



Intersecting War, Education and Politics: Chinese Higher Education Policy during the Anti-Japanese War, 1931–1945

XIANGKUN SHI¹

*CHOO CHIN LOW²

¹School of Marxism, North China University of Science and Technology, Hebei, China

²History Section, School of Distance Education, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 USM, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia

*Corresponding author: lowc@usm.my

Published online: 31 October 2025

To cite this article: Xiangkun Shi and Choo Chin Low. 2025. Intersecting war, education and politics: Chinese higher education policy during the Anti-Japanese War, 1931–1945. *KEMANUSIAAN the Asian Journal of Humanities* 32(2): 41–62. <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2025.32.2.3>

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.21315/kajh2025.32.2.3>

Abstract. During the Nanjing nationalist government period, the Ministry of Education established a developmental theme of “rectification” for higher education. Within this framework, each successive minister of education influenced the direction of higher education through their unique educational philosophies and policy approaches. From the onset of the Mukden Incident (1931) to the end of the Anti-Japanese War, three Ministers of Education—Zhu Jiahua, Wang Shijie and Chen Lifu—held notably long and stable terms. Their tenures and the implementation of their educational ideologies reflect not only the political manoeuvring within the upper echelons of the Kuomintang (KMT) but also the ongoing contest with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). As Chiang Kai-shek’s position as “supreme leader” solidified, his control over educational administration evolved from limited influence to full authority. With the intensifying national crisis and the KMT government’s tightened control over education, liberalism in higher education entered a period of “dormancy”. The complex interplay between war, education and politics thus shaped the underlying factors driving shifts in higher education policies during this era.

Keywords and phrases: Anti-Japanese War, Chiang Kai-shek, higher education, China’s policy, Republic of China

Introduction

On 30th November 1928, the Ministry of Education of the Nanjing national government was officially established. From its inception, the ministry set a development goal for higher education, stating, “This ministry shall focus on

improving the quality of university education rather than expanding its quantity” (Second Historical Archives of China 1994, 127). This laid the foundation for the Nanjing national government’s approach to higher education, with an emphasis on “rectification” as the central theme throughout its period in power. After the establishment of the Ministry of Education, the position of Minister of Education underwent frequent changes. From the Mukden Incident 1931 to the full-scale War of Resistance, the ministers of education with relatively stable and lengthy tenures were Zhu Jiahua, Wang Shijie and Chen Lifu, whose terms largely spanned the entire wartime period. Each minister of education held distinct educational philosophies and governance approaches. The implementation, or lack thereof, of their educational ideals was complicated by internal political struggles within the upper echelons of the Kuomintang (KMT) and, at times, by rivalries with the Communist Party of China. All these factors were inextricably linked to the evolving dynamics of the war. The intersection of war, education and politics created the underlying factors that drove the shifts in higher education policies during this period.

Existing research on the adjustments and responses of higher education during the War of Resistance (1931–1945) is already extensive. Zhuang (1979) was one of the first scholars to focus on the overall response of higher education during the full-scale war, examining Japan’s cultural and educational infiltration intentions, the shift from a national crisis response to wartime policies in higher education and the adjustments and improvements made to universities and colleges. Israel (1998) examines KMT–communist relations on campus through the case of Lianda, a wartime university formed by the merger of Peking, Tsinghua and Nankai universities, which operated from 1937 to 1946. Zhang and Hayhoe (2017) provide an introduction to the development of higher education during wartime. Wang (2022) focuses on the modernisation of Chinese higher education and the localisation of academic research from a regional perspective. Researchers such as Fang (1995), Jin (1998) and Hu (2004) have also conducted specialised studies on higher education during wartime.

However, most of these studies emphasise institutional analysis, often overlooking the human aspect. Qian (2001, 4), when discussing institutional history, stressed the importance of understanding “personnel”, arguing that “to discuss the institutions of an era, one must first be well-versed in the personnel of that era”. Esteemed modern historian Luo (2020, 5) has also highlighted the “absence of individuals” in modern historical research. More recently, scholars have increasingly recognised the interaction between wartime higher education and politics, emphasising the role of personnel behind educational decisions. Yeh (1990, 173–176), for instance, investigated the “participation” of higher education (*danghua jiaoyu*) and Zhua Jiahua’s efforts at Zhongshan University.

Zhang (2005) examined the development and debate surrounding the national government's policies on liberal arts and science, revealing complex negotiations between local and central authorities, as well as between liberal intellectuals and party officials. Wang (2012) explored the impact of Chen Lifu's tenure as Minister of Education on the development of Chinese higher education. Zhang (2015) noted the influence and effectiveness of Chiang Kai-shek's educational philosophy on the direction of higher education as a whole. Additionally, Zhang (2022) used multiple historical sources to analyse the reasons and impact of the 1938 ministerial change from Wang Shijie to Chen Lifu in the Ministry of Education. The CCP established a comprehensive educational system for both party and non-party members throughout its border territories. Price (2019, 197–216) argues that prior to the Sino-Japanese War, the CCP had meticulously focused on developing its leadership. Since its infancy, the party has depended on several institutions to educate the individuals who directed its military and mobilisation efforts.

This article analyses the changes and continuity of higher education under different leadership, chronologically, based on Chinese sources. This research has the following objectives. First, to examine the contents and differences of the policies of successive ministers of education in higher education. Second, to analyse the role of Chiang Kai-shek in the appointment of officers of the Ministry of Education and his philosophy on higher education. Third, to contextualise the interaction between war, education and politics during the Anti-Japanese War. Official documents were obtained from the Archives of the Ministry of Education and the Archives of the Nationalist Government. In addition, this article also uses memoirs (Chen Lifu [Chen 1994], Chen Bulei [Chen 2009], Wang Shijie [Wang 2012] and Chiang Kai-shek [Chiang 1930]) and newspapers (*Ta Kung Pao* and *Shun Pao*). There are limitations of document analysis, such as potential biases in memoirs. The biases are mitigated through the triangulation of data from various sources. Triangulation is the process of utilising multiple methods and/or data sources in research to enhance comprehension of phenomena and to validate interpretations of the phenomena. It validates data by examining the convergence of evidence from various sources (Hanson-DeFusco 2023).

Higher Education Developments before the Mukden Incident (1929–1931)

In 1927, the Nationalist Party (KMT) assumed control of the national government. Initially, the administration of education operated somewhat independently from government oversight, with the Ministry of Education heavily influenced by senior figures within the party. During this period, there was intense rivalry

between two factions within the educational administration, one led by Li Shizeng (educator and elder member of KMT) and the other by Cai Yuanpei (former Minister of Education and President of Peking University). To reconcile these opposing forces, Chiang Kai-shek had to personally assume the role of Minister of Education from December 1930 to June 1931, with Chen Bulei serving as the permanent vice minister (Chen 2009, 408).

During that period, Chiang Kai-shek was unable to control educational administration fully. He lamented that “the Ministry of Education recommended inappropriate candidates” and he could not make independent decisions regarding personnel, being constrained by various limitations (Chiang 1930). However, Chiang was not content with this lack of control. Thus, as the national leader and concurrent Minister of Education, he positioned himself to grasp the overarching goals and direction of education. On 19th January 1931, Chiang Kai-shek delivered a speech at the Ministry of Education for the first time. It was titled “The Ideological Problems of Chinese Education”. In his address, he shared his perspective on prior educational practices, stating that “education before the 20th year of the Republic (1931) not only showed no progress but deteriorated day by day” (Qin 1984, 450). It is evident that Chiang, taking a macro perspective, believed that the current education system had failed to fully implement Sun Yat-sen’s “Three Principles of the People”. He was quite pleased with his address, noting in his diary, “I have made clear to the government and Ministry of Education officials my desire to establish this as the foundation of Chinese education, to revive China’s inherent culture” (Chiang 1931a). On 9th May 1931, at a National Assembly meeting, Chiang once again discussed educational issues, proposing guidelines to direct educational facilities. Regarding higher education, he suggested: “Fifth, establish as many specialised schools as possible related to industries and the livelihood of the people; Sixth, make natural sciences and practical sciences the guiding principles of university education” (Gao 2004, 89). On 13th May 1931 the assembly’s fifth session passed two proposals on Sun Yat-sen’s teachings and educational direction, prompting Chiang to write with satisfaction, “If our nation has this central guiding thought to nurture, then perhaps our country will have a way forward” (Gao 2004, 156). Whether Chiang’s educational philosophy could achieve the goal of national salvation remains to be seen. However, it is clear that he has personally established a framework for education rooted in the Three Principles of the People¹ and integrated it into the national governance system.

In June of the following year, Chiang left for Nanchang to lead the campaign against the communists. In drafting a list of candidates for various government positions, he proposed that Zhu Jiahua should succeed as Minister of Education (Chiang 1931b).

Zhu Jiahua's Leadership and His Higher Education Philosophy (1931–1933)

On 20th February 1932, Zhu Jiahua officially assumed his role as the Minister of Education. One of the most pressing issues awaiting him was the financial crisis facing educational institutions in Beiping and Tianjin. Zhu personally travelled north to coordinate and negotiate with universities in Beiping and Tianjin, ultimately reaching an initial resolution. However, as similar financial issues arose at Peking University, Tsinghua University and Qingdao University, the Ministry of Education began planning to expand the supervisory committee model nationwide, aiming to better organise and stabilise educational funding (Ta Kung Pao 1932a). Confident in this solution, Zhu responded to reporters, asserting that the unrest was not due to funding issues: “Education funding, like all other expenditures, has not been reduced and as soon as the central treasury is stable, overdue payments will be supplemented” (Ta Kung Pao 1932b). This resolution to the funding crisis boosted the Ministry of Education's credibility (Hu 1964, 368) and with educational expenses fully allocated, Zhu Jiahua established a solid foundation for future reforms.

Zhu Jiahua, once the youngest professor at Peking University and President of Sun Yat-sen and Central University, had deep insights into university education. As early as September 1931, he delivered a report titled “Current Status of University Education and Necessary Reforms to Address Its Deficiencies”, at a memorial conference for the prime minister held by the Central Party Committee (Ta Kung Pao 1931). In this report, Zhu expressed his dissatisfaction with the lack of proportional development and progress in higher education relative to funding. He advocated for a systematic “rectification” of education as a means to improve it and achieve national rejuvenation, expressing concern that higher education had become “debased” (Ministry of Education 1932a).

On 11th July 1932, the Ministry of Education organised a national conference for the presidents of institutions of higher education. The agenda of the meeting primarily included two main topics. The first was to discuss the educational reform plan proposed by Chen Guofu (KMT Minister of Organisation) (1932, 15–16), which aimed at advocating for the establishment of agricultural, engineering, medical and scientific departments in various universities and to gather the opinions of university presidents to inform the reform of higher education. The second concerned the issue of funding for universities, which was also a central topic of discussion at the meeting. The Ministry of Education prepared proposals that represented the direction of higher education reforms at the time (Shun Pao 1932). The opinions expressed at this meeting, led by the

education authorities, were further discussed and approved at a government meeting at the end of the year. On 21st December 1932, the KMT held the third plenary session of the Fourth Central Executive Committee, during which the “Resolution on Education” was passed. This resolution reiterated that “the proliferation of secondary schools, universities and independent colleges was excessive” and proposed that “existing universities and secondary schools must be strictly restructured to ensure that universities produce truly qualified talent”. The resolution approved principles for restructuring higher education, directing a shift from liberal arts to science, agriculture, engineering, medicine and defence-related fields, such as applied chemistry (Ministry of Education 1932b).

Under this philosophical guidance, Zhu Jiahua pursued the “rationalisation” of universities, implementing sweeping reforms in the organisation and enrichment of higher education institutions. Measures included cutting humanities and philosophy programs, suspending admissions and closing Labour University, redirecting its funds to establish Northwest Agricultural College. Amid the Mukden Incident and repeated disasters in the northwest, the nationalist government launched a policy of “promoting and studying agriculture”. The founding of Northwest Agricultural and Forestry College reflected wartime higher education’s role in economic reconstruction and the strategic shift towards inland development (Guan 1986, 3–8). Zhu appointed Luo Jialun as President of Central University and reshuffled education heads in Jiangxi and Hubei, sparking dissent within the education system. Correspondingly, Lei Xiaocen, the Director of the Anhui Provincial Education Department, published an article articulating his differing views on the issues of reorganising the liberal arts and the independence of educational funding (*Ta Kung Pao* 1932c). In response to public criticism, Zhu provided a detailed explanation, emphasising that all decisions to consolidate and suspend admissions, made after careful deliberation, may appear passive on the surface but are, in fact, proactive measures to facilitate student learning and support educational efforts (*Ta Kung Pao* 1932d).

Zhu Jiahua’s tenure in this position was short-lived. On 26th October 1932, the decision of the Central Political Council was approved, with Zhu taking over the role of the Minister of Communications. However, it was not until April 1933 that a final decision was made; the position of Minister of Education was assumed by Wang Shijie (*Ta Kung Pao* 1933a).

Wang Shijie and the “Golden Period” of Chinese Higher Education (1933–1935)

On 8th May 1933, Wang Shijie formally took office at the Ministry of Education. On the evening of 7th May, Wang announced his three main educational principles: (1) Implement productive education, (2) Secure stable funding for education and (3) Enhance the effectiveness of education (*Ta Kung Pao* 1933b). He has outlined key directions for educational administration, which include promoting vocational education, advocating for financial independence in both central and local education budgets, advancing the implementation of a civil service examination system and establishing appropriate career pathways for young people (Wang 2012, 1). Wang Shijie emphasised the fundamental purpose of education, aiming to ensure that university students develop specialised skills, meet societal needs and successfully secure employment.

Wang Shijie's observations on the state of higher education at the time focused on both quantity and quality. In terms of quantity, he noted that the number of institutions and students had increased hundreds of times in 1934 compared to previous years. From a quality standpoint, Wang Shijie (1934) believed that higher education had undergone a period of disorder, which was attributed to factors such as the implementation of the new education system, the suspension and reduction of educational funds, and internal political instability. He described this phase of expansion as abnormal, marked by an imbalance between the liberal arts and the practical sciences (Wang 1934). Based on these observations, the Ministry of Education, under Wang Shijie's leadership, established a development policy focused on enhancing the quality of higher education.

Scholars have previously examined Wang Shijie's reform efforts and achievements in higher education (Xue 2010, 49–55). However, this article will briefly analyse a few aspects that have received little attention, including the difficulties he encountered in adjusting the division between liberal arts and science faculties, his interpretation of educational control, and his management of financial resources for higher education. Wang Shijie actively addressed the imbalance between liberal arts and practical sciences during his tenure, a process fraught with challenges and significant resistance from both within and outside the government. Firstly, public opinion raised concerns and questions about the focus on practical sciences and the perceived marginalisation of liberal arts and philosophy. On 9th April 1935, when a reporter inquired about this trend, which favoured the sciences at the expense of the humanities, Wang provided a detailed explanation of the policy's original intent. He noted that

the current number of humanities and philosophy graduates had surged and to improve quality, it was essential first to eliminate substandard programs. Wang also stated that the initial adjustments were largely complete and that the next step would be to “actively encourage and strengthen humanities and philosophy departments starting this fall, with specific measures currently under consideration” (*Ta Kung Pao* 1935a). In summary, Wang aimed to achieve a balanced development between the liberal arts and the practical sciences, ensuring that neither was neglected.

In addition to public opinion concerns and inquiries, Wang Shijie’s stringent limitations on admissions to humanities and law programs faced considerable resistance within the Nationalist Party’s judicial circles. During the Fifth Plenary Session of the National Government, Vice President of the Legislative Yuan, Tan Zhen, led a group of 27 members in a joint proposal to lift restrictions on law school admissions. The proposal argued that “our country already faces a severe shortage of legal talent across legislative, judicial and administrative sectors, with growing demand expected as constitutional governance and local autonomy progress”. It also criticised the restriction as an inappropriate means of rectifying private law schools (Ministry of Education 1935). These arguments were well-reasoned and directly countered Wang’s policy stance. While Wang’s explanations to the press might have temporarily eased public discontent, opposition from within the party was far harder to address.

Secondly, there was a focus on talent regulation and educational control. Wang Shijie advocated for a regulatory system to address employment issues, particularly within the academic sector. In contrast, Chiang Kai-shek pushed for a broader approach that extended beyond education. In July 1934, representatives from the Beijing Federation of University Students’ Vocational Movements petitioned the Ministry of Education, proposing that the government should have “reasonable control” over talents. In response, Wang proposed a talent regulation system, which included plans to establish a national talent allocation agency, expand research institutes and promote the recruitment of university graduates by government agencies (*Ta Kung Pao* 1934a).

Thirdly, Wang Shijie placed great emphasis on increasing educational funding. When he served as the president of Wuhan University, he outlined five conditions for establishing the new university: spacious buildings, adequate facilities, independent funding, qualified professors and strict discipline (Xue 2010, 1). At the beginning of his tenure as the Minister of Education, Wang discussed plans for independent educational funding with then-Premier Wang Jingwei. However, the discussion probably did not yield substantive results,

as Wang did not document any further details on the matter (Wang 2012, 2). In 1937, Wang Shijie again applied to Chiang Kai-shek, then President of the Executive Yuan, for an increase in the education and culture budget, which was approved and allocated to expand higher education in the wartime interior (Wang 2012, 11). To ensure that these funds were spent effectively, Wang did not hesitate to oppose KMT elder Ju Zheng, who had proposed a subsidy for Chaoyang College under his administration. Wang argued that the institution's performance was mediocre and that granting it financial support would run counter to the principles of educational reorganisation (Wang 2012, 11–12). After Wang's persistent efforts, education funding increased, but Wang still believed that its proportion of the central government's total was too small. This clearly illustrates Wang Shijie's commitment to securing and utilising educational funding as an educator.

During the first two years of Wang Shijie's tenure, the domestic political situation remained relatively stable and the reform of higher education achieved remarkable results. Starting in 1933, the reform focused on three key areas: emphasising practical disciplines, enriching content and improving standards, thereby promoting quality enhancement. Statistics show that the number of post-secondary institutions increased from 103 in 1930 to 111 in 1934 (*Ta Kung Pao* 1934b), with slow growth reflecting a development strategy centred on quality over quantity. During this period, universities actively cooperated with the Ministry of Education (Wang 2012, 4), contributing to what scholars regard as the “golden age” of modern Chinese higher education in the mid-1930s.

Educational Response under National Crisis and Wang's Resignation (1935–1937)

After 1935, the situation in North China grew increasingly tense. In November, Japan continued to incite the “North China Autonomy Movement”, aiming to push the national government out of the region and establish a puppet regime to facilitate its domination of North China. Amid this upheaval, educational circles in Beiping and Tianjin were highly active. In response, the Ministry of Education issued the “Purpose of Education in National Crisis Period and the Educational Program for the National Crisis Period”, which emphasised physical training, improvements in mental discipline and a focus on production capabilities and specialised curriculum as foundational elements of education during the crisis (*Ta Kung Pao* 1936a; *Min Bao* 1936).

Following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident in 1937, the situation in North China intensified, putting the region on the brink of becoming a second Northeastern region under Japanese control. In light of the severe anti-Japanese circumstances, the Ministry of Education issued a series of directives, including the “Guidelines for Supervision of Educational Work During National Mobilisation”, “Measures for Schools in War Zones”, “General Instructions for Schools at All Levels Before and After the Outbreak of War” and the “Reorganisation Plan for Higher Education Institutions in the Beijing-Tianjin-Shanghai War Zones” (Second Historical Archives of China 1997, 2–12).

The Educational Program for the National Crisis Period, along with a series of policies introduced at the onset of full-scale war, provided timely measures to sustain higher education amidst the turmoil of conflict. However, at best, these measures primarily involved making localised adjustments within the existing framework of educational policies. Wang Shijie did not aim to propose an entirely new plan that would overturn the established educational direction.

As the national crisis evolved into a wartime situation, the situation became increasingly dire, and at this juncture, Wang Shijie’s tenure as Minister of Education was nearing its end. Due to a conflict with Judicial Yuan President Ju Zheng, Wang Shijie requested to resign as Minister of Education in May 1937 (Wang 2012, 17). Examining the educational situation of the time, along with Wang Shijie’s change in outlook, his decision to step back was influenced by both subjective and objective factors. From the subjective perspective, according to Wang Shijie, the conflicts and contradictions between the Ministry of Education and other party members were increasingly difficult to reconcile. Wang was acutely aware of his precarious position. Except for Chief Justice Ju Zheng, he had also been struggling against the negative tendencies within the party for four to five years, and four presidents of the five branches of government had expressed dissatisfaction with him (Wang 2012, 78). Meanwhile, Wang was increasingly overwhelmed by the internal affairs. He stated, “the contributions made did not correspond to the growing resentment and the difficulties continued to escalate” (Wang 2012, 17).

From an objective perspective, considering the personnel arrangements of the higher leadership under Chiang Kai-shek and his educational philosophy, Wang Shijie had effectively been sidelined. Throughout the 1930s, Chiang Kai-shek placed significant importance on education, considering “national defence, industry, education and economy as the foundation of the nation” (Chiang 1937c). In the earlier part of this decade, Chiang focused on promoting the core principles of the Three Principles of the People through education; however, he

later aimed to implement a system of educational control. The terms related to the control of education frequently appeared in Chiang's diaries from 1936 to 1937. Simultaneously, he was aware that such control could provoke resentment. Engaged in self-reflection, he stated that, "the new system of education based on military principles can avoid the label of control while effectively achieving mastery, which is an original and innovative proposal" (Chiang 1937b).

On 6th July 1937, during a joint commemoration event organised by various ministries, Chiang delivered remarks specifically addressing educational issues in China and outlined future educational policies. He emphasised to reporters that basic training should not be neglected during wartime (*Min Bao* 1937). Chiang consistently upheld a conservative and traditional approach to education. At this time, the renewed emphasis on educational policies, trending towards localisation, signalled the direction of future policies and potential candidates for the position of Minister of Education. Additionally, after Wang Shijie tendered his resignation in May 1937, although Chiang did not officially approve it, he had already begun contemplating the selection of a new Minister of Education. In his diary entry on 3rd June 1937, he noted, "Appoint Chen Lifu as Minister of Education", indicating that Chen was already on Chiang's radar at that time (Chiang 1937a).

In contrast, Wang Shijie seemed unable to grasp these changes and continued his usual educational approach. On 26th November 1937, Wang met with reporters and stated that during wartime, basic training in general school education should not be overlooked (Wang 2012, 69). In addition, Chiang invited Wang to discuss future educational policies, but Wang continued to advocate his previous views. Wang did not record Chiang's reaction in detail, but it can be inferred that the discussion did not meet Chiang's expectations. In fact, Chiang had already devised a strategy regarding educational policies, the structure of the Ministry of Education and personnel arrangements. Soon, on 31st December 1937, Chiang once again met with Wang Shijie and informed him that the Sixth Department of the Military Commission would be incorporated into the Ministry of Education, with Chen Lifu (the Head of the Sixth Department) assisting Wang. Wang then voluntarily expressed his desire to step aside, allowing Chen to take full responsibility (Wang 2012, 77). Thus, Wang successfully resigned from his position.

Chen Lifu and the Launch of Wartime Education Policies (1938–1944)

When Wang Shijie stepped down as the Minister of Education, Chen Lifu's succession was unexpected. In his memoirs, Chen (1994, 235–237) defended and clarified his qualifications, asserting that he had long been involved in educational work and was not an “outsider” to the field. This article suggests that, beyond Chen's own statements, an examination of the historical context reveals that his appointment was, in fact, a logical outcome. From the perspective of interpersonal networks, Chen Lifu had many years of experience in organisational work, accumulating a solid network of contacts within the party. Due to his close relationship with Chiang Kai-shek, he seemed to enjoy good relations with senior figures in the party. After the Mukden Incident of 1931, while travelling north with Ju Zheng, Chen received a telegram from then-Executive Yuan President Wang Jingwei inviting him to take charge of the Ministry of Education (Chen 1994, 237). This indirectly indicates that Chen Lifu had a good relationship with both Ju Zheng and Wang Jingwei. Based on the analysis of memories, this article finds that compared to Wang Shijie, Chen adapted much better to the political ecology of the KMT government. After reporting his appointment as the Minister of Education to Dai Jitao, Dai expressed his congratulations, deeming Chen's move wise. During Chen's tenure as Minister of Education, Kong Xiangxi, who served as both the Executive Yuan President and the Minister of Finance, provided strong support to Chen (Chen 1994, 237). The recognition from both Dai and Kong illustrated the unique advantage of Chen Lifu's interpersonal relationships.

Most importantly, Chiang Kai-shek supported and endorsed Chen Lifu's leadership of the Ministry of Education. Initially, when Chiang appointed him as Minister of Education, Chen was also concurrently handling organisational work. He expressed that the two roles had different natures and could not be held simultaneously; if he were to take on the role of the Minister of Education, he would need to resign from his organisational duties. After consideration, Chiang agreed to Chen Lifu's request the next day, allowing him to focus solely on the position of the Minister of Education (Chen 1994, 219). This aligns with Chiang's proposal on 3rd June 1937 to appoint Chen Lifu as the Minister of Education, highlighting Chiang's strong intent for Chen to assume this role (Chiang 1937a). This decision underscores Chiang's determination to reorganise the personnel structure of the education system. His motivation for this appointment was to leverage Chen Lifu's influence to implement educational control and promote an education system based on the Three Principles of the People (Zhang 2022). In hindsight, Chen Lifu acknowledged that his role as the Minister of Education was closely tied to Chiang's support and revealed Chiang's desire to enhance “character education” among youth and students (Chen 1994, 299).

Wang Shijie disagreed with Chen Lifu's educational thoughts and proposals, describing them as "Chen's ideas tend to revert to antiquity in recent years" (Wang 2012, 38). It indicated that Wang had become aware of certain trends within Chen's educational ideology. Chen had previously stated that he received considerable support, trust, direction and guidance from influential figures such as Chiang Kai-shek, Kong Xiangxi, Chen Guofu, Dai Jitao, Wu Zhihui and Chen Brilai in his handling of departmental affairs (Chen 1994, 240–42). As shown above, in contrast to Wang's image as a modern scholar, the party and state officials behind Chen were deeply influenced by traditional Chinese culture, representing the traditional literati and being proponents of traditional moral values and rites.

On 7th March 1938, Chen Lifu took the oath of office at the national government. The day before, he stated to reporters that the reform of the national wartime education program would be released as soon as possible. He emphasised that the new plan corrects the focus on knowledge-based education by emphasising moral education and military training. Schools, once like marketplaces with fleeting relationships, must be swiftly reformed (*Ta Kung Pao* 1938). It indicates that Chen will initiate a "new policy" for wartime education, bidding farewell to the "liberal" educational approach of Wang Shijie's era.

Upon taking office, Chen began formulating new guidelines and policies for the development of higher education. As the war zone continued to expand, schools could not operate as usual in their original locations and began relocating. Under these circumstances, two key questions arose. First, should schools continue operating, or should they consolidate and reduce their numbers? Second, should the curriculum and training primarily focus on military training, or on implementing a "national crisis education"? This was essentially a matter of balancing quantity and quality, prompting Chen and Wu to engage in thoughtful consideration and decision-making.

During his time teaching at Peking University, Wu Junsheng had already expressed his views on education during wartime:

The education needed during the national crisis should not merely be an addition of a special education segment to the existing education; it should be an education that fully integrates the goal of saving the country. Furthermore, the education required in times of crisis should not only address immediate emergencies but also prepare for "future calamities". (*Ta Kung Pao* 1936b)

Wu believed that education should be part of a comprehensive, long-term plan rather than a response to temporary conditions. Chen Lifu agreed with Wu's perspective. Ultimately, Chen and Wu established the development policy for

higher education, asserting that “the number of schools should not only remain stable but, based on needs, should be significantly expanded” (Chen 1994, 243). It signified that higher education would enhance both quantity and quality simultaneously.

The new education plan formulated by the Ministry of Education was quickly approved in the government meeting. On 29th March 1938, the KMT convened a temporary National Congress in Chongqing, and on 1st April 1938, the meeting approved the KMT’s “Guidelines for National Defense and Nation-Building” (Ministry of Education 1948, 49). During the conference, the “Framework for Implementing Wartime Education at All Levels” was also discussed and approved. This framework proposed nine guiding principles for future education (Ministry of Education 1938b). In addition to the nine guiding principles, 17 work points were also adopted. These provisions comprehensively outlined the policy direction and framework for wartime higher education. Chen Lifu had been dissatisfied with the education system during Wang Shijie’s tenure (Wang 2012, 38; 44); at this point, he began to construct a new wartime higher education system gradually.

Zhu Jiahua’s Appointment as the Minister of Education (1944–1945)

On 20th November 1944, Zhu Jiahua was appointed Minister of Education. This adjustment in the education ministry underwent a protracted process of initial deliberation and final determination. Initially, Chiang Kai-shek proposed that Wang Shijie assume the role of the Minister of Education. However, the position ultimately went to Zhu Jiahua.

In the first half of 1944, prior to the 12th National Congress of the KMT, Chiang Kai-shek began preparations for a new round of personnel adjustments involving party and government officials, including various ministers from the party headquarters, as well as the ministers of the Executive Yuan, Finance and Education. Chiang included the adjustment plans in the agenda for the week of 21st May 1944 (Chiang 1944a). He intended to appoint Wang Shijie as Minister of Education and reassign Chen Lifu to the position of the Minister of Organization. On 25 May 1944, Chiang instructed Chen Bulei to communicate these arrangements and sought Wang Shijie’s consent; however, Wang declined the offer (Wang 2012, 607). Consequently, this arrangement was temporarily shelved.

On 15th November 1944 in the second half of the year, Chen Bulei again informed Wang that Chiang intended for him to choose between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Propaganda. Chen promised first to inquire whether Zhu Jiahua would be willing to take on the role of Minister of Education. In the afternoon, Chen reported back to Wang that Zhu was indeed willing to accept the position (Wang 2012, 653). However, it seems Chen did not immediately convey this information to Chiang, or perhaps Chiang still intended for Wang to take the position. Thus, on the 18th November 1944, Chiang again asked Wang Shijie to consider a role in the Ministry of Propaganda or Education. Wang (2012, 653) declined, citing Zhu Jiahua's acceptance of the Minister of Education's position. On 20 November 1944, the Central Party's interim standing committee and the Supreme National Defense Council officially decided that Zhu Jiahua would become the Minister of Education, Chen Lifu would serve as the Minister of Organization and Wang Shijie would take on the role of Minister of Propaganda (*Ta Kung Pao* 1944).

The adjustments within the Ministry of Education were merely one part of this personnel reshuffle, but the process proved to be quite cumbersome. Chiang Kai-shek expressed his frustration, remarking, "It has been an arduous effort and the difficulties are immense" (Chiang 1944e). What factors, then, motivated Chiang's "painstaking concern" with the appointment and arrangements of educational personnel?

Chiang Kai-shek decided to remove Chen Lifu from the Ministry of Education, a move that Chen attributed to preparations for the National Assembly elections. As a result, Chiang summoned Chen back to the Organization Department to assist with these preparations (Chen 1994, 321). This explanation from Chiang is evidently a pretext. Chen had served as Minister of Education for seven years without any changes, so his removal at this time, purportedly due to preparations for the National Assembly, seems unreasonable. In reality, just as Chiang's support was instrumental in Chen's initial appointment to the ministry, his departure reflects Chiang's withdrawal of support. Following this round of personnel adjustments, Chiang met with Chen Lifu and Zeng Yangfu, expressing his dissatisfaction with their leadership of the Ministry of Communications and the Ministry of Education; he even labelled it "the greatest failure of the party and government" (Chiang 1945). In terms of education itself, many of Chen's initiatives cannot be regarded as entirely successful, but they also cannot be classified as failures. When Chiang refers to the failures of the "party and government", he is specifically targeting the ideological education of university students and youth, an area that has long been of concern to him, particularly regarding "character education" (Zhang 2015).

An examination of Chiang Kai-shek's diaries reveals a renewed dissatisfaction with the state of education in the 1940s. He expressed numerous complaints about university professors and student bodies, with his language becoming increasingly stern. For example, in 1941, he remarked, "The academic atmosphere in primary and secondary schools has deteriorated annually. Recently, I noticed that university presidents lack qualified faculty and a true understanding of education, harming both the youth and the nation" (Chiang 1941). In 1942, Chiang (1942) reiterated his concerns by stating, "The presidents and professors of all universities must undergo thorough reform". In 1943, Chiang (1943) further lamented:

University academics have deteriorated severely, leaving education without foundation. Corrupt scholars and politicians harm the youth and nation, causing more damage than past military cabinets—a reality that fills me with deep anger and sorrow.

It is evident that Chiang viewed the academic atmosphere as seriously lacking and attributed the responsibility to the university president. In 1944, Chiang's rhetoric became even more intense, declaring, "Most university professors have been swayed by reactionaries, with Chinese education dominated by individualists. National morality and patriotism are nearly lost, resembling the communist bandits, yet they still call themselves teachers" (Chiang 1944c). He also noted, "The bandits stir up chaos in the education sector and among the youth, causing societal unrest" (Chiang 1944b). Furthermore, he observed, "What I have seen and heard recently are all signs of decline and decay. It is not only the military that is affected, but especially the corruption in education and the demoralisation of the people that are most severe" (Chiang 1944d). Chiang's criticism of both students and teachers thus targeted their ideological orientation rather than pedagogy, tying education to the nation's destiny. Therefore, Chiang's expectation of renewal within the educational sector may well have been the underlying purpose of this personnel adjustment.

The appointment of Zhu Jiahua as the Minister of Education was somewhat incidental. As mentioned earlier, Chen Bulei appeared to be a "casual" orchestrator of this event. However, Chiang did not reject the proposal. This perhaps indicates that Chiang was also open to endorsing Zhu's appointment as Minister of Education. After assuming office, Zhu emphasised the balanced development of higher education quality and proposed the idea of "adjusting higher education to achieve both quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement" (*Shishi Xinbao* 1945). This signifies that higher education has returned to a trajectory emphasising both quality and balanced development.

Conclusions

An overview of the evolution in higher education development policies under the Nanjing national government from 1931 to 1945 reveals a complex trajectory. The development of higher education was shaped by the differing ideologies of ministers. Zhu Jiahua and Wang Shijie prioritised quality improvement, with limited focus on expansion, while Chen Lifu emphasised quantitative growth. Under Zhu and Wang, education remained relatively depoliticised, with Wang advocating for educational liberalism and resisting political influence, as seen in his opposition to Confucian rituals in schools. In contrast, Chen pursued centralised control, strengthening the Ministry of Education's authority. These ideological differences significantly influenced the trajectory of higher education during this period.

At the same time, the policymaking process of the Ministry of Education was never insulated from broader institutional pressures. As a branch of government administration, the Ministry of Education's policymaking was influenced and constrained by the highest leadership, as well as by institutions such as the National Assembly, the Executive Yuan and the Central Political Committee. For example, during Wang Shijie's term, when he established enrolment quotas for humanities and technical disciplines, journalists questioned if this move was intended to "suppress" the humanities. Wang firmly denied any policy intent to undervalue the humanities, clarifying instead that the policy to limit humanities while expanding technical fields was a fixed administrative direction of the government (*Ta Kung Pao* 1935b). Policies favouring technical subjects over liberal arts originated from external bodies, such as the National Congress and the Executive Yuan, as well as proposals by Chen Guofu, which were seen as an "overreach" by non-educational entities. The Ministry of Education's decisions were influenced by competition among various government institutions.

Otherwise, Chiang Kai-shek, as the "unseen hand" behind educational administration, consistently influenced educational policies. His authority became more consolidated and Chiang increasingly took command of personnel appointments and administrative decisions in the educational sector. Chiang had a deep control over the rotation of the three ministers, Wang Shijie, Chen Lifu and Zhu Jiahua and the formulation of educational policies during their terms. When Chen Lifu and Zhu Jiahua first took office, Chiang directly instructed them to improve university education (Ministry of Education 1938a; 1944). Thus, Chiang Kai-shek transitioned from an initial position of "lack of autonomy" to a stage where he completely grasped control.

During this period, the philosophy, direction and character of higher education were deeply influenced by the intertwined forces of war and politics. Pre-war higher education had a strong liberal orientation, with schools across the country acting independently. However, the outbreak of war disrupted the balance between politics and education, opening a gateway for political influence within academia. During the war, the nationalist government strategically advanced the nationalisation of higher education. Key measures included expanding state funding, establishing new national universities, reallocating the spatial distribution of institutions and standardising curricula. Policies such as the student loan scheme embodied a dual educational and political logic: they enabled displaced youth to continue their studies while simultaneously preventing their potential drift towards the CCP. At the same time, wartime universities expanded significantly in practical fields, particularly defence science and military engineering, reflecting the state's demand for technical expertise in national defence. These developments highlight how higher education, once relatively autonomous, became increasingly integrated with state policy, local administrations and industry. Ultimately, authoritarianism in education grew in response to the national crisis and the government's increasing control over academia, while the liberalism that once characterised higher education was forced into "dormancy". Yet dormancy did not mean disappearance; it remained an enduring ideal in the minds of many intellectuals. At the National Southwestern Associated University, for instance, the liberal tradition of intellectual openness and inclusiveness continued (Israel 2012, 309–10). Intellectual elites from different political affiliations coexisted and a delicate balance was maintained between political forces and academic discourse, enabling the university to function as a "fortress of democracy" during the War of Resistance (Wang 2006).

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to the Editor-in-Chief of the journal and the anonymous reviewers for their invaluable insights and constructive critiques on the earlier version of the article. Their comments are tremendously helpful in improving the hypothetical inquiry, addressing the research gap, and informing the findings. This research was supported by the North China University of Science and Technology Teaching Reform Research Project (No. L2318).

Note

1. The Three Principles of the People (*Sanmin Zhuyi*), formulated by Sun Yat-sen in the early 20th century, served as the ideological foundation of the Republic of China and later became central to Chiang Kai-shek's education and governance strategies. The principles include *minzu* (nationalism), *minquan* (democracy) and *minsheng* (the people's livelihood), aiming to strengthen national sovereignty, implement representative governance and improve social welfare. During the wartime period, Chiang reinterpreted and emphasised the moral and educational dimensions of these principles—particularly national unity and ideological discipline—as a framework for educational reform.

References

- Chen, B.L. 2009. 陈布雷回忆录 (*Memoirs of Chen Bulei*). Beijing: Dongfang Press.
- Chen, G.F. 1932. 陈果夫氏改革教育方案 (Mr. Chen Guofu's proposal for educational reform). *Education Weekly* 124.
- Chen, L.F. 1994. 成败之鉴: 陈立夫回忆录 (*Lessons from successes and failures: Memoirs of Chen Lifu*). New Taipei: Zhengzhong Publishing.
- Chiang, K.-S. 1945. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 11 January. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1944a. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). May. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1944b. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 15 July. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1944c. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 31 August. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1944d. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 13 July. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1944e. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 9 November. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1943. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 15 & 16 February. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1942. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 23 January. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1941. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 5 August. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1937a. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 3 June. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1937b. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 19 June. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1937c. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 8 December. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1931b. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 22 May. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- _____. 1931a. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 19 January. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.

- . 1930. 蒋介石日记 (手稿本) (*The diary of Chiang Kai-shek [manuscript]*). 5 December. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University.
- Fang, L.S. 1995. 论抗战时期中国的高等教育 (On higher education in China during the War of Resistance). *Journal of Anti-Japanese War Research, Special Issue Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of Victory*, 271–295.
- Gao, S.L., ed. 2004. 蒋中正总统档案事略稿本 (*Chiang Kai-Shek's chronological event transcripts*). Taipei: Academia Historica.
- Guan, L.F. 1986. 西北农业大学校史 1934–1984 (A history of Northwest Agricultural University, 1934–1984). Xi'an: Shaanxi People's Publishing House.
- Hanson-DeFusco, J. 2023. What data counts in policymaking and programming evaluation: Relevant data sources for triangulation according to main epistemologies and philosophies within social science. *Evaluation and Program Planning* (97): 102238.
- Hu, G.T. 2004. 浴火重生: 抗战时期的高等教育 (*Rebirth through fire: Higher education during the War of Resistance*). Taipei: Daoxiang Publishing.
- Hu, S.P. 1964. 朱家骅先生年谱简编 (A short chronological biography of Dr. Chu Chia-hua). *Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica* 35: 353–419.
- Jin, Y.L. 1998. 战时大学教育的恢复和发展 (The restoration and development of university education during the war). *Journal of Resistance War Studies* 28(2): 50–69.
- Israel, J. 2012. 战争与革命中的西南联大 (LIANDA: A Chinese university in war and revolution). Beijing: Jiuzhou Publishing Company.
- . 1998. *LIANDA: A Chinese university in war and revolution*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Luo, Z.T. 2020. 斯文关天意: 近代新旧之间的士人与学人 (*Heaven's design and the way of the scholar: The intellectual between tradition and modernity in modern China*). Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company.
- Min Bao. 1937. 行政院各部会联合纪念周蒋院长讲中国教育问题 (Premier Chiang's speech on Chinese educational issues at the joint commemoration of government ministries). 6 July.
- . 1936. 王世杰讲国难时期教育 (Wang Shijie on education during the national crisis). 23 February.
- Ministry of Education. 1948. 第二次中国教育年鉴 (*The second China education yearbook*). Shanghai: Shangwu Press.
- . 1944. 教育部历年来工作计划及参考材料 (*The Ministry of Education's annual work plans and reference materials*) no. 5(2)–000302–373. Nanjing: Second Historical Archives of China.
- . 1938a. 教育部历次部务会议记录 (*Records of the Ministry of Education's administrative meetings*) no. 5(2)–00171–010. Nanjing: Second Historical Archives of China.
- . 1938b. 中国国民党中央执行委员会函国民政府有中国国民党关临时全国代表大会通过战时各级教育实施方案纲要函请查照转饬机关遵照 (*Letter from the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang to the national government regarding the implementation framework for wartime education at all levels approved by the Provisional National Congress of the Kuomintang*) (1938–4–21) no. 001–012500–00001–001. Taipei: Academia Historica.

- _____. 1935. 中国国民党中央执行委员会函国民政府有关五全大会关于覃振等提撤销法科招生限制一案 (*Letter from the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang to the national government concerning the proposal by Qin Zhen and others to repeal the admission restrictions for law students*) no. 001-012502-00004-009. Taipei: Academia Historica.
- _____. 1932a. 教育部长朱家骅呈国民政府为送九个月来教育部整理全国教育之说明一册 (*Minister of Education Zhu Jiahua's report to the national government: A nine-month summary of the ministry's nationwide educational reorganisation*) no. 001-090004-00004-001. Taipei: Academia Historica.
- _____. 1932b. 中国国民党中央执行委员会常务委员汪兆铭等函国民政府有关四届三次会议委员程天放提确立教育目标与改善制度改革高等教育各案经决议修正通过请查照转行教育部遵办 (*Letter from the Standing Committee Members of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang, including Wang Zhaoming, to the national government concerning the resolutions on Cheng Tianfang's proposals to establish educational goals, improve the system and reform higher education*) no. 001-090005-00010-001. Taipei: Academia Historica.
- Price, J.L. 2019. Revolution, nation-building and Chinese communist leadership education during the Sino-Japanese War. In *Perspectives on a changing China*, eds. J.A. Fogel and W.T. Rowe, 197–216. Routledge.
- Qian, M. 2001. 中国历代政治得失 (*Gains and losses in Chinese political history*). Beijing: SDX Joint Publishing Company.
- Qin, X.Y, ed. 1984. 中国教育的思想问题 (*The ideological problems of Chinese education*). In 先总统蒋公思想言论总集卷 (*Collected thoughts and speeches of the late President Chiang Kai-shek*), 449–453. Taipei: Central Committee of the KMT Party History Committee.
- Second Historical Archives of China. 1997. *Compilation of Historical Archives of the Republic of China*. Vol. 5, No. 2, Education 1. Nanjing: Jiangsu Ancient Books Publishing House.
- _____. 1994. 教育部成立两年来的工作概况 (*An overview of the Ministry of Education's work in its first two years*). In *Compilation of Historical Archives of the Republic of China*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Education 1, 2. Nanjing: Jiangsu Ancient Books Publishing House.
- Shishi Xinbao. 1945. 朱家骅杭立武谈最近教育措施 (*Zhu Jiahua and Hang Liwu discuss recent educational measures*). 7 July.
- Shun Pao. 1932. 今日举行国立专科以上校长会 (*Today's meeting of presidents of national specialised and higher schools*). 11 July.
- Ta Kung Pao. 1944. 中常会今晨决定中枢局部改组 (*The Central Executive Committee decided on partial reorganisation of the central government this morning*). 20 November.
- _____. 1938. 改革战时全国教育部短期内发表方案 (*The Ministry of Education to announce a nationwide wartime educational reform plan soon*). 7 March.
- _____. 1936a. 教育部通令宣告国难时期教育宗旨 (*The Ministry of Education issues a circular declaring the educational objectives during the national crisis*). 30 January.
- _____. 1936b. 论国难期内的教育 (*On education during the national crisis*). 16 February.
- _____. 1935a. 王教长与本报记者纵谈教育问题 (*Minister Wang talks about educational issues in an interview with our reporter*). 10 April.
- _____. 1935b. 与王教长谈教育 (*A conversation with Minister Wang on education*). 22 April.

- _____. 1934a. 大学生职业问题平方推代表到京请愿王世杰主张统制人材 (University students petition in Beijing on career issues: Minister Wang advocates regulating talent training). 23 July.
- _____. 1934b. 教育部最近改进专科以上学校之要点 (Key points of the Ministry of Education's recent improvement of higher and specialised schools). 30 October.
- _____. 1933a. 王世杰允就教育部长 (Wang Shijie accepts appointment as Minister of Education). 24 April.
- _____. 1933b. 发表教育方针 (Announcement of educational policy). 8 May.
- _____. 1932a. 整顿全国教育教费保委会将成立教育部现正筹划中 (The Ministry of Education plans to establish the National Educational Finance Committee to reform education nationwide). 30 May.
- _____. 1932b. 各地教费并未减发 朱家骅谈将来补发旧欠 (Local educational funds not reduced: Zhu Jiahua discusses future repayment of arrears). 22 June.
- _____. 1932c. 改革大学教育意见雷啸岑致教长朱家骅书 (Lei Xiaocen's letter to Minister Zhu Jiahua on university educational reform). 23 July.
- _____. 1932d. 朱家骅对于政府整理大学之说明 (Zhu Jiahua's explanation of the government's university reorganisation). 26 July.
- _____. 1931. 大学教育现况及应行革除之弊病 (The current situation and problems of university education). 4 September.
- Wang, Q.S. 2006. 战时大学校园中的国民党: 以西南联大为中心 (The Kuomintang on wartime university campuses: The case of the National Southwest Associated University). *Historical Research* 4:125-147.
- Wang, S.J. 2012. 王世杰日记 (*The Diary of Wang Shijie*). ed. M.L. Lin. Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica.
- _____. 1934. 中国教育的现状 (The current situation of Chinese education). *China Educational Circles* 22(5): 97-99.
- Wang, B.X. 2012. 陈立夫与战时中国高等教育 (Chen Lifu and higher education in wartime China). MA diss., National Taiwan Normal University.
- Wang, Y. 2022. Curricular challenges in wartime: Northern Guangdong universities and the Anti-Japanese War. *Irish Journal of Educational Practice* 5(4): 96-103.
- Xue, Y. 2010. 王世杰传 (*A biography of Wang Shijie*). Wuhan, China: Wuhan University Press.
- Yeh, W.H. 1990. *The alienated academy: Culture and politics in Republican China, 1919-1937*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Zhang, H. 2022. 1938 年国民政府教育部人事变动与政策转向 (Personnel changes and policy shifts in the Ministry of Education of the national government in 1938). *Republican Archives* 4: 105-117.
- Zhang, K. 2015. 蒋介石和国难之际高等教育走向 (Chiang Kai-shek and the orientation of higher education during the national crisis). *Guangdong Social Sciences* 1: 140-148.
- Zhuang, K.M. 1979. 抗战时期中国高等教育之研究 (A study of Chinese higher education during the War of Resistance against Japan). PhD diss., Chinese Culture University.
- Zhang, M.C. and Hayhoe, R. 2017. The origins of modern Chinese education. In *Handbook of education in China*, eds. W.J. Morgan, Q. Gu, F. Li, 15-42. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781783470662.00010>
- Zhang, T.Y. 2005. 20世纪30年代的文实之争 (The debate on liberal and practical education in the 1930s). *Modern Chinese History Studies* 6: 171-204.