

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

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### **Abstract**

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*The Nanjing Massacre completely destroyed the education of Nanjing, most of the primary and secondary schools in Nanjing were closed, and most of the campuses were bombed, looted and burned by the Japanese army. After that, the puppet regime began to restore local education, rebuilding some middle and primary schools in Nanjing, and promoting slavish education, but the effect was not ideal, and gradually fell into trouble.*

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**Keywords:** occupied period, Nanjing, primary and secondary schools, dilemma

### **1. Introduction**

According to the National government's investigation of the educational work of the puppet regime in Nanjing, we can see that the education of Nanjing had recovered to a certain extent after the massacre, but it was still far below the pre-war level in all aspects. In Nanjing, there were three secondary schools under the management of the puppet Ministry of Education, including the puppet National normal school, the puppet National model male school, and the puppet National model female school. There were two schools belonging to the puppet National Central University, including the male school and the female school. The puppet Nanjing Education Bureau managed nine middle schools. In terms of primary schools, there were 70 primary schools including five private primary schools, six simple primary schools and 109 old-style private schools under the jurisdiction of the puppet Education Bureau. Social education included 22 schools of the people, three education halls of the people and one library of the people.

In terms of students, Nanjing has about 4,000 old-style private school students, more than 30,000 primary school students, and nearly 6,000 middle school students. Many excellent teachers fled to avoid the war before the fall of Nanjing and the casualties of teachers caused by the Nanjing Massacre, resulting in a small number of qualified teachers in Nanjing, accounting for less than half of the total number of teachers, and the puppet Education Bureau in order to increase teachers, opened teacher training courses, etc. But it didn't work. Among primary and secondary school teachers, in order to promote pro-Japanese education and teach students of primary and secondary school Japanese language and culture, there are many Japanese teachers in Nanjing, and they also carried out propaganda and supervision work. At that time, female teachers accounted for the majority of teaching staff in Nanjing, teachers' salaries were limited, it was difficult to maintain a living, many teachers changed to other jobs, and some teachers did not want to work for the puppet regime, waiting for the opportunity to go to the Rear Area, the teachers could not escape because of family and other reasons had unstable emotion mostly.

After Nanjing Massacre, the number of primary and secondary schools, the number of classes, the number of teachers and the number of students increased every year to a certain extent. The primary and secondary education in Nanjing was restored to a certain extent after the massacre, but there was a big gap between the number of teachers and students, the quality of teachers and the quality of teaching and other aspects compared with the pre-war Nanjing. In order to compete with the National Government for legitimacy, the Wang puppet regime re-edited textbooks and adopted tough measures to promote education. In order to achieve the pro-Japanese goal, the content of pro-Japanese education was increased and the Japanese language education was strengthened in an attempt to weaken and eliminate the resistance consciousness of the Nanjing people. After 1943, due to the increasingly tight education funds, the tuition fees of primary and secondary schools in Nanjing increased year by year under the rule of Wang puppet regime in order to increase education income, which was difficult for ordinary families in Nanjing at that time, resulting in more children out of school in society.

## 2. The dilemma of teachers

The Nanjing Massacre had brought comprehensive and serious damage to the education of Nanjing, and teachers are one of the most important links in the education. The teachers in Nanjing had been severely shrunk due to the Japanese massacre, and many excellent teachers had been killed or injured or have fled Nanjing, so the quantity and quality of teachers in Nanjing were very weak. After that, the puppet regime tried to restore primary and secondary education in Nanjing.

At that time, the teachers' education background of Nanjing primary schools were relatively low, most of them graduated from the county normal school and simple normal school, lack of sufficient professional knowledge, most of them did not pass the teacher qualification certification of the education bureau, teaching level was not high, they were said to be non-qualified teachers, but at that time, its proportion exceeded one-third of the total number of teachers. After Nanjing Massacre, the number of college students was very small, which made the number of middle school teachers seriously insufficient, and the teaching level was uneven. Due to the serious shortage of primary and secondary school teachers, the quality of teachers and the level of teaching had been greatly affected. Some school principals lower the threshold because of teacher recruitment difficulties, recruit social personnel, and even housewives as teachers, although these personnel had received certain education, but usually because of the housework, there was still a big gap between their level and teachers, they were recruited as teachers mostly for fun.

The newly built and restored schools of the puppet regime were difficult to operate and small in scale due to the lack of funds and teachers. At that time, due to the influence of the war, the price of social commodities had increased by dozens of times compared with the pre-war, but the salary of teachers had not increased, and because of the lack of education funds of the puppet regime, there was a situation of unpaid teachers' salaries, which caused difficulties to the basic life of teachers. According to the prices of the society at that time, people needed 70-80 yuan per person per month to meet their food and clothing, and many primary school teachers' monthly food expenses were only 20-50 yuan, and their life was extremely stressful because of their low salaries. This situation made many teachers depressed, and even some teachers in order to live on the road of robbery. The low salary of teachers led to the shortage of teachers and the decline of teaching quality, and the situation of teachers quitting was common.

In view of the situation of low salary, insufficient quantity and low quality of primary and secondary school teachers in Nanjing, the salary level of primary and secondary school teachers in Nanjing had been improved after adjustment, and was barely close to the average living standard of society. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, the education funds of the Wang puppet regime were further reduced, and the treatment of primary and secondary school teachers in Nanjing was also low, and now it was worse, and the limited salary increase was soon offset by the continuous rising inflation, and the life was difficult and difficult to make ends meet, many people taught during the day and work hard at night to supplement the family.

In order to solve the problem of shortage of teachers, the puppet Nanjing Education Bureau set up temporary teacher cultivation centers and simple normal schools in 1938, and formulated the *Registration Measures for unemployed teachers in secondary Schools* at the end of 1940, organized the registration of unemployed teachers, and formulated the *Registration Measures for unemployed teachers in secondary Schools*. However, these methods are limited by reality and had not been effectively promoted.

There were still many unqualified teachers in primary and secondary schools in Nanjing. Moreover, because teachers' salaries were too low and their lives were difficult, many teachers were physically weak due to overwork and have no energy to teach, resulting in a decline in teaching quality. More teachers choose to find another career, which made the shortage of primary and secondary school teachers more serious, and had a very adverse impact on the primary and secondary school education in Nanjing.

### **3. The situation of teaching**

After the massacre, the Nanjing Education Department was under the rule of the puppet regime supported by Japan, and the educational policies of the Nanjing National Government had been destroyed and abandoned by the Japanese puppet government. The puppet regime first demanded that primary and secondary education absolutely prohibit the appearance of communist and other related content, and completely cut off the ideological connection between students and the National Government and the Communist Party. After that, the educational policy of peace, anti-communism and nation-building was clearly put forward. Under this background, the puppet Nanjing Education Bureau formulated educational policies and guidelines in line with the interests of Wang puppet regime. First of all, the puppet education bureau demanded to strengthen the ideological control of teachers and students in primary and secondary schools. The principals of primary and secondary schools in Nanjing were required to carry out good ideological guidance to the students and staff regularly, so that they would support the leaders, in order to achieve the purpose of peaceful anti-communist nation-building. Secondly, promulgating specific educational policies to guide primary and secondary school students. The policy required primary school students to develop the spirit of peace and goodwill; the ability to use both hands and brains to produce employment; and the virtues of loyalty, honesty, decency and shame.

The curriculum and teaching materials of primary and secondary schools during the period of the National Government were also abandoned by the puppet regime, and the puppet education bureau demanded that the curriculum and teaching materials meet its ruling interests. According to the instructions, the Nanjing Education Bureau strengthened the ideological education courses in primary and secondary schools, requiring all kinds of schools in Nanjing to open the so-called civic education and Party principles courses; In addition, students were required to read the classics of ancient Chinese Confucianism in order to cultivate the so-called benevolence and Kingly way. In terms of teaching materials, the puppet education bureau conducted a lot of review and modification of the teaching materials of the original National Government, such as deleting the contents of the Japanese pirates' harassment of China's coastal areas in the Ming Dynasty, the Japanese occupation of Taiwan in the Qing Dynasty, and the Sino-Japanese War. In geography textbooks, Chinese territories such as Taiwan and Penghu were converted into Japanese territory, and Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning provinces in northeast China were classified as Manchukuo. Many primary and secondary school teachers in Nanjing, especially teachers of Chinese, history and geography, prefer to use their own teaching handouts rather than use national textbooks. Although the puppet education bureau had made great efforts to force sales, the effect was still not ideal, and even the operating funds of the printing company had been greatly affected. Because of the lack of materials in Nanjing, there was not enough paper to print the national textbook, which could not ensure that each student had one book.

An important feature of primary and secondary education in Nanjing after the massacre was the inclusion of Japanese courses. At the beginning of 1939, the Japanese army asked the Education Department of the puppet Nanjing Municipal Government to order all primary and secondary schools in Nanjing to open Japanese courses, which were equivalent to Chinese courses. In all kinds of primary and secondary school examinations, the Japanese test was also listed as a compulsory subject, and those who failed the Japanese test could not enter or graduate. Japanese elements were also included in music and physical education programs. The puppet Nanjing Education Bureau also organized a Japanese research association, employing experienced Japanese teachers as consultants, meeting once every two weeks, and Japanese teachers took turns to guide Japanese teaching in primary and secondary schools.

#### 4. Conclusion

The great pain brought to the people of Nanjing by the Nanjing Massacre would be lasting and indelible. For the sake of its long-term rule, the Japanese authorities hid the fact of the massacre and tried to dilute the pain of the Nanjing people in the short term. They made the puppet education bureau of Nanjing force the teaching of Japanese courses in primary and secondary schools, and tried to train and edify Japanese thinking and Japanese culture among the teenagers who were not yet mature in cognition, so as to dilute the thinking habits of students in Mandarin and make them gradually accept Japanese values and cultural concepts, and be closed to Japan psychologically and spiritually. In order to emphasize its legitimacy, the Nanjing puppet regime issued a series of educational guidelines and policies, controlled and supervised the thoughts of primary and secondary school students in Nanjing, and tried to completely break off the connection between teachers and students of primary and secondary school and the Nanjing National Government and the Communist Party of China in spirit. They reviewed, revised and re-edit the curriculum, textbooks in order to strengthen the sense of identity of primary and secondary school students to the puppet regime, dilute their sense of resistance; At the same time, the idea of Sino-Japanese rapprochement was added to the educational policy, curriculum and textbooks to cater to Japan and try to get long-term support from the Japanese authorities.

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