

Historical Interpretation in High School History Teaching from the Perspective of Historical Event Evaluation

-- Take the evaluation of the Boxer Movement as an example

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Abstract: The high school history curriculum takes moral cultivation as the fundamental task, and aims at cultivating and improving the students' key competencies of history discipline. Historical interpretation is the core content of the key competencies of the history discipline, and the evaluation of historical events is an important form of historical interpretation. This paper expounds the status of the key competency of historical interpretation in high school history teaching and its relationship with the evaluation of historical events. Starting from the difference between the evaluation of the current people's education press high school history textbooks and the old version of high school history textbooks on the Boxer Rebellion, it comprehensively analyzes the complexity of the evaluation of this movement in history. This paper tries to put forward some strategies to train students' competency of historical interpretation by evaluating historical events, in order to promote the cultivation of students' competency of historical interpretation.

Keywords: High School History Teaching; Boxer Movement; Historical Interpretation.

1. Introduction

In the "History Curriculum Standards for Senior High School (2017 edition)" (hereinafter referred to as the "New Curriculum Standards"), the five key competencies of the history discipline are proposed for the first time, including: historical materialism, concept of time and space, historical evidence, historical interpretation and feelings for the family and country. Compared with the previous three-dimensional objectives, its requirements for high school history teaching are more detailed, pointing out the direction for high school education, focusing on improving students' comprehensive quality and promoting students' all-round development, and breaking through the drawbacks of exam-oriented education to a certain extent. The teaching of history course is not only to let students pass the exam, but more importantly to cultivate the key competencies of students' history discipline. And how to implement this goal is the key issue of history teaching at present, and it is also a big difficulty for history teachers. It is one of the important means to promote the cultivation of the key competency of history interpretation by improving students' ability of history.

2. Historical Interpretation and Evaluation of Historical Events

2.1. The Status of Historical Interpretation in High School History Teaching

The "New Curriculum Standard" defines historical interpretation as: the attitude, ability and method of rational analysis and objective evaluation of historical things based on historical materials. By cultivating students' key competency of historical interpretation, students can discriminate and judge the value of various historical interpretations,

objectively discuss historical events, historical figures and historical phenomena, put forward their own interpretations of historical issues, and try to demonstrate them.

First of all, historical interpretation is a comprehensive ability, "historical materialism competency requires to be able to apply historical materialism in the study and exploration of history, and take historical materialism as the guiding ideology for understanding and solving practical problems is historical interpretation " concept of time and space competency requires to be able to make a reasonable explanation of historical events under different time and space frames, which is historical interpretation. The requirement of the empirical process in the empirical literacy of historical materials is actually the process of historical interpretation." It can be seen that the achievement of the key competency of historical interpretation has a promoting effect on the cultivation of other key competencies, and occupies an important position in the key competencies of history discipline.

Secondly, history textbooks are also examples of historical interpretation. The principle of compiling textbooks is to treat history dialectically and objectively, which is consistent with the basic requirements of historical interpretation. The important and difficult contents in textbooks are also closely related to historical interpretation. Mastering historical facts is the foundation, on which students can understand objective views and multiple interpretations of historical issues, which is the key content. For example, in the "Westernization Movement", the textbook says that "the Westernization New Deal introduced the machine production of capitalist countries and was an early attempt at modernization in China." "The original intention of the Westernization movement was not to change the feudal rule, but to introduce the new military and production technology of capitalist countries. It was to make tinkering on the basis of the feudal

system. The failure of the Westernization movement was inevitable." Regarding the "Hundred Days' Reform", the textbook says that "The Hundred Days' Reform movement played a positive role in promoting the development of Chinese national capitalism and the spread of new ideas." "Due to the strong conservative forces and the lack of a reliable social foundation and strict organization of the reformists, as well as the hope placed on the emperor who did not fully grasp the real power, the movement failed to achieve the expected goal and ended in failure." This way of expression is the basic characteristic of historical interpretation and constitutes the important and difficult content of textbooks.

Finally, the goal of history teaching is realized through historical interpretation. The educational value of history teaching needs to be implemented in the concrete process of "historical knowledge imparts". In order to achieve the real "teaching", "historical interpretation" is an important entry point and observation path. For example, when teaching the reasons for the failure of the "Hundred Days' Reform", the book only has a very general conclusion, "the obstruction of the conservative forces" and "the lack of social foundation of the reformists", then "why did the conservative forces obstruct the reform? Why did the Reformists lack a reliable social foundation?" These questions are the key for students to deeply understand the failure of Wuxu's Reform. Guide students to draw answers from the analysis of the measures of Hundred Days' Reform and the attitude of the Reformists towards the masses, experience the process of historical development from the specific situation, and lay the foundation for historical interpretation. The historical interpretation formed in this way is simple and concrete and has the most teaching effect. Only in this teaching process can students truly understand history and get inspiration from it. Therefore, it is an important direction and task for the development and reform of history teaching to do a good job of historical interpretation in the teaching process.

2.2. The Relationship between Historical Interpretation and Evaluation of Historical Events

On the one hand, historical interpretation refers to the objective narration of historical events and historical figures, and on the other hand, historical evaluation. In high school history teaching, historical evaluation is divided into two categories: one is the evaluation of historical things, including the evaluation of historical events, historical figures and historical phenomena; One is the evaluation of the historical views put forward by predecessors. For the same event, due to the different times and own experience of the interpreters, they make different evaluations. In addition, historical evaluations inevitably have subjective factors of the interpreters themselves. Therefore, teachers should guide students to look at various viewpoints dialectically, which is to cultivate students' competency of historical interpretation.

Historical events are the core component of history, but history includes not only the events themselves, but also the process of their connection and development, as well as the causality hidden behind these events. In high school history teaching, the evaluation of historical events is much more than the evaluation of historical figures, historical phenomena and historical views. Because in the history teaching of high school, the narration of historical events is conducive to connecting history and helping students form a basic

understanding of history, while the evaluation of historical events can further enable students to have a complete and objective understanding of history. By evaluating historical events dialectically and objectively, students can not only have a variety of understandings and explanations of historical events, but also master the principles and methods of historical evaluation, and use this method to independently explore historical issues, put forward their own explanations and try to demonstrate. Therefore, the evaluation of historical events is one of the main means to improve students' key competency of historical interpretation.

3. About the Difference of the Evaluation of the Boxer Movement

As to why I chose the event of "Boxer Rebellion", it is because the descriptions of the Boxer Rebellion in the high school textbooks introduced in 2019 are quite different from those in the previous edition. In the past, high school history textbooks did not introduce the "Boxer Movement" in a separate section, but was mixed in the sub-section of "The Invasion of China by the Eight-Nation Allied Forces", with only a short sentence, "The anti-imperialist patriotic movement launched by the civil organization Boxer, under the banner of" supporting the Qing Dynasty and destroying the Foreigners ", reached its climax in the Beijing and Tianjin areas in the spring and summer of 1900." ; Current high school history textbooks include the Boxer Rebellion as a separate section under "The Struggle to save the nation from extinction." "The Boxer Movement had a strong anti imperialist patriotic tendency, and there were obvious blind xenophobic behaviors. Without the leadership of the advanced class, the Boxer Movement could not prevent China from sliding into the semi-colonial abyss, but the sacrifice spirit of the Chinese people who were not afraid of violence showed that the foreign powers realized that no country had the brainpower and military power to rule a quarter of the world's living beings, and that "partitioning is actually a bad policy." It can be seen that the new edition of the textbook evaluation of this event is more objective and specific, and in history, the evaluation of the "Boxer Movement" has also experienced a long and complex process.

3.1. There are Differences in the Evaluation of Different Historical Periods

The period from 1950 to 1966 is the initial stage of the study on the history of Boxer Rebellion in China. During this period, influenced by the international Cold War pattern and the domestic anti-imperialist struggle, the research direction mainly focused on the anti-imperialist patriotic nature of the Boxer Movement. For example, in the evaluation of the Boxer Movement, Fan Wenlan praised the Boxer Movement as "fully demonstrating the strong spirit of resistance of the Chinese people" and "preventing the ambition of partition of various invading countries, which is an indelible achievement". Premier Zhou Enlai also mentioned in his speech that "the Boxer Movement is the manifestation of the Chinese people's tenacious resistance to imperialist aggression. Their heroic struggle is one of the cornerstones of the great victory of the Chinese people 50 years later." Therefore, under the influence of the general policy of the state, most scholars in this period also focused their views on the Boxer Rebellion on its anti-imperialist and patriotic nature and gave a high evaluation, thereby exposing the imperialist,

especially the American policy of invading China.

From 1967 to 1976, the study of the Boxer Movement suffered setbacks in China. During this period, influenced by the "Cultural Revolution", it was emphasized that the Boxer Movement was not only an anti-imperialist patriotic movement, but also a great "anti-feudal revolutionary mass movement", hoping to prove the rationality of the rebellion of the Red Guards. Later, in order to cooperate with the "Gang of Four" launched the campaign against forestry and Confucius, some people also said that the Boxer Movement was an anti-terrorism campaign. In short, at this time, the Boxer Movement was regarded as a political tool, its nature and role were further elevated, and the evaluation was full of praise and negative evaluation was negated.

The period from 1977 to 1990 was the reflection stage of the study of the Boxer Movement in China. First of all, many erroneous views put forward during the Cultural Revolution were reconsidered. For example, "The Boxers never put forward a clear anti-feudalism program, nor did they have an impact on the feudal society, nor did they shoulder the historical mission of anti-feudalism." The Boxer's spirit of patriotism should indeed be commended, but the problems exposed by it cannot be denied: The Boxer did not have the leadership of the advanced class, blind xenophobia and so on. Since then, most scholars also held this view on the Boxer Movement. In the 1980s, the study of the Boxer Movement gradually received cold attention and lost its central position.

After 1990, a multiple perspective was formed on the Boxer Movement. For example, from the perspective of modernization, some scholars believe that the failure of the Boxer Movement stimulated the reform movement of the New Deal at the end of the Qing Dynasty, promoted the modernization of the political system at the end of the Qing Dynasty, and had a great impact on the Revolution of 1911. The anti-imperialist struggle of the Boxer Movement and the modernization of China were complementary to each other; In terms of ideology, some scholars believe that the Boxer Movement promoted the renewal of Chinese people's ideas in the early 20th century, saying that "the defeat of the Boxer Movement was an important turning point in the ideological movement of modern China", "it stimulated the national awakening after the Sino-Japanese War, and promoted the discourse transformation and conceptual renewal of the Chinese press in the early 20th century". In addition, some scholars also put forward new explanations for some views in the Boxer Movement. For example, the blind exclusion of the Boxer Movement, which some scholars believed was a just resistance inspired by the acute contradiction between imperialism and the Chinese nation, was not due to the rejection of the new mode of production by ignorance and backwardness; As for the cause of the rise of the Boxer Movement, some scholars believe that "it was not a war of state affairs, but a war of party disaster". Such new views continue to appear, which greatly enriched people's understanding of this issue.

3.2. Different Subjects Have Different Evaluations on this Issue

Different periods have different views on the Boxer Movement. In that historical period, different subjects stand in different angles and have different views on it. Reformists such as Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, although they strongly criticized the imperialist aggression and the partition of China, did not take specific anti-imperialist actions, but

slanders the Boxer's anti-imperialist struggle. Liang Qichao denounced that "the Boxers were directed by the government and presided over by the empress dowager Ci Xi." Moreover, the newspapers they controlled, such as the Chinese and Foreign Daily and the Qing Yi Daily, regarded the Boxer Movement as "not a war of state affairs, but a war of party disaster" and denied the anti-imperialist patriotic nature of the Boxer Movement. On the one hand, it was the cause of Empress Dowager Cixi, who used the Boxer Rebellion against the foreigners. The slogan of the Boxer Rebellion was "support the Qing Dynasty and destroy the Foreigners", so these reformists simply regarded the Boxer Rebellion as her "running dogs". On the other hand, the reformists wanted to learn from the West, while the Boxers wanted to "destroy the foreign", which ran counter to the reformists' views.

The later revolutionaries deeply sympathized with and paid attention to the Boxer Movement and praised its anti-imperialist patriotic spirit. In December 1900, the 33th issue of China's Xun News published a commentary entitled "Sovereignty", refuting the reformists' slurs against the Boxer and praising the patriotic spirit of "the Boxer fought for power with foreign countries". Convinced that this spirit "will develop the embryo of independence, autonomy and freedom, and make China eventually become a big democratic country." The great revolutionary leader Dr. Sun Yat-sen also fully affirmed the just nature of the Boxer Movement and its spirit of struggle. This view of the revolutionaries prompted them to seek support from the broad masses of the people, hoping to use the power of the masses to promote the development of the democratic revolutionary movement.

The early Communists, Chen Duxiu and Qu Qiubai, initially used Marxist viewpoints and methods to comprehensively evaluate the Boxer Movement. They did not deny its anti-imperialist patriotic nature, and even believed that the Boxer Movement was a "national revolutionary movement" of the Chinese people's fight against imperialism, and praised its anti-foreign spirit as "the first full expression of the Chinese national revolution." At the same time, they also sharply criticized the Boxer's blindness in "xenophobia", and the Boxer's defeat was also a historical inevitability. Although this view of them still has some places to be discussed, compared with the reformists and revolutionaries, they have made great progress, and created the method and viewpoint of studying the Boxer Movement under the guidance of Marxism.

And how did the foreign invaders at the time view the movement? At the beginning, Japanese people from all walks of life generally had a low understanding of the Boxer Rebellion, believing it to be a superstitious, ignorant, practical and anti-Christian "mob" that would not cause major problems. Later, in the process of suppressing the Boxer movement, Japan's view of the Boxer changed. The Japanese General Staff Headquarters commented: "The official army and the Boxer stubbornly resisted until they fell, bringing heavy losses to the armies of other countries and putting them in trouble, which was really unexpected. Although they were the enemy, they were still very much lamented ". The Boxer Movement showed the spirit of patriotism and the spirit of sacrifice without fear of violence, so that foreign powers were shocked and realized that "dividing up the matter is actually the worst policy."

Hurd, as a foreigner in China and a witness to the movement, recorded his unique feelings about the Boxer Rebellion and China in writing during the days when he was

trapped in the embassy. Different from the "barbaric" and "thuggish" prejudices of other missionaries, he admitted that the Boxer was "a purely patriotic voluntary movement, whose purpose was to make China strong and strong to realize the Chinese plan". Different from the simple anger of Westerners after being violated, he saw more of the realistic demands behind the Boxer Movement and gave them sympathy and affirmation.

4. The Cultivation Strategy of Historical Interpretation Literacy

Through the above different evaluation and analysis of the Boxer Movement, it can be seen that historical interpretation is diversified and there are many factors affecting historical interpretation. Students' competency of historical interpretation can be cultivated from the following aspects:

4.1. Occupy Historical Materials and Explain History Comprehensively and Objectively

Historical interpretation is the attitude, ability and method of rational analysis and objective evaluation of historical things based on historical materials. At present, in history teaching in high schools, historical materials are the basis for teaching. Objective explanation of history not only means objective narration of the development process of historical things, but also rational analysis and objective evaluation of historical things, which relies on the help of historical materials. Therefore, when teachers cultivate students' competency of historical interpretation, on the one hand, they can tell the story by showing the true and objective historical materials. For example, when evaluating the "Boxer Movement", appropriate historical materials should be selected to guide students to correctly understand this movement. We should not only see its anti-imperialist patriotic tendency, but also realize its limitations such as blind exclusion, ignorance and backwardness, but also understand its role in saving the Chinese nation from extinction. On the other hand, students can also choose historical materials with completely different views on the "Boxer Movement". By strong contrast, they can form a comprehensive understanding of this issue and know that they should look at historical issues objectively. Instead of deliberately avoiding different views, it can promote the improvement of students' historical interpretation ability.

4.2. Group Inquiry Emphasizes Students' Main Body Status

High school history teaching emphasizes that students are the main body, and the competency of historical interpretation should be implemented to the students. Therefore, teachers should take appropriate teaching methods to strengthen students' subject status in the teaching process. The method of group inquiry is more commonly used. The way of grouping can be carried out according to different views of historical interpretation. Take the "Boxer Movement" as an example, it can be evaluated from two main aspects: anti-imperialist patriotism and blind xenophobia. Students are divided into two groups. In order to prove their own point of view, students need to actively consult historical materials, expand their historical knowledge, learn the viewpoints and methods used by relevant scholars to evaluate historical events, and learn to evaluate and explain historical events with historical thinking. Teachers should participate in a timely manner, give guidance

and evaluation to students, and finally summarize the issue. In this way, students' acceptance and effect can be greatly improved, so as to achieve the purpose of improving students' ability of history interpretation.

4.3. Flexible Use, Pay Attention to the Teaching of Methods

The highest goal of the key competency of historical interpretation is to independently explore historical issues, try to verify previous statements or put forward new explanations on the basis of owning historical materials as much as possible. Through the evaluation and analysis of the "Boxer Movement", it can be found that different periods, different subjects and different angles have different interpretations of the same issue, which helps students initially establish a historical consciousness and understand the complexity of history. The historical thinking and methods such as historical materialism, theory from history, independent evidence and not standing on the ground are permeated in the evaluation of the narrated movement. It can help students to have a questioning and critical attitude in the process of learning history in the future, put forward their own views from the questioning, look for objective and true historical materials, analyze with historical materialism, demonstrate their own views, and flexibly apply their historical interpretation ability to other historical issues, so as to truly apply what they have learned.

5. Conclusion

The objective evaluation of historical events is conducive to the cultivation of historical interpretation literacy. Similarly, the improvement of historical interpretation literacy can help students to correctly view historical events. The two complement each other. However, to promote the cultivation of students' historical interpretation literacy is not limited to the evaluation of historical events, there are many important means worth exploring. It is expected that more in-depth research on this issue can be carried out in the future practical teaching, so as to better improve students' thinking quality and thinking ability and highlight the realistic value of history teaching.

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