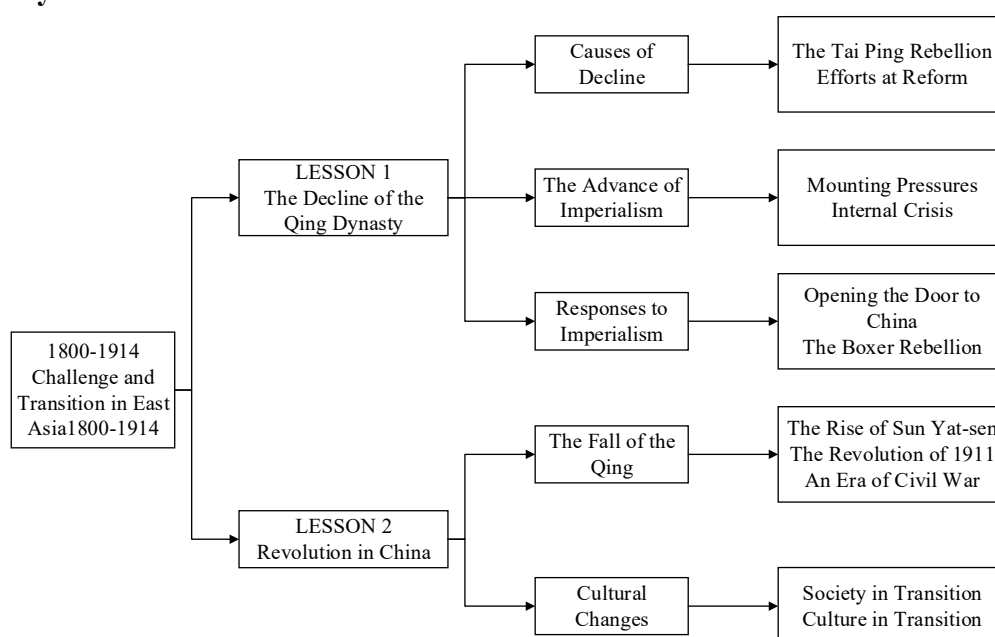


Fig 2. Knowledge structure of McGraw Hill's version of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty [2]

The McGraw-Hill History textbook includes a chapter on the "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" along with its Japanese contemporaries, and is limited to the period from 1800 to 1914, a period of challenge and transition for the entire East Asian region. The McGraw-Hill edition of "The History of the Late Qing Dynasty" objectively presents the main features of Qing society during this period, namely, the irrevocable decline of the dynasty and the unstoppable Chinese revolution, which are the two main threads that link China's internal and external difficulties after the Opium War and highlight the historical process of the gradual growth of democratic revolutionary factors, and the influence of Western factors around The influence of Western factors in the meantime constitutes the basic face of the historical picture of the late Qing Dynasty.

In contrast to the unified version of the required history textbook, McGraw-Hill's edition takes major historical events as the entry point for the textbook, and is written in the order of historical development, using the perspective of Western thought to examine the direction of the history of the late Qing Dynasty - the fall of the dynasty and the rise of revolution. Because the historical development of the late Qing Dynasty was influenced by both domestic and foreign influences, McGraw-Hill's analysis fully expresses the internal and external problems that China faced at that time, externally by the pressure brought by the West and internally by the problems faced by its own social development. The impact of external factors on the historical development of the late Qing Dynasty is magnified.

Based on this idea, the McGraw-Hill textbook also has its own characteristics in the selection of knowledge points. The first section analyzes the reasons for the decline of the dynasty from the perspective of three challenges faced by the late Qing Dynasty, firstly, the failure of the Opium War, symbolizing the failure of foreign wars, which led to the invasion of Western powers; secondly, the revolution and uprising of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Movement, which brought intense internal social conflicts to the Qing Dynasty; and secondly, the failure of the Foreign Affairs Movement, symbolizing the failure of the landowning class to save itself but the internal social conflicts. Secondly, the revolution and uprising of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom movement, which brought intense internal social conflicts to the Qing dynasty; and then the failure of the foreign affairs movement, which symbolized the landowning class' attempt to save itself but ended in failure as well. It is clear from the preparation of the textbook that the authors focused only on the three events that led to the decline of the Qing dynasty, namely the Opium War, the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Movement, and the Foreign Affairs Movement, and did not study much about the internal connection between the three. In the second subsection, "Imperialist Invasion," although the title of the subsection is about external invasion, the content is not only about external, but also about internal factors, emphasizing that the impact of imperialism on China was the most crucial factor in the development of the late Qing Dynasty. The author's strong Western-centric ideology can be seen. On the one hand, the section describes the continued deterioration of China's internal environment due to the encroachment of external forces on China's territorial sovereignty; on the other hand, the analysis of the Hundred Days Reform describes the challenges to the modernization and reform of the late Qing dynasty under the impact of external forces. In the third subsection, "Responding to Imperialism," two important events are selected: the Open Door Policy and the Boxer Rebellion. The Open Door Policy not only highlights the importance that the United States attached to China's status, but also depicts the national environment in which the late Qing Dynasty could respond to the challenge of foreign power brought by the West; the Boxer Rebellion Movement is a typical event in the late Qing Dynasty's misguided response to Western power, and based on the reasons for the emergence and rise of the Boxer Rebellion Movement and its ultimate outcome, it is easy to see that the late Qing Dynasty could not escape its eventual decline, and that the future trends of the world are also implied in it. The future development trend is also implied in it.

In Lesson 2, "The Chinese Revolution," the selection of knowledge points is characterized by the fact that events and impacts can prove each other. First, the events are the three historical events of the New Deal at the end of the Qing Dynasty, the Xinhai Revolution, and the establishment of Yuan Shikai's rule, which are sufficient to explain the development experience of the revolution; then, the

cultural development and changes are highlighted to show the development of society and culture after the revolution, so as to describe the impact of the revolution.

In the teaching of "The History of the Late Qing Dynasty", the causal relationship between "The Decline of the Qing Dynasty" and "The Revolution in China" cannot be ignored. These two lessons have been selected to provide a complete account of the important historical facts of the late Qing Dynasty. The McGraw-Hill version of the history textbook looks at the history of the late Qing Dynasty in the context of the entire East Asian society, emphasizing the development trend of history from a macroscopic perspective and minimizing the influence of specific historical events on the "history of the late Qing Dynasty".

### 1.2 Comparison of the Selection of Topics in the Two Editions

With similar time periods, the decline of the Qing dynasty, the influence of Western powers, and the rise of modern revolutions are all points of emphasis in both Chinese and American editions of the textbook. However, the degree of emphasis on "late Qing history" in both editions also influences the emphasis on the main theme of modern history in each edition.

First of all, in Chinese history textbooks, "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" belongs to Chinese history, and the core of the textbook is set mainly from the Chinese perspective. The textbook positions China as a victim of persecution by the Western colonial rulers, and the aggression of the Western colonialists was an important cause of the decline of the Qing Dynasty and even the national crisis.

Secondly, the materials in the unified version of the compulsory textbook are analyzed from the perspective of the materialistic view of history in the selection of the main theme. For example, in The Two Opium Wars, the unified textbook uses a subheading to explain the economic gap between China and the Western world before the Opium Wars, highlighting the role of productive forces in determining social and historical development. In addition, according to the structure of the textbook in the new standard, political, economic, and cultural history are combined in the same period of time, and the mastery of "the struggle of the Chinese people against foreign invasion" is a prerequisite for learning "the history of the late Qing Dynasty, internal and external problems, and the struggle to save the country." "The prerequisite for the study of the history of the late Qing Dynasty is the internal and external troubles and the salvation of the country. [3] The emphasis on "the various social classes to save the situation" reflects that "the Chinese people's resistance against aggression was gradually escalated, from the initial struggle of individual civil organizations to the joint resistance of multiple classes and finally to the universal resistance", and its emphasis is placed on the political line of The aim is to guide students to understand the systematic thread of "the journey of the modern classes to find the way to save the country and the people"[4].

The McGraw-Hill history textbook reflects a strong Westernist ideology and modernized view of history at the core of the "History of the Late Qing". First of all, the McGraw-Hill history textbook selects the period of the late Qing Dynasty from 1800 to 1914, when the whole East Asia was in a social transformation. The analysis of the history of the late Qing Dynasty in the context of the whole East Asian modernization movement focuses on the overall orientation of social development in the macro environment, and not a single historical event can change the direction of historical development, but also weakens the persecution of the Chinese people brought by the Western colonial invasion. The time period chosen by the American textbook shows that the main approach to the study of the late Qing Dynasty in the West is to study the social changes in East Asia as a whole from the perspective of a modernized view of history, by enlarging the context of the study of the "late Qing Dynasty" and placing it in the context of world changes, and by studying the confrontation between China and Japan in the same period of time in response to foreign invasion. We will also study the social changes in East Asia as a whole in the context of the confrontation between China and Japan in response to foreign invasion at the same time.

Second, McGraw-Hill's textbook is a study of China's attitude toward foreign invasion and resistance from a Western perspective. "They place the history of the late Qing Dynasty in the context

of the social transformation movement in East Asia and the changes made in the late Qing Dynasty in the light of the changes in the world as a whole, so they consider the main theme of the history of the late Qing Dynasty to be transformation and challenge. It is also from this Western perspective that the textbook refers to the invasion of China by Western colonizers, but in the Western view this act contributed to the transformation of Chinese society into a modernized one, and it was the Western colonizers who were the leaders of the social transformation of China [5].

In short, the textbook of the unified version of the compulsory textbook, in its selection and structure, mainly emphasizes that the changes in the history of the late Qing Dynasty were brought about by the forced changes in the nature of Chinese society, and summarizes the "history of the late Qing Dynasty" into three main historical development stages: the history of the sinking of China's semi-colonial deepening due to the invasion of Western powers, the history of the struggle of the Chinese people to rise up and resist, and the history of the initial development of political, economic and cultural development. The history of the struggle of the Chinese people to resist, and the history of the initial political, economic and cultural development. McGraw-Hill's history textbook focuses on the decline of Qing rule and the transformation of China into a modernized country, and analyzes history from the perspective of modernization that is customary in Western historiography.

## 2. A Comparison of the Presentation of the Content of the Two Editions of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty"

**Table 1.** The same historical events selected from the unified version of the required textbook and the McGraw Hill version

The unified version of the compulsory textbook	McGraw Hill Edition Textbook
Opium Wars	The Opium War
Taiping Heavenly Kingdom	The TaiPing Rebellion
Foreign affairs movement (in Qing times)	Efforts at Reform
Sino-Japanese War of the First Sino-Japanese War	The Chinese went to war with Japan
The Eight-Power Allied Forces invaded China	The boxer rebellion
Xinhai Revolution	The Revolution of 1911

While history is objective in nature, the recording of history is influenced by human activity. As a result, people are often subjectively influenced by their nationalities and camps in their efforts to document and transmit history, and they make choices about the content of history textbooks. Inevitably, history textbooks are also influenced by the subjective consciousness of their compilers, and each region's history textbook has its own political characteristics and mindset in the selection of materials and narratives [6]. Because of the differences between China and the United States, the historical narratives are also different, and the differences in historical narratives reflect the different perspectives to some extent.

As can be seen from Table 1, there are certain similarities between China and the United States in the process of programming relevant history textbooks on key historical materials in the section on late Qing history. However, because of the differences in their respective national contexts, the presentation of the same material in the process of programming history textbooks differs between China and the United States. How did the differences arise? What are the implications of these differences? In this paper, we explore the differences in the presentation of historical events in the two countries by examining selected historical materials from the Opium War and the Foreign Affairs

Movement that are included in both the Chinese Unified Edition required history textbooks and the American McGraw-Hill Edition history textbooks.

## 2.1 Opium Wars

An analysis of the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition shows that it is divided into "The World and China in the Mid-19th Century", "The Two Opium Wars" and in the first part, the subject is divided into two parts: "The World and China in the Mid-19th Century," "The Two Opium Wars," and "Seeing the World with Open Eyes. In the first part, the background of the war is broadly described from both domestic and international perspectives. In the second part, the reasons for the two Opium Wars, their course and the final results are discussed. The third part describes the impact of the Opium Wars on some of the people of the Qing Dynasty. In contrast, however, the McLaughill version of the history textbook presents the Opium Wars only as a part of the decline of the Qing dynasty. The textbook covers, in general, how the trade deficit between China and Britain was created and the role played by the opium trade. However, the history of the war and its final effects are not discussed. Considering the issue from the point of view of length, it can be concluded that the unified version has a certain advantage. The Opium War had a profound impact on China and was the beginning of modernization in China. The compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition is significantly more detailed and provides a more coherent account of historical events and the internal logic of historical events, which can help students to sort out the modern history more clearly.

The two versions of the textbook, which analyze the problem from the perspective of the causes of the war, have different expositions of its nature. The unified version of the compulsory textbook presents a logical structure: the Sino-British trade deficit - the British attempt to reverse the trade deficit with opium trade - the Qing court's anti-smoking campaign - the British At the same time, the McGraw-Hill edition of the textbook presents the following logical sequence: a trade deficit between the two countries - Britain's failed attempt to negotiate a solution to the trade deficit - Britain's failed attempt to solve the trade deficit through the opium trade The British tried to solve the trade deficit through the opium trade - The Qing Dynasty curbed the opium trade to protect its own interests - The British finally started the war. From the perspective of the causes of the war, the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition emphasizes Britain's sinful positioning as an aggressor, and conveys a sense of home and country to students between the lines. The McGraw-Hill edition, however, seems to agree that the Opium War was merely a trade conflict, and that the outbreak of the trade conflict was due to the improper handling of the Qing court, trying to portray the Qing court as the party at fault in the cause of the Sino-British Opium War. Because of these different views, the two editions of the textbook also have very different definitions of opium, which played an important role. The unified version of the compulsory textbook considers opium as a tobacco poison that "damaged the health of the Chinese people, increased political corruption, weakened the army and increased the burden of the working people", and condemns the British opium trade from a moral point of view. The trade led to a massive outflow of Chinese silver on the one hand, and had a negative impact on the physical and mental well-being of the Chinese people on the other. McGraw-Hill's version of history states that opium was an addictive, in-demand drug, and that the Qing dynasty's opium trade was unethical at that point in history, according to Lin Zexu's letters. Although both versions of the textbook condemn the opium war, there is a significant difference in the definition of opium. In contrast to the Chinese textbook, which defines opium as a drug, the American version defines it as a medicine, reflecting to some extent the intentional dilution of the American version. In the Chinese version of the compulsory textbook on the Opium War, the historical events of the war are described through the actions of Lin Zexu, reflecting to some extent the implication of the ban on smoking and justice. In the American textbook, however, the process is broadly outlined as a blockade of foreign areas in Guangzhou by the Qing Dynasty, forcing British traders to give up opium, which led to British intervention by force.[7] At first glance, the above appears to be fair, but a detailed analysis of it reveals that it reflects, to a certain extent, the attitude of the American McGraw-Hill textbook that avoids discussing the substance of the smoking ban. To a certain extent, this shows that there are

significant differences between the two editions in terms of the reasons for the start of the Opium War. The unified version of the compulsory textbook reflects, to a certain extent, Britain's status as the aggressor, and to a large extent, the fact that Britain was largely responsible for the war. At the same time, the nature of the war was unjust. The logic of the American textbook is based on the idea of shock and reaction, and suggests that China's avoidance of the shocks associated with trade with Britain led Britain to resort to war to trade with China. Although both versions of the textbook provide a historical reconstruction, the difference in logic ultimately leads to a different characterization of the causes of the war and the attitudes held by each through the construction of characters.

The analysis related to the impact of the wars shows that there are significant differences in the relevant positions taken by the two editions mentioned above. The unified version of the required textbook devotes more space to a comprehensive account of the political, cultural, and economic impact of the two Opium Wars, both from the domestic perspective and from the perspective of the invaders involved in the wars. The American version, however, tends to analyze the role of the Opium Wars through the lens of Sino-British trade and commerce, and explores the changes in Western power in the Qing dynasty after the wars, with a focus on the impact of the wars on the political landscape of East Asia. The unified version of the required textbook takes the perspective of national history, while the American version takes the perspective of world history, resulting in a somewhat different understanding of the war.

## 2.2 Foreign Affairs Movement (In Qing times)

The unified version of the compulsory textbook generally places the Foreign Affairs Movement in the second part of the lesson "The Search for a National Way and the Intensification of the Aggression of the Powers", which basically depicts the important events of the late Qing Dynasty in chronological order, including the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom Movement, the Foreign Affairs Movement, the Sino-Japanese War, and other historical events. At the same time, the subsequent Partition Frenzy is also described. In the second part, the circumstances and people involved in the foreign affairs movement, the purpose of the foreign affairs movement and the establishment of specific factories are described and evaluated. In addition, in the third part, the end of the foreign affairs movement is mentioned, as the defeat of the Qing Dynasty in the Sino-Japanese War marked the failure of the foreign affairs movement [8], reflecting the fact that this version of the textbook adopts the long-standing theory of the failure of foreign affairs: in the Sino-Japanese War, the achievements of the foreign affairs movement related to learning from the West were lost, and the navy built by learning from the West was wasted. Therefore, to a certain extent, it indicates the bankruptcy of the foreign affairs movement. However, the above-mentioned view has also led to some controversies. The foreign affairs movement was still going on after the Sino-Japanese War and was continued in different forms.

On the evaluation of the foreign affairs movement, the compulsory textbook of the unified version focuses on the inevitability of its failure, and the presentation is relatively dialectical.

The Foreign Affairs New Deal was an early attempt to modernize China by introducing the machine production technology of capitalist countries. The foreign affairs faction expected that the New Deal would guarantee national security and resist foreign invasion, but later it proved that this purpose was not achieved. The original intention of the foreign affairs faction was not to change the feudal rule, but only to introduce new military and production technologies from capitalist countries, which was a patchwork based on the feudal system.

The textbook of the unified version of the compulsory textbook shows that it focuses more on the definition of the movement through the political and class aspects, characterizing it in general as a movement to strengthen its rule with the help of Western technology while maintaining the original feudal system.

The following is an exposition of the McGraw-Hill version of the foreign affairs movement.

In the late 1870s, the Qing dynasty was in decline. Unable to restore order on their own, government forces relied on troops recruited by regional warlords to help fight against the Taiping.



To finance their troops, the warlords levied taxes on the local people. After the uprising, many of these warlords left their armies behind.

In its weakened state, the Qing dynasty finally began to heed the calls of reformist officials. The reformers called for a new policy they called "self-improvement. In other words, China should adopt Western technology, but retain its Confucian values and institutions.

Some reformers want to change China's traditional political system by introducing democracy. However, for most reformers, this idea was too radical. In the late nineteenth century, the Chinese government worked to modernize the army and build industry without touching the basic elements of Chinese civilization. Railroads, arsenals, and shipyards were built. However, the Chinese value system remained intact [10].

The McGraw-Hill edition above broadly characterizes the foreign affairs movement as a reform. At the same time, the background and content of the movement are explained. The textbook defines the Reformation more in terms of culture. It is characterized as a process of self-reinforcement based on the maintenance of Confucianism and related institutions and the use of Western technology.

### **3. Evaluation of the Content of the Textbook "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" in Both Editions**

Through a comparison of the text systems of the two editions of "History of the Late Qing Dynasty", we find that while the two editions reflect similarities, they also have differences and present distinctive features.

#### **3.1 Systematic Evaluation of Compulsory Textbooks in the Unified Version**

The unified version of the compulsory textbook is divided into the upper book (Chinese history) and the lower book (world history) according to the chronological development of history. This is in line with the new curriculum's goal of developing students' historical thinking skills and core historical literacy. The text system of the compulsory textbook of the Unified Edition on the "History of the Late Qing Dynasty" has two main features.

First, the content is designed to be coherent, and the knowledge of the sub-topics can be smoothly and naturally transformed. For example, in the elaboration of the Opium War, the first step is to analyze the background factors of the outbreak of the war, to cultivate students' core qualities of materialistic view of history from the perspective of the impact of the development of productive forces on human society, to explain the historical inevitability of the outbreak of the Opium War, and to foreshadow the failure of the late Qing government, which was lagging behind the world trend. Then, the history of the war and its final outcome are explained, which ultimately led to the outbreak of the Second Opium War due to the dissatisfaction of Western countries with the status quo. The presentation of the war is a continuation of the information and a reflection of the cause and effect [11].

Secondly, the compulsory textbook materials of the Unified Edition emphasize national emotions in their relevant elaboration of this knowledge point. On the one hand, the textbook provides students with relevant knowledge content, and on the other hand, it also plays a relevant role in cultivating personality. The Ministry of Education has clear requirements for students to develop national sentiments in the learning process, making it an extremely important part of the process of promoting traditional culture. The textbook educates students through dialogues and related sentiments in the process of elaborating the history of the late Qing Dynasty, emphasizing the formation of students' emotional education in the process of elaborating the history of the nation. Therefore, the unified version of the compulsory textbook has a role in social education on the one hand, and helps students develop a good sense of historical responsibility on the other, which in turn helps students strengthen their sense of identity with the motherland, avoid historical and national nihilism, and contribute to the great rejuvenation of the motherland.

### 3.2 McGraw-Hill Edition Textbook System Evaluation

First, the McGraw-Hill version of the textbook basically covers the key historical events of the period in the process of selecting relevant materials for the history of the late Qing Dynasty. At the same time, its arrangement is relatively balanced, and the relevant historical events have a good typical role. However, the content is too large and does not highlight key elements. For example, there is relevant content repetition in the lesson on the decline of the Qing Dynasty and the lesson on the Chinese Revolution. In addition, the textbook uses a large amount of space to explain how the Qing dynasty fell, using many events to form clues about its decline, but because the material involved is too large, it is too complicated in terms of knowledge points, thus making it difficult to help students highlight the relevant knowledge, which may lead to a certain degree of fatigue in the learning process.

Second, the McGraw-Hill version of the textbook is deficient in its presentation of relevant historical events in a top-down manner. The textbook is too detailed and microscopic in its presentation of historical events. There is a large number of related points in a single chapter, but there is no logical exercise between them, and each part has a clear independence. The above approach makes students feel a certain degree of jumpiness, which has a negative impact on their logical chain. For example, in the lesson on the Chinese Revolution, there is no direct logical relationship between the two parts, the decline of the Qing Dynasty and cultural changes, and the title of the lesson.

At the same time, McGraw-Hill's version of the textbook unfolds history through the analysis of relevant historical figures. For example, in the case of the late Qing Dynasty, there is a great deal of discussion about Cixi, Guangxu, Sun Yat-sen, and others. In this textbook, Cixi's behavior is described from the perspective of different people, and the role of Cixi in the late Qing Dynasty is described on the one hand, and the role of ancient Chinese political women in family and politics on the other. Finally, the McGraw-Hill textbook is set with relevant topics at the end of the lesson, which helps to strengthen students' learning about the history of the late Qing Dynasty and can stimulate their thinking skills to a certain extent.

## 4. Conclusion

"The history of the late Qing Dynasty is of great importance in the process of modernization of China, and it also has a key position in the teaching of Chinese history, which contains a deep national sentiment. However, the history of the late Qing Dynasty is not only an important part of China's modern history, but also has a very important position in world history. Experts have said, "If you don't read Chinese history, you don't know why China is great; if you don't read world history, you don't know why China is backward." The role that China plays in other countries' world history textbooks depends on the publishing country's attitude toward the history in question, and the presentation of historical content from certain time periods in the textbooks can be distorted to some extent. From the relevant descriptions of our history in other countries from the perspective of world history, it is possible to discover historical content that we have not given sufficient attention to before, and thus to create a new perception of the same history.

Because of the influence of the requirements related to the new curriculum reform, history teaching materials and history teaching are constantly changing. By looking at the world and analyzing the history textbooks of different countries, we can expand our vision of history teaching to a certain extent. At the time of writing, there are some shortcomings in this paper, for example, this paper only analyzes some of the contents of the current compulsory textbooks in China and the McGraw-Hill edition in the United States. In the future, new research is needed on a larger scale. For example, the study of how to use both textbooks for learning, the study of students' and teachers' evaluations of both textbooks, and the study of how to integrate other textbooks. All in all, there are shortcomings that need to be explored in more depth in the future. This study is only a preliminary study on the comparison of different textbooks, and it can provide some reference for future research.

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