

## **The Recovery and Difficulties of Higher Education in Nanjing during the Occupied Period (1938-1945)**

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### **Abstract**

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*After the establishment of the National Government of Nanjing in 1927, the education of Nanjing had been rapidly developed, and a number of colleges and universities had been built and developed, and the status of higher education in Nanjing is second to none in China. The Nanjing Massacre completely destroyed Nanjing's education, and eight public and private colleges and universities were moved west to Sichuan and Chongqing, while most of the school campuses were bombed, looted and burned by the Japanese army. After the establishment of the puppet National Government headed by Wang Jingwei, they tried to restore higher education in Nanjing and planned to establish a university in Nanjing. After the establishment of the Wang puppet regime, the puppet Ministry of Education restored National Central University in Nanjing, and established three private colleges and universities to promote slavish education, but the effect was not ideal, and gradually fell into trouble.*

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**Keywords:** occupied period, Nanjing, higher schools, dilemma.

### **1. Introduction**

In 1938, the Puppet Nanjing Reform Government enacted *the Law on Colleges and Universities* to prepare for the establishment of one university in Nanjing at the end of that year. The provisional name was National Chinese University. In December, the puppet Ministry of Education set up the Preparatory Office of National Chinese University, and later changed the name of the school to National Nanjing University due to the opposition of the Japanese side, and planned to open preparatory and normal colleges first. However, due to the Nanjing Massacre, which seriously damaged the buildings, teaching equipment, books and other facilities of the original universities in Nanjing, most of the teachers moved west, the university campus was occupied by the Japanese army, and the puppet regime was seriously insufficient in funding, which led to the continuous revision of the preparatory plan, the continuous reduction of the scale of the school, and the establishment time was repeatedly postponed. By the autumn of 1939, the puppet Ministry of Education still had not solved the problems of funding and school buildings. Eventually, the plan of National Nanjing University was aborted.

On April 9, 1940, the second meeting of the Executive Yuan of the Wang Puppet Government first made the decision to restore the National Central University and set up the Preparatory Committee for the Central University. Subsequently, the puppet Ministry of Education allocated a temporary fund of 400,000 yuan and a regular fund of 680,000 yuan for the construction of university. On July 9, 1940, the Wang puppet government officially appointed Fan Zhongyun as president of Central University and Qian Weizong as vice president to carry out the work of enrollment and construction of the university, choosing the site of the former Central Political College in the Hongzhilang of Jianye Road as the site. In that year, the University enrolled 674 freshmen in seven cities, including Nanjing, Peiping, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan, Hangzhou and Suzhou. The school officially opened in September of that year.

In the same year, Jiang Hongjie founded a private Anhui University in Baixia Road, with a small class of 14 faculty members and 36 students. At this point, higher education began to recover somewhat after the Nanjing Massacre.

After 1941, the number of students enrolled at the puppet National Central University increased every year. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Japanese authorities took over the site of Jinling University on Tianjin Road. In August of the following year, the puppet National Central University moved from Jianye Road to the site, and the building on Jianye Road was converted into an affiliated experimental primary and secondary school. In August 1942, the Chinese Public School was re-established in Nanjing. The school rented the former Legislative Yuan Street site as a campus, including the college section and high school. There were Chinese, law and business departments in college, the first-year enrollment of more than 100 people. In the autumn of the same year, Jiang Hongjie moved the former Private Anhui University located in Baixia Road to No. 109 Shigu Road and renamed it Private Southern University. In the same year, Chen Ruizhi set up Private Jiancun Agricultural College in Xiuhua Lane, with 63 students and 26 faculty members. By the end of 1942, there were four colleges and universities in Nanjing, with 279 staff and 1,150 students. The re-establishment of private schools in Nanjing, such as the Private Southern University and China Public School, expanded the scale of higher education in Nanjing after the massacre to some extent.

Although higher education after the Nanjing Massacre had developed to a certain extent, except for Wang Puppet Central University, the two private universities are small in scale, with fewer teachers and students, and had little influence in the social and educational circles. No students graduated from the college of China Public School even until the fall of Wang Puppet regime. The Puppet Central University which was the only public comprehensive university, could be described as a relatively complete university.

## **2. The situation of teachers and students**

In August 1940, the puppet Central University began to enroll students in seven cities, including Nanjing, Peiping, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Wuhan and so on, and the enrollment categories were divided into formal students, trial students, audit students and special students. The university stipulated that students must be guaranteed by a guarantor for admission, requiring the guarantor to have a proper job, live in Nanjing, and have a certain economic strength, and the cost of students during the school, if there is a default, the guarantor was responsible for it, which made a large number of poor children were blocked out of the university gate. In addition, there were fewer opportunities for scholarships, grants and work students, which was far less than the number of students who could not meet the school. Transfer or dropout rates were high, with an average student turnover rate of 10 to 15 percent per academic year. The university had two graduates: 189 undergraduate graduates in 1944 and 42 graduates in normal, agriculture and art. There were 227 graduates in 1945, and 11 graduates majored in art.

The puppet Central University was the largest university in Nanjing after the massacre, its disciplines were relatively complete, and the number of students in Nanjing accounts for the majority of all college students. Nanjing also had two private universities. Southern University has 537 graduates and junior college students in 1945, mainly majoring in liberal arts. The college of China Public School was founded late, and no students had completed their studies until the victory of the Anti-Japanese War, so there were no graduates. After the Nanjing Massacre, there were only about 500 college graduates, and the vast majority of them were graduates of the puppet Central University.

Before the Japanese occupation of Nanjing, the National Central University and other public and private colleges and universities had been moved west with the National Government, a large number of outstanding teachers, professors and scholars also moved west with the school. After the Nanjing Massacre, the resources of college teachers in Nanjing were extremely scarce. In the early days of the establishment of the puppet Central University, there were only 23 full and associate professors, 29 lecturers, and three teaching assistants (including two Japanese teachers). With the expansion of the scale of the school, the faculty of the university had developed to a certain extent, with the number of full and associate professors reaching 110 and 39 lecturers (including 15 Japanese teachers and one German teacher). Because of poor management, teacher mobility was large, and employment problems often appeared. Since the outbreak of the Pacific War, Japan had stepped up efforts to extract war resources from China, and educational funding had become increasingly tight.

Although professors at puppet Central University are paid a high salary, with a monthly salary of 400 to 600 yuan, the former Central University pays professors a monthly salary of 500 to 600 yuan, but due to the serious inflation in Nanjing, the price of a Western language book was at least 30 to 40 yuan. Most of them were more than 100 yuan, and the professor's salary was not only to buy books and other scientific research materials, but also to maintain the family life was difficult.

The number of students, including students and graduates, accounted for more than half of all the graduates of colleges and universities in Nanjing at that time, while the graduates of colleges and universities in Nanjing at that time were mostly liberal arts majors, business, law and other liberal arts majors, and relatively few science and engineering graduates, and due to war, economy and other reasons, relatively few students received higher education, and the loss of students was relatively serious, and only more than 500 graduates. In order to cater to the Japanese authorities, the Wang puppet government hired Japanese teachers in the puppet Central University. However, due to economic difficulties, insufficient investment in higher education and poor educational administration, the shortage of teachers in Nanjing universities and colleges resulted in low salaries for teachers and even unable to meet the needs of life. It was more difficult to carry out scientific research and the loss of university teachers was more serious. After the Nanjing Massacre, the work, study and living conditions of college teachers and students were more difficult, and there was a big gap compared with the period of the National Government..

### 3. The situation of teaching

The Puppet Central University basically followed the management system of the Central University of the National Government. The university was led by the president, and the council was responsible for the formulation of school regulations. There are administrative organs such as the General Affairs Office, the Teaching Affairs Office, the Discipline Office and the Secretariat, and there were affiliated experimental schools and primary schools. The faculties of the puppet Central University include: Faculty of Science and Technology (Departments of civil engineering, chemical engineering, electrical and mechanical engineering, mathematics and science); Faculty of Arts (Departments of Chinese, Foreign Languages and History); The Faculty of Education (Department of Education, Art, Teacher Training and Art); School of Law and Business (Departments of Politics, economics, law and business); The Faculty of Medicine (Department of medicine); School of Agriculture (Department of agriculture and the specialized agriculture), etc.. It had a basic undergraduate education of four years, a medical college of five years, and a junior college of two years.

The curriculum basically followed the curriculum system of the Central University of the National Government, which mainly included university-level common compulsory courses and school-level common compulsory courses, as well as department major courses and elective courses, while adding Japanese as a compulsory course and canceling the Party lesson. Freshman students would major in compulsory courses in their respective colleges, and sophomore students would start to set up departmental major courses and elective courses. The compulsory courses mainly include Chinese, Japanese, English, general history of China, physical education, military training and spiritual instruction.

In addition to basic courses, Puppet Central University also paid more attention to students' practical teaching and scientific research. Although the school was short of funds, in order to meet the experimental needs of students, it had built 20 laboratories for the school of science and technology, and organized students to go to factories and other internships. The school of Agriculture had a farm for students to practice; Most of the courses of the medical school invited the deans and directors of off-campus hospitals to teach, and the students practice in Tongrenhui hospital and epidemic prevention station; The School of Law regularly organized students to attend sessions of the puppet High Court and District Court, and used the court as a place for students to practice. Each department generally set up a variety of research associations, paid more attention to scientific research, the School of literature had a literature and history society, teachers and students often held seminars after class; The School of Education had set up the Education Research Institute, and the students of the Department of Education also conduct special research on early childhood education, and carried out social surveys and wrote reports for many times; The Political Society was established by the Law School; The Institute of Technology had also set up a variety of societies, and often invited famous experts and scholars inside and outside the school to make academic reports, and also organized students' research experiences to be written into special wall journals; The School of Agriculture set up the Agronomy Society and founded the monthly magazine *Nong Heng*.

In order to strengthen the so-called legitimacy and promote the friendship between China and Japan, the Wang puppet regime ordered the puppet Central University to organize students to carry out various commemorative and cultural exchange activities. The commemorative activities organized by the Wang Puppet regime were quite different from those of the National Government. In addition, the university also arranged a spiritual speech activity at 6 a.m. every Monday to publicize the so-called China-Japan friendship and Japan's Greater East Asia doctrine to students. The puppet Central University's foreign cultural exchanges were mainly based on exchanges with Japanese universities, and Publicity Department of Wang puppet regime also showed a series of films titled Japanese Cultural Industry at the school.

#### 4. Conclusion

The puppet Central University basically followed the administrative system, teaching system and curriculum of the Central University of the National Government before the Nanjing Massacre. Although faced with the difficulty of insufficient funds, it still set up research institutes, laboratories and other scientific research institutions in each department, which could be seen that the puppet Central University attached more importance to university scientific research. The Wang puppet regime set up Japanese courses in the puppet Central University, and invited Japanese professors to give lectures in the name of cultural exchange, etc., which reflected Wang Puppet's tendency to cater to the Japan and try to carry out cultural brainwashing among college students in Nanjing.

#### 5. Acknowledgement

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