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## THE IMAGE OF THE SOVIET UNION AND RUSSIA IN CHINESE HISTORY TEXTBOOKS OF THE 2000s (in the perspective of development of Chinese historiography)\*

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The article represents analysis of the image Russia and the Soviet Union have acquired in Chinese history textbooks of 2000s. My analysis of the treatment Russia and the Soviet Union receive in contemporary Chinese history books serves to demonstrate that the content of those texts reflects complex and multidirectional trends in the academic and political environment. In recent decades Chinese political and economical policies aimed at China's integration into the world's economical and political institutions defined images of Western countries. In this context, Russia is a subtle subject, and observing its treatment has revealed some inconsistencies in the current Chinese policies. Ideology urges policymakers to acknowledge the ultimate victory of socialism, while their economic and political ambitions are aimed at integration into the system of global capitalism. Refs 33.

*Keywords:* educational policy in PRC, October revolution, curriculum, educational standard, history school textbooks.

### ОБРАЗ СОВЕТСКОГО СОЮЗА И РОССИИ В КИТАЙСКИХ ШКОЛЬНЫХ УЧЕБНИКАХ 2000-х годов (в свете тенденций развития китайской историографии)

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Статья посвящена анализу образа России и Советского Союза в современных китайских учебниках для старшей и средней школы. Содержание учебников КНР отражает сложные и разнонаправленные тенденции как в академической, так и в политической жизни страны. И в этом отношении Россия оказывается весьма неудобным объектом для интерпретации, выявляющим противоречивость нынешнего курса Китая. Требования идеологической политики вынуждают признавать конечную победу социализма, и это позволяет акцентировать опыт Октябрьской революции и дальнейшего социалистического строительства. Однако реальный внешнеэкономический и политический курс направлен на интеграцию в систему глобального капитализма, что требует весьма критически оценивать социально-исторический опыт Советского Союза. Библиогр. 33 назв.

*Ключевые слова:* образовательная политика КНР, Октябрьская революция, Советская Россия, учебный план, образовательный стандарт, исторические учебники для средней школы.

Issues of teaching history in secondary and higher education of Asian countries, prospects for revision of Social Sciences and Humanities, and civil education development have all become popular research subjects with experts in history of education and comparative pedagogy. In fact, these topics reveal turbulent foreign affairs in the Asia-Pacific region caused by problematic relations between bordering countries with the vision of their placement in the region and the world.

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The discontent between the counties of the Asia-Pacific region, the renewed discussion of disputed territories are accompanied by the so-called 'history wars' and indoctrination of History subject in Chinese, Japanese and Korean schools [1; 2]. In China the topic of foreign relations not only leads to debates over the prospects of history education, but also causes a nationwide public discussion.

When describing socio-ideological profile of today's China, most scholars highlight increased nationalism, claims of Chinese power and might communicated in public discourse and favored by the majority of citizens, especially by junior population. These trends are mainly attributed to the changes in educational policies of today's China, as well as new courses in civil and historical awareness for secondary and higher educational institutions. The content of the courses is defined by the patriotic education campaign currently commissioned by the government. Most scholars consider this campaign the main reason for the popularity of nationalism with the youth [3; 4].

The vast majority of research papers on history education in China, interpretation of milestones in national history and the foreign factor in the history of China view the patriotic education campaign as guidelines for teaching national history [4–6]. However, most of these studies research the images of Japan and the Japanese construed in Chinese text books and do not target images of western countries [7; 8]. This, in turn, urges us to embark upon further analysis of history text books, which could reveal conventional historiographical approaches and pragmatic motives in securing foreign relations, as well as manifestations of propaganda.

This article contends that the images of the Soviet Union and Russia are a demonstrative example of how interpretations and attitudes to historical events or foreign countries can be loosely dependent on patriotic guidelines. This argument is supported by detailed analyses of the image of Russia, which results mostly from pragmatic rather than ideological motives.

The study focuses on Russia, since it is the major country neighboring China with an extended northern border. Disputed border territories have long been a favorite topic in Chinese historiography defining Russia's image with both professional historians and lay Chinese citizens. School textbooks as objects of study prove to be highly informative, as school education is the main source of knowledge about another country for a given nation. The research also involves an analysis of the current history education standards underpinning the textbook for the high school issued by *People's Education* publishing house [9].

### Chinese history education policy under Patriotic Campaign

The study is to be introduced with a brief overview of *Patriotic* campaign, which affects most of the reforms in national academic curriculum of today's China. *Patriotic education* campaign was launched in 1991 after the Tiananmen Square incident and student riots of 1989.

The large-scale advocacy emerged in the aftermath of global and national political events, namely, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist camp, and instances of social unrest in China. The government's concern about their future and the prospects of the chosen social model were later defined in academic articles as the crisis of faith in socialism, Marxism, and the leading party [10, p. 788]. Insufficient ideological work with the young was seen as main drawback to the CCP's policy, which needed to be improved.

The ideological campaign (爱国主义教育活动) started as early as 1991, when the CCP Central Propaganda Department issued a manifest *Circular on Fully Using Cultural Relics to Conduct Education in Patriotism and Revolutionary Traditions* targeting the youth. In 1994, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council jointly issued another document, entitled *Outline on the Implementation of Education in Patriotism*. This Outline sparked an upsurge of patriotic education in the whole society. This instrument stated the main goal of patriotic education, which was defined as foster national spirit and solidarity, as well as catering for respect and pride in the nation [11, p. 289–290].

In brief, the commissioned campaign became a counter measure taken by CCP in view of geopolitical changes, discredited socialist model, as well as an attempt to suggest new unifying idea for their citizens.

The content of patriotic education stipulated in the 1994 Outline was wide-ranging but two themes dominated the campaign. One was Chinese tradition and history and the other was national unity and territorial integrity. The long history of China and Chinese traditional culture held a prominent place in education. Special emphasis was given to the process of Chinese national development characterized by its unceasing efforts to struggle against foreign aggression and oppression. As regards national integrity, nationalist resentment against foreign pressures was instigated. China's foreign relations thus became an important component of education. In line with this effort, numerous examples of interference in China's domestic affairs by hostile foreign forces were provided to the Chinese people as an integral part of patriotic education [11, p. 296–297]. Patriotic agenda also involved supporting activities, visiting 'patriotic sites', such as memorials, local museums, and cultural heritage monuments featuring the country's glorious past<sup>1</sup>.

The main achievement of the patriotic education campaign was the history course reform in high school and college. Indeed, the reform caused a total transformation of the very philosophy of history teaching. The 'class struggle' concept was replaced by the 'patriotic narrative' approach. As a result, the history course rejected the conventional topic of party conflict between the CCP and the Kuomintang in favor of a bigger China-versus-other-nations issue in the 19<sup>th</sup>–20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Scholars have called this change in narrative "from winners to victims". The modern and contemporary history of China was not so much associated with the CCP's success, as it was with the attacks of foreign nations. The campaign of patriotic education suggests a new interpretation of the period between 1849 and 1949 in the history of China, which is formulated as "one hundred years of humiliation" followed by gradual revival [12, p. 97].

According to the previously cited scholars, Chinese history textbooks published since 1990 should describe Western countries' aggressive foreign states as the nation's oppressors responsible for social and economic setbacks. However, the detailed analysis of textbooks has revealed irrelevance of such presumption. The anti-Western rhetoric is less poignant than that aimed at Japan. In fact, only 40 out of 100 patriotic sites in the official list from 1997 feature international conflict history — there were 20 sites dedicated to wars

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<sup>1</sup> The analysis of patriotic education campaign in mass media is presented in Gotelind Müller. Documentary, World History, and National Power in PRC: Global Rise in Chinese Eyes. Routledge, 2013. Самойлов Н. А. Китайский взгляд на всемирную историю (Размышления в связи с выходом в свет монографии: Gotelind Müller. Documentary, World History, and National Power in PRC: Global Rise in Chinese Eyes. Routledge, 2013. 264 p.) // Вестн. С.-Петерб. ун-та. Серия 13. Востоковедение, африканистика. 2015. Вып. 2. С. 136–140.

with Japan and only 9 to the events of the period of the Opium wars and anti-Western protests [13]. Moreover, the above mentioned research into history education in today's China is focused on Japan's image, rather than western countries. These prompt us to reject the common "nationalist discourse" concept, which characterizes history education in Chinese schools in favor of defining a new history standard applied to teaching material.

The existing standard for history education in upper secondary school was introduced alongside renewal of school curricula. The reform launched in late 1990 had been the fourth in the history of the PRC since 1949 and proved to be the most radical inasmuch as it affected the content and structure of curricula, as well as mechanisms of their development, implementation and evaluation. The purpose of the reform was to update the content of education, while adapting it to the demands of globalization and educational industry. The new student-centered training model implied multilateral personal development (素质教育), encouragement of students not only in academic, but also extracurricular activities, creating opportunities for more flexibility in selecting educational strategies [14, p. 13–18].

The introduction of new educational standards for lower secondary school had been officially announced in 2001 and then tested in pilot schools of provincial centers. By 2005 new standards had been introduced to every school [15]. Meanwhile, the standard for upper secondary school underwent revision. This standard was test-launched in 2004 in schools of the four provinces and adopted for all national schools in 2010 [14, p. 18]. The innovations implied student empowerment in choosing elective courses, school admission of elective courses, and a problem-oriented approach to teaching [16, p. 59–68]. The purpose of education was also reformulated and called 'tripartite' (三维目标), as it covered knowledge and skills, processes and methods, feelings and values ("知识与能力, 过程与方法, 情感态度与价值观). The new formula meant a combination of several components, namely: ways of obtaining and mastering knowledge, values and personal goals of students, their attitude to learning. This tripartite purpose applied to every subject.

2003 witnessed the publication of the new history teaching standard for upper secondary school, which listed the above mentioned approaches. The text defined history learning as learning historical facts and the logic of historical development. The emphasis was given to teaching students to analyze, compare and generalize the material. While maintaining the materialist vision of history, attention was paid to developing independent thinking and tolerance to alternative points of view. Besides, history education aimed to demonstrate similarities and differences in developmental models of different societies [9].

The new educational standard laid the foundation for the majority of history textbooks for upper secondary school published in China in recent years. It is worth saying that curriculum reform also affected textbook editing. It resulted in publishing a variety of textbooks for different regions, while maintaining a single standard (一纲多本) [17]. This, in turn, triggered monopolisation of textbook publishing industry, which had been managed by the *People's education publishing house* (人教出版社).

By the mid-2000s, the most widely used textbooks were printed by four publishers, namely: the *People's Education publishing house* (人教社), *People's publishing house* (人民社), *Yuelu Publishing House* (岳麓社) in Prov. Hunan, and *Daxiang publishing house* (大象社) in Prov. Henan. The textbook of *People's Education publishing house* strictly adhered to the single standard [18, p. 26–27].

The new standard for history education in the senior secondary school outlined a number of ideological innovations, such as the drop of conventional class struggle rhetoric, the idea of association between Chinese and world histories. These alterations to presenting historical material are of vital importance, since the revised interpretation of historical process set a somewhat different image of the western countries, their role in world history and the history of China.

### Chinese historiography trends in the 2000's

The above mentioned changes of the historical standard had an immediate impact on major trends in Chinese historical research. The reform and indulgence resulted in searching for new approaches towards understanding the process of history. Among ideological and theoretical sources used for the revision of historical materialism were American and European studies, which later laid the basis for modern historiographic trend called "global history" [19, p. 491–511; 20, p. 475–495]. Having become an independent school in 1990–2000, *Global history* sought to go beyond traditional methodology, which considered historical process from the national societies' perspective. In the analysis of historical events the emphasis was now given to discovering links between different world regions regardless of national and other identities. Local developments were considered from the global perspective as reflecting common trends while preserving local uniqueness [21, c. 79–81].

Chinese historians of 1980–1990 first learnt about western historiography through translated classical works by W.H. McNeil *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community* (1963), G. Barraclough *History in a Changing World* (1955), L. S. Stavrianos *Global History* (1970). Chinese scholars became interested in these studies and the emerging *Global history* school because the western framework complied with that of Chinese counterparts. The globalist approach to world history did not override the importance of historical materialism, which certainly facilitated the spread of "global history" in China. In addition, the "global historians" criticized the principle of Eurocentrism and put forward a new vision of world history regional centers. This could not but attract historians of the PRC. Finally, the new historiographical paradigm helped Chinese historians to fulfill the most challenging task, which was the development of methodological tools for studying globalization [19, p. 499–500].

The most prominent Chinese historian who contributed to the popularization of "global history" in the 1990s was Prof. Wu Yujin (吴于廑), (1913–1993), a graduate of Harvard having a professorship at the Wuhan University. He authored and co-authored a number of major academic papers and textbooks on the world history [22; 23, p. 29–32]. In modern Chinese historiography Professor Wu Yujin is known as the author of the acclaimed "integrated world history" concept (整体世界史观) [24]. At the core of this concept lay the idea of an "integrated global system" (整体世界体系). In his original thesis Wu Yujin relied on Marx's statement about the special conditions for world history development, a gradual transformation of history into world history. In *German Ideology* Marx wrote that increasing cooperation between the societies, improved methods of production as well as emerging division of labor between nations could allow us to overcome the initial reticence of communities, so that a history would become the world history [25, c. 22].

According to Wu Yujin, world history is more than a summation of national histories. Therefore, it requires a special methodology aimed at identifying trans-border processes and trends occurring across national and regional boundaries. The history itself develops both vertically and horizontally. The vertical axis indicates the historical development of productive forces, the gradual change of production mode. The horizontal axis stands for the gradual expansion of the contact area and interaction of the initially isolated communities, which, in turn, forces these communities to establish close relationships and form a relatively unified whole. Within this model world history is a certain stage in the historical development characterized by the establishment of interactions between societies on a global scale [24, p. 52; 26, p. 329–331].

According to Chinese historians, the defining role in historical development belongs to production mode, the efficiency of productive forces. This allows us to suggest a time scale for the world history divided into three periods, namely: ancient time (古代), modern time (近代) and contemporary time (现代). Ancient time is associated primarily with the rise of the agricultural society and gradual integration of former nomadic communities [24].

The XV–XVI centuries became the turning point in global historical development that marked the beginning of the new era. 1500 witnessed geographical discoveries that nullified the isolation of nations. It was characterized by emerging capitalistic production mode, which led to the industrial revolution and the rise of industrial society. The turn of XV–XVI centuries is associated with the beginning of “the world history”. An “integrated world system” (整体世界体系) with the industrial society at the core has been gradually formed since then [24, p. 55]. The emphasis has been given to the horizontal axis of historical development, which stands for the expansion of capitalism and industrial society to different parts of the world, as well as the degree of their reception.

One of the problems facing Prof. Wu Yujin and the next generation of history scholars was fitting the topic of socialist development within the concept of the global capitalism. Wu Yujin saw the 20th century history as a conflict between the capitalist and socialist models. Their rivalry also implied mutual influence and mutual deterrence. The collapse of socialism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe meant new prospects for the expansion of capitalist society. However, this did not lead to abandoning the socialist model of development, which had been adopted by developing countries. The somewhat paradoxical conclusion of the historian said that socialism was able to survive expansion of capitalism [24, p. 56].

The prospects of a particular model are still a challenge for Chinese historians. Their interpretation is largely dependent on ideological considerations. Therefore, scientists try to use neutral language and call the spread of capitalism the history of integration and globalization. Meanwhile, the more definite official position claims that capitalism will fail to resolve the internal contradictions and the world history development will lead to the adoption of socialism [26, p. 493–494].

Wu Yujin's concept, the summary of which was given in the article, has not lost its academic relevance. It has become a theoretical milestone in the development of the so-called “global history”, which attracts many contemporary Chinese historians. In fact, the concept of “global history” receives political and ideological support today. In May 2016 there was a special meeting dedicated to prospects of philosophical and social Sciences in China, where Chinese President Xi Jinping called for the development of



philosophical and social scientific system with Chinese characteristics (中国特色哲学社会科学) [27]. The academic debate following this event proves that ideas of Wu Yujin and other scholars working within the “global history” framework are relevant. The concept of “world history” (世界史体系) is being considered as a national product of Chinese historical science [28].

New theoretical and methodological approaches in the historiography have not only become applicable to academic research but also defined history teaching both in higher professional education and schools. The fundamental provisions of “global history” have had a direct influence on the development of history research. These new trends have been reflected in the above-mentioned 2003 standard for history subject in upper secondary school [29, p. 78; 30, p. 141–142].

As far as innovations to history education in upper secondary school are concerned, the concept of history development has undergone a total revision with the idea of class struggle blending into the background. History is conceptualized as a common process involving all regions of the world. The fundamental principles for the standard became the idea of interconnectedness of different societies, the mutual influence of Chinese and world history (中外合編), the continuity of the basic historical trends, the relation of the past with the present — 貫通古今 [29, p. 78; 30, p. 141–142].

As a result, when delivering historical material, the focus has been made on identifying similar features and trends. The history of China is seen as an integral part of world history. Unlike previous standards, the materials for both world and Chinese histories are proportionally represented.

The major innovation to the new standard was also a different presentation of the educational material on key cross-cutting topics covering different periods in the history of societies. In addition, an attempt was made to give up on interpreting history as a succession of political events. In fact, new sizeable sections on economic and cultural history were added.

The history course was divided into compulsory and elective subjects. The former covered twenty-five topics in three units (模塊), namely: politics, economy and culture. Political section included ten topics on the political history of China and Western countries since ancient times till today, the rise and development of socialism, foreign policy contacts of the PRC, and the system of international relations. Economical section consists of eight topics related to different stages in economic development of China up to modernity, issues associated with the expansion of capitalism and socialism in Western countries and Russia, distinguishing features of economic globalization. Cultural section involves eight topics describing culture and science trends in China and the West.

Compulsory subjects follow the chronology of Chinese and world history. By contrast, elective subjects cover separate cross-cutting topics featuring different countries and regions. The elective set involves six major cross-cutting topics, which reveal the correlations between Chinese and foreign influence as well as those between ancient and contemporary factor. The six topics are the world experience of reforms, theory and practice of democracy, war and peace in the twentieth century, important personalities of world and Chinese history, mysteries (lost civilizations), the world's cultural heritage.

The selection of topics for both compulsory and elective sets of subjects is noteworthy. The developers of the standard focused on the following issues, namely: the democratic model, the rise of capitalism and industrial society in the XV–XVI centuries,

socialist experience, the new multipolar system of international relations, world's reforms experience. In fact, these topics on the world and Chinese history are most frequent in the current political and public discourse of China reflected in corresponding slogans and programs, such as China's integration into the world economy, globalization and China's place in the global world, the position of China in the multipolar world, the idea of rule by the law and democratization, the role of scientific and technical progress.

Despite a number of fundamental innovations approved in 2003, the standard for history retains some features inherited from the previous versions. Compulsory subjects in political, economical and cultural sections present Chinese history ahead of world history. The issues of Chinese and world history are delivered separately and do not correspond chronologically. The critique of Eurocentrism has become one of the recurring topics in modern Chinese historiography. Meanwhile, the priority is given to the world history, which is viewed as a set of British, French, German, American and Russian histories. The only Asian country receiving special attention is Japan.

History and issues of Eastern Europe, countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America are only mentioned in regard to anti-colonial struggle, modern multi-polar world, and rapidly developing "third world". The history of Ancient Eastern civilizations, indigenous cultures of America are discussed in the elective part under the titles *Mysteries of History* and *World Cultural Heritage*. This, in our opinion, inhibits understanding of non-European history reducing it to fairy-tale stories.

As already mentioned, innovations in historiography and history education are fundamental to the analysis of European countries and Russia's images in contemporary Chinese textbooks for senior high school. This topic has attracted Chinese researchers. While textbooks issued in 1980–1990 communicated a negative vision of Western nations as colonialists and exploiters, those published in 2000 give a neutral and somewhat positive assessment. Western countries are capitalist powers, whose economic development resulted in the colonization of other nations, but at the same time contributed to world economic and political relations, as well as the world capitalist system [31, p. 19].

As far as the history of world capitalism is concerned, the images of Russia and the Soviet Union seem to be particularly interesting. Innovations in the historiography promote interpretations of Russian history in Chinese textbooks in order to reveal how the image of a country fits into the world capitalism concept.

### Images of Russia/the Soviet Union in the history textbook of the 2000s

Next, we will analyze basic characteristics of Russia's/the Soviet Union's image in the history textbook for upper secondary school published by *People's education*. This textbook was chosen because it fully complied with the standard requirements and was commonly adopted. Besides, today it is the latest edition of a history textbook that is used nationwide.

The coverage of Soviet and Russian history is mainly concerned with four main topics, which are the reform in the second half of the XIX century and the abolition of serfdom, the October revolution, the experience of socialist political and economic system, confrontation with the United States during the cold war. Moreover, the account of reforms under Alexander II together with a brief insight into the history of earlier periods



and a more detailed overview of the country's history since the eighteenth century are attributed to the elective part dedicated to reform movements in the world's history.

A special attention should be given to the territorial issue between Russia and China, the so-called territorial acquisitions of Russia in the second half of the XIX century. This topic is addressed in Chinese modern history section focusing on Opium wars and the clash of Qing China with the West. For example, page 53, which recollects the events of the second opium war, says that "the U.S. and Russia benefited by forcing the Qing government to sign disadvantageous treaties. The main beneficiary of the two was Russia, which occupied most of the northern lands of China" [32, p. 53]. It should be noted that this topical subject is neutrally covered, especially when compared with earlier editions of textbooks. In the textbooks published in 1980 and 1991 Russia was characterized as the state leading an aggressive foreign policy aimed at territorial expansion. The text emphasized Russian territorial ambitions at the expense of China in the Far East and the military occupation of the Ili region in the West [31, p. 30–31]. We can assume that this issue once rooted in Chinese modern historiography of Russian-Chinese relations has lost its topicality in view of improved relations between the two countries and development of their partnership<sup>2</sup>.

The overview of Russian and Soviet history in the compulsory part of the course opens with a Chapter on the October revolution of 1917 following the section dedicated to the rise of Marxism in Europe. Thus, the events of 1917 can be interpreted as a new stage in the development of Marxism illustrative to its fundamental principles. Interestingly, the presentation of those events is given very succinctly and concisely. The language itself is stripped of strong evaluative statements typical of earlier issues in of 1980–1990, in which the revolution was characterized as "an example of success for the international proletariat marking the beginning of a new era" [30, p. 33]. The 2007 textbook focuses on analyzing causes of the revolution and its historical significance. The main reason for the revolution is seen in Russia's economic inferiority to the more developed capitalist countries accompanied by the devastating First World War campaign. Social unrest turned the country into the weakest link in the chain of imperialism and made revolution inevitable [32, p. 88].

According to the editors of the textbook, the 1917 revolution made a historical impact because it was the first attempt to create a socialist state with a new development path for Russia. At the same time, the revolution revealed flaws in the capitalist world system, and outlined factors for the socialist movement, anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle [32, p. 91].

Further coverage of Soviet history focuses on the socialist economic model; therefore, these sections are included in the economic unit of the history course. The material is presented in a way that the historical development of economy of the USSR could serve as a lesson to other socialist societies. In the light of economic reforms starting with the NEP in 1920s and ending with the 1980s reforms, it is emphasized that the Soviet model was innovative. Therefore, the Soviet leader had to develop a course of reforms by trial and error. However, despite all achievements, the Soviet model had certain drawbacks, such as overcentralization, excessive emphasis on heavy and defense industries. As a result,

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<sup>2</sup> But at the same time we need to note, that Chinese territory losses to Russia are carefully observed in junior secondary school with the exact dates of Russia's major acquisitions and the territories marked on supplementary maps.

agriculture and light industry experienced heavy losses, the welfare of the population also suffered negative consequences. The main detriment to the Soviet model was its rigidity. The editors of the textbook buttressed this thesis with Deng Xiaoping's quotation saying that in the later stages of its development the Soviet model became retarded [33, p. 98–101].

When economical and political reforms of the late 1980s failed, it led to the Soviet Union's collapse. Meanwhile, according to the editors, the Soviet experience taught us a valuable historical lesson, and the Soviet Union's collapse instigated the search for new ways to implement the socialist model [33, p. 94].

Finally, it should be noted that the account of Russian history is literally reduced to the Soviet experience of socialism. This material is meant to illustrate a socialist revolution attempt, the development of the socialist socio-economic model. However, the main purpose is to identify those historical lessons that can be taken up in other countries committed to the socialist path. The history of contemporary Russia is hardly outlined at all. The section dedicated to the current international situation only mentions Russia as the successor to the Soviet Union and one of the centers of a multipolar world. The authors of the textbook noted that the unfolding economic reforms strengthened the country's international position [32, p. 128–129]. However, the economic unit and sections on economic integration and globalization state that history development is aimed at further global integration and globalization. In this respect the 20<sup>th</sup> century events, such as the cold war and the confrontation between the capitalist and socialist models have significantly slowed the integration. By contrast, the collapse of the bipolar world, and the popularity of market reforms contributed significantly to globalization trends in economy resulting in new economic and trade relations.

This assessment of political and economic developments in the policies of the Soviet Union and world economic integration manifested a certain ambivalence inherent in Chinese historiography, determined by political and ideological features of the model. As already mentioned, Chinese historians took up the global history concept and defined global integration and establishment of the capitalist world system as the main historical development. Yet, they claimed that the capitalist system could not cope with internal contradictions and would inevitably give place to the socialist model. This ambiguity is seen also in the evaluation of the previous century given in the textbook. Thus, it is necessary to study the mistakes of the Soviet experience because the Soviet Union's collapse does not mean rejection of the socialist model. However, the very coexistence of the two systems has become an obstacle to proper world history development, which is the establishment of the world capitalist system.

Our analysis of Russia's/the Soviet Union's image in contemporary history books of China serves to demonstrate that the content of these texts reflects complex and multidirectional trends in the academic and political environment. In recent decades, and the 2000s in particular, the image of Western countries was defined by Chinese political and economical policies aimed at its integration into the world economical and political institutions. In this respect, Russia is a subtle subject, the treatment of which reveals some inconsistencies in current policies of China. Ideology urged policymakers to acknowledge the ultimate victory of socialism, while their economic and political ambitions were aimed at integration into the system of global capitalism.

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