

The Educational Struggle of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School During the Sino-Japanese War

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Abstract

During the Sino-Japanese War, in the face of the multiple threats brought about by Japan's full-scale invasion of China, Chinese universities launched educational struggle. Wuxi Sinology Specialized School (WuXiGuoZhuan), as an important position of sinology education, always adheres to the tenet of "correcting people's hearts and saving people's lives" and stands the educational ground in the war. It actively cultivated anti-Japanese and national salvation talents through the dissemination of Chinese classics, strengthening of physical education and military training and other measures. Teachers and students were courageous in the moment of national crisis, carrying out anti-Japanese salvation activities, while constantly implementing civilian education, showing the responsibility of Chinese universities in times of national crisis and cultural self-awareness, which provides valuable educational experience and historical revelations for future generations.

Introduction

During the Sino-Japanese War, Japan launched a full-scale aggression against China, not only carrying out autocratic rule in politics and plundering in economy, but also promoting enslavement education in an attempt to manipulate the people's thoughts. Chinese universities carried out anti-enslavement education struggle under this background. Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, as a "Collegiate School", took the continuation of China's traditional culture and educational spirit as its mission. During the turbulent period of the Republic of China, it took "rightening people's hearts and saving people's lives" as its pursuit, and took the revival of Chinese culture and developing national spirit as its own responsibility, and actively carried out educational struggles. Since the "September 18 Incident", "resistance" became one of the most important themes in school life.

At present, the research on Wuxi Sinology Specialized School mainly focuses on the implementation of sinology education, in-depth analysis of its unique education model and social impact, summary of historical experience and lessons, and provide inspiration for contemporary education reform and development. Existing research not only focuses on the outstanding contribution of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School to the

inheritance and development of fine traditional Chinese culture, but also explores how it adjusted its teaching to meet the needs of the times and cultivated talents with a deep cultural heritage and a sense of national responsibility in a specific historical context. However, as a banner of sinology education at that time, how Wuxi Sinology Specialized School held its educational position in the midst of the war, how it continued to inherit the essence of Sinology under the conditions of lack of resources and poor environment, and how to cultivate talents who fought against Japan and saved the country, as well as its wisdom and perseverance in the educational struggle, are important topics worthy of our in-depth exploration. However, this important area has not received sufficient attention and discussion. Therefore, this paper takes Wuxi Sinology Specialized School as the research centre, through the in-depth excavation of its textbooks, commemorative books and other materials, in order to make a detailed analysis of its educational resistance, so that we can have a glimpse of the resistance and efforts made by the Chinese universities in the battlefield of education during the Sino-Japanese War.

1. Tenet: rightening people's hearts and saving people's lives

During the period of Republic of China, with the strong input of Western culture, the structure of traditional Chinese culture suffered a drastic shock, and the spiritual world of the Chinese people underwent a subversive change. The continuously accumulating and deteriorating situation was like a torrential flood that broke the dam of faith, triggering a "cultural tear" in modern China.¹ The attitude of the Chinese towards traditional culture underwent a drastic change from "arrogance" to "self-abandonment"², which not only contained the dissatisfaction of the Chinese with the reality and the impatience to get out of the predicament, but also led to the so-called "derogation and hatred" of their own traditions.³ Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was established in such a time background.

In December 1920, Shi Zhao, who had served as the Consul of China in New York, contributed 8,000 yuan, with an annual budget of 10,000 yuan, to open a Sinology Specialized School in Wuxi and invited Tang Wenzhi to serve as the director. Since the beginning of its establishment, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School had distinctly put forward its educational philosophy, that is, to emphasise that the only main theme of the school must be to "rightening people's hearts and saving people's lives".⁴ To the Sino-Japanese War, this concept had been further deepened, its connotation was sublimated from the general social responsibility to the responsibility of national righteousness and national survival. In the era of war, "rightening people's hearts" not only meant shaping the moral character of individuals, but also became the spiritual power to unite people's hearts and inspire the will of the nation to fight; "saving people's lives" went beyond daily relief and assistance, and rose to the noble mission of saving the country in danger and saving the nation in the moment of survival. In 1936, when the National College celebrated its 15th anniversary, Tang Wenzhi, the founder and headmaster of the school, wrote an article reiterating his educational philosophy: "To save the lives of the people, we must first save the hearts of the people; to save the hearts of the people, we must first make clear Confucianism." He firmly believed that the school has an inescapable responsibility in cultivating talents and establishing social integrity, and "rightening people's hearts and saving people's lives" is the constant educational tenet of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School.

1.1 Nurturing talents and shaping national character

Tang Wenzhi, the headmaster of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, had already perceived the profound

¹ Chen Xingde. *Modern Cultural Thought and the Formation of the View of Science and Technology in the 20th Century*[J]. Journal of Hubei University (Philosophy and Social Science Edition), 2016(06).

² Wenmingguo. *Cai Yuanpei's Autobiography 1868-1940* [M]. Beijing: People's Daily Press, 2011:287.

³ Ma Chuanjun. *Derogatory Hate Complex and the Anxiety of Chinese Modernity* [J]. Jiangsu Social Science, 2003(02):287.

⁴ Tang Wenzhi, *Tang Wenyi. Ru Jing, Mr Ru Jing's own chronicle of his life* [M]. Taipei: Wenhai Publishing House, 1986.

truth that “today’s world is based on academic warfare” before the school was founded. In the face of the serious situation of national peril, he even put forward the insightful assertion that “talents are the lifeblood of the country”, and made “creating leaders through education” as the goal of his endeavour. In the face of the destruction of traditional culture and ethics and morality, Mr Tang pointed out bitterly: “No matter in ancient and modern times, no one can destroy their own culture and survive by themselves.” He deeply realized that education bears the noble mission of “correcting people’s hearts” and is the key to inheriting and developing traditional culture.

Therefore, Tang Wenzhi lectures pay much attention to guiding students to pursue “integrity”(Qijie). During the Sino-Japanese War, the situation was turbulent. Tang Wenzhi paid more attention to it when he presided over the Shanghai Branch of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, and regarded it as the spiritual pillar to resist foreign aggression and maintain the national pulse. He repeatedly emphasised that “the key to learning the scriptures is to learn the rites”, believing that the study of etiquette is the cornerstone for shaping students’ character and maintaining social order. At the same time, he proposed that “the development of Confucianism and the maintenance of the integrity of the people’s conscience are the most urgent tasks today”⁵. He regarded the cultivation of students’ moral conscience and sense of shame as the first and foremost task of education, which deeply reflected his insight into and grasp of the essence of education, and also demonstrated his commitment to the responsibilities of the times.

In addition, the teaching philosophy of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School endeavoured to carry through the spirit of imparting knowledge and cultivating virtues in equal measure. In the teaching of literature, it has also not forgotten its aim of “establishing character” and saving the world. Mr Tang Wenzhi believed that writing and knowledge complemented each other, and that the truth was in the writing. Therefore, he emphasised that a good “literary style” was sufficient to “save the world and the hearts of people from invisibility”. In the process of discussing and teaching literature, Tang Wenzhi attached the most importance to the “establishment of character”, and he believed that people with no character, no matter how great the learning is of no use, and may even cause harm to society. Therefore, he advocated that the study of literature should be based on the Confucian classics (Jingxue) and Neo-Confucianism (Lixue) and only in this way can the articles play a proper role in saving the country.

Tang Wenzhi was convinced that “the essence of man lies in the heart, and the rule of affairs is based on the rule of the heart”⁶. In his view, the root of education lies in cultivating people’s heart and moulding students’ personality. Therefore, in the educational practice of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, he always put the cultivation of students’ moral character and personality traits in the first place, and devoted himself to cultivating people with not only profound education, but also noble character and firmness. It not only helps to inherit and carry forward the traditional culture of the Chinese nation, but also plays an active role in social change and contributes to national independence and national rejuvenation. It has been proved that the students trained by Wuxi Sinology Specialized School not only played an important role in the society at that time, but also left a valuable spiritual heritage and academic resources for future generations.

1.2 Promoting sinology to save the nation from extinction

During the Sino-Japanese War period, the headmaster Tang Wenzhi always adhere to the development of the school, revitalise the sinology of ambition. He was deeply aware that in order to “save our country, save our people”, in addition to cultivating industrial and scientific and technological talents, the education of sinology is also related to the rise and fall of the nation. As Carl H. Becker said in 1931, the League of Nations Education Mission: “Where a country seeks to survive in the world, should be the first to study science; but the study of science, must first make the national consciousness. The launching of national consciousness can only be

⁵ Tang Wenzhi, ‘Regulations of the Wuxi National Academy of Sciences’, *Rujingtang wenji* (Collected Works of Rujingtang), vol. 2, p. 181.

⁶Tang Wenzhi. *Regulations of the Private Wuxi National Academy*[A]//Chen Guoan, Qian Wanli, Wang Guoping. *Selected Historical Materials of Wuxi Sinology Specialised School*. Suzhou: Suzhou University Press, 2012: 259.

achieved through the development of national education, and then the inherent national spirit of each country can be maintained.”⁷ It is with this belief that President Tang Wenzhi has made Wuxi Sinology Specialized School an important position for the promotion of Chinese studies and the cultivation of talents.

The “National Studies” studied in Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was not limited to the traditional scriptures or Songming ethics, but broadly covered many fields of Chinese culture, such as literature, philosophy, history, geography, economy and art. It manifested the atmosphere of the times, digged deeply into the connotation of national studies, moulded the character of students with the traditional concepts and humanistic spirit of national studies, cultivated their national spirit and patriotism, shaped a new generation of “nationals”, and then achieved the goal of “correcting the hearts of the people and saving the lives of the people”. The goal of education was not just a transmission of knowledge. Education was not only a transmission of knowledge, but also a transmission and cultivation of the spirit. In the difficult environment of the war period, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School paid more attention to the cultivation of character and national integrity, and the educational purposes of “correcting people’s hearts and saving people’s lives”, “taking care of the world’s important matters and studying the world’s affairs” were consistently applied. Through the study of Confucianism, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School cultivates students’ moral character and morality; at the same time, it also introduces Western studies to improve students’ practical ability. This combination of Chinese and Western education not only preserves the essence of Chinese studies, but also incorporates modern elements, providing a strong support for the cultivation of a new generation of “nationals”.

The educational achievements of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School are remarkable. It has trained a large number of outstanding talents, such as Wang Dianchang, a generalist in literature, history, philosophy and arts; Tang Lan, a historian and expert in bronzes; Wu Qichang, a renowned literary historian; and Chiang Tien-shu, a scholar of ancient literature, and Qian Zhonglian, a renowned writer of poetry and an expert in the study of classical literature. These academically accomplished literati and historians practiced the spirit of nationalism and inherited the cultural essence of the Chinese nation, played a key and unique role in resisting invasion, and made outstanding contributions to the development of modern China.

2. Nurturing Measures: Sensitising people to shame and teaching combat skills to revive China

After the “September 18 Incident” in 1931, Tang Wenzhi put forward the educational policy of “sensitising people to shame and teaching combat skills to revive China”. Since then, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School has always focused on this policy to carry out education and teaching work, aiming at education as the cornerstone, forging the soul of the nation, and cultivating talents who can shoulder the important task of national rejuvenation. Although Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was founded as a private school, it was different from other schools in that it was in the midst of the turbulent modern China, and it never forgot the original heart and mission of “saving our country and saving our people”.

2.1 Transmission of National Studies and Integration of New Studies

As the only officially registered school of Chinese studies and the only school of higher education specialising in Chinese studies, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School attached great importance to the inheritance of classical culture and fully demonstrated its distinctive characteristics of Chinese studies education. However, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School did not stop at the tradition of sticking to and copying, but actively integrated the new concepts and new atmosphere of modern education while reproducing the classics of Chinese studies, realising the organic fusion of tradition and modernity. This is reflected in the teaching content

⁷ The League of Nations Educational Mission left Wuxi yesterday[N]. Xin Wuxi (新无锡), 1931-11-15 (02).

of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School during the war period, which is mainly based on national education, supplemented by new learning.

In order to “correct people’s hearts’ and ‘save people’s lives”, Tang Wenzhi attached particular importance to the value of reading the scriptures (Jingxue) , asserting that “Reading the scriptures is the first thing to save the world”⁸. In his view, scripture study is the study of discovering the reasoning contained in the classics in order to teach people to be righteous. Therefore, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School in teaching attached great importance to the reading of the original, for the students listed in the general reading list are the original canon, such as *Mencius (Mengzi)* , *The mediocrity (Zhongyong)* , *Shiji (Shiji)* , *Xunzi (Xunzi)* , and so on are in the list of the general reading⁹. Read more original works, has been throughout the development history of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School. Even in the difficult period of branch schools, students were required to read the original works. At the same time, Tang Wenzhi also compiled teaching handouts for the content of the lectures. Based on the needs of social development, he abridged the classics in accordance with the standards of the times, and determined the common principles contained in the scriptures to be correct in the heart and in the world. At the same time, he was able to integrate western science and absorbed the advanced methods of western science and put them to use, thus laying a good foundation for teachers and students to read and preach the scriptures. Therefore, under the guidance and assistance of teachers, most students were able to delve deeply into the recommended reading list. This process not only led to a significant improvement in students’ language and writing skills, but also enhanced their understanding and appreciation of ancient texts, thus improving their own ancient literacy as a whole.

Like many old-fashioned scholars, Tang Wenzhi focused on the continuation of traditional culture and the role of education. However, he was not an old-fashioned person, but regarded the study of Western knowledge as a proper meaning in the Confucian classics, and was physically active, putting it into practice and daring to be the first in the world. After the outbreak of the war of resistance, according to the requirements of the situation of the war of resistance, in order to cultivate the students’ national patriotic consciousness, new courses such as “National Literature”, “History of the War of Resistance”, “Geography of National Defence”, and “History of the Chinese Nation” were added. After Wuxi Sinology Specialized School moved to Guangxi, some new courses were also opened with the change of teachers, such as “Philosophy of Chinese and Western Cultures” newly opened by Liang Shuming for the National College. During the war period, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School paid more attention to broaden the horizons of national studies, such as the opening of Chinese and foreign history, Chinese and foreign philosophy and so on. In the layout of the whole teaching content, it endeavoured to emphasize the foundation, broaden the horizons, and seek for fine research in order to better cultivate the students.

2.2 Emphasis on physical education and learning Chinese Martial Arts

Wuxi Sinology Specialized School in the teaching of traditional culture at the same time, placed great importance on the students to carry out physical education, especially the teaching of Chinese martial arts (Guoshu) . This initiative reflected the educational philosophy of Tang Wenzhi, the headmaster, who believes that students should “abide by the teacher’s instructions, take morality as the basis, and strive to move forward, with the spirit of chastity and solidity, and never slacken off”. The purpose of learning Kung Fu was to protect oneself, the family, the country and the nation.¹⁰

At the Wuxi Sinology Specialized School Tang Wenzhi had long employed Hou Jingyu, a martial artist who was proficient in Chinese medicine, as a martial arts instructor, specialising in training students in order to strengthen their bodies and protect the family and the country. Some martial arts enthusiasts also often went to

⁸ Tang Wenzhi. *Ru Jing Tang Anthology* [M]. Taipei: Wenhai Publishing House, 1974:800.

⁹ Liu Luxi, Wang Tongsun. *Tang Wenzhi's Selected Writings on Education* [M]. Xi'an: Xi'an Jiaotong University Press, 1995: 373.

¹⁰ Liu Luxi, Wang Tongsun. *Tang Wenzhi's Selected Writings on Education* [M]. Xi'an: Xi'an Jiaotong University Press, 1995: 229.

Hou Jingyu's home to receive additional specialised training and instruction. In order to further demonstrate the glamour and achievements of the martial arts, the school also organised martial arts teams to perform at various school celebrations, which Zheng Xue Tao, an alumnus of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School who entered the school in 1933, was still impressed by 60 years later: The 'Chinese martial arts' class of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was rare among many colleges and universities at that time. It was a unique elective course, offered from cram school to the third year. The teacher, Mr Hou Jingyu, taught martial arts at, starting with a set of punches called 'Dejutsu' (Tuozhan). This was a set of punches that has some leaping movements and could be used to get close to the opponent very quickly. After learning boxing, one learns stick, gun, single sword, double sword, machete, and so on."¹¹

Besides, under the difficult situation of having no venue and no funds during the war period, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School still adapted to the local conditions and insisted on carrying out all kinds of sports and fitness activities. Some alumni recalled that in Guangxi Branch, funds were tight and sports equipment was in a strange shortage. "At that time, the village primary school had a basketball court, but couldn't buy balls, it was not easy to play basketball and table tennis"¹². So in addition to insisting on morning exercises, they "encouraged students to practice hiking, cycling, horseback riding, mountain climbing, shooting, swimming, etc. frequently as an alternative to track and field sports."¹³ During the Guilin period in Guangxi, the school continued to make efforts to improve the conditions for physical education, finding ways to build playgrounds, and purchasing basketball, volleyball and other sports equipment, which provided the necessary material protection for students' physical activities. At the same time, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School regularly held basketball, volleyball, tug-of-war, tai chi competitions and other sports activities, which not only enriched the after-school life of the students, but also stimulated their enthusiasm to participate in sports. This is particularly important in times of war.

In the face of the deepening national crisis and the difficult moment of the survival of the country, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School strove to strengthen students' physique and temper students' willpower through active measures. It not only enabled students to better protect themselves and the country, but also fully demonstrated the important mission and responsibility undertaken by the university at the critical moment of national crisis.

2.3 Enhanced militarised training and military literacy

During the war period, the research and study of the military by teachers and students of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was significantly strengthened. For example, in the composition contest conducted every semester, there were generally three questions, at least one of which was about the military or the discussion of the invasion of the country and the nation, the danger of humiliation and how to resist the invasion. Teachers also wrote and published many articles on this subject, such as Wei Jianyou's *The Korean Question and the Sino-Japanese War* and Lu Jingzhou's *An Introduction to the Art of War of Sun-Wu*. There were also many student theses on the military aspects of the war. For example, among the graduation thesis topics arranged by the school in December 1936, there were four military topics, such as *The Military System of the Qing Dynasty* and *Poetry of National Shame in the Hundred Years*, etc. Schools also often hold speech contests on the theme of anti-Japanese, such as the speech contest in December 1936, the whole school students sent two representatives from each class, the theme of the speech is "air defence". The topics of the speeches were "Two qualities of China's national defence today", "How to make the public get a correct understanding of air defence", "National knowledge and preparation for air defence" and so on.

¹¹ Zheng Xuetao, *Looking Back at the Alma Mater - Remembering the People and Events of Sixty Years Ago*[J], Voice of Sinology, General Issue 24 and 25, edited by Shanghai Alumni Association of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, 2001, pp. 1-2.

¹² Li Lide, *Memoirs of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School Moving to Guangxi*[J], Wuxi Sinology Specialized School in Guangxi, issued by Wuxi Sinology Specialized School Alumni Association, 1993, p. 199.

¹³ Meng Shouchun, *Inspection Report*[J], Republic of China Archives, Report of the Ministry of Education on the Inspection of the Private Wuxi School of National Studies, Wuchang Wenhua Library College, and Related Documents 1941-1943, Full File No. V, Volume No. 2031, Nanjing, Second Archives of Chinese History.

Not only that, in order to strengthen the students' will and organisational discipline, and always fought for the protection of the family, the country and the nation, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School also conducted military training for the new students entering the school every year, and practiced live-fire shooting. In the years before the outbreak of the war, the militarised management was gradually strengthened. After the "September 18 Incident", Wuxi Sinology Specialized School "implemented military management and militarisation in the school. All students wore grey uniforms in summer and yellow uniforms in winter. The signal for work and rest was changed to a bugle call, and it was stipulated that every day at 6:30 a.m. and 5:50 p.m. would be the time for raising and lowering the flag, and the whole school would gather to salute". Finally, the whole school was formed into a brigade, with Tang Wenzhi as the brigade commander, and the whole school was divided into five districts, with the headmaster appointing "students with rich experience in military training" to be the district commanders¹⁴. On 23rd May 1935, Chen Panzao, a counsellor sent by the Ministry of Education, and Chen Kezhong, the director of the National Compilation and Translation Museum, visited the school, and it so happened that the students of the first and second grades of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School "went to Huishan to shoot at targets with live bullets on the same day and achieved good results". The third grade and cram school students wore uniforms in class. They were impressed by the school's rigour.

On the other hand, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School paid great attention to the international situation and studies the China-Japan issue in depth. In order to enhance the anti-Japanese awareness and coping ability of teachers and students, it successively invited scholars such as Qian Jibo and Tang Qingyi to give lectures on anti-Japanese issues, analyse the current affairs rationally, and seek for good anti-Japanese strategies. When the news of the "September 18 Incident" in 1931 reached Wuxi, "the students were filled with indignation and discussed the strike, how to protest and how to propagandise the masses. In the afternoon classes, some teachers had already been invited by the students to talk about the history of the modern Japanese invasion of China."¹⁵ Wuxi Sinology Specialized School resolved to suspend classes, and the students who stayed behind to suspend classes also actively carried out military training and Japanese studies, with a view to contributing to the anti-Japanese salvation.

3. The Practice of Resistance: Saving Our Country, Saving Our People

President Tang Wenzhi praised Zhang Zai's ideal of "To ordain conscience for Heaven and Earth. To secure life and fortune for the people. To continue lost teachings for past sages. To establish peace for all future generations." And Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was always to "save my country, save my people" as the ultimate goal. At a time when the country was in turmoil, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was extremely important to stimulate students' patriotic consciousness of salvation. In daily teaching, Tang Wenzhi, on the one hand, required students to be practical and diligent, on the other hand, he opposed students to study only, and encouraged students to pay attention to the current affairs of the country and the current situation of the society through tangible or intangible methods.

3.1 Adapting to the current situation and forming a characteristic culture

Being in the era of deep national crisis, for the country's wealth and strength, for the revival of national culture was the lifelong pursuit of President Tang Wenzhi, but also became a characteristic campus culture of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School.

In terms of material culture, Wuxi National College has created a strong cultural atmosphere and strong national sentiment through plaques and banners. Some alumni recall that the school auditorium hung a plaque with the word "Make New People" on both sides of the banner with a length of more than ten feet and a width

¹⁴ Wuxi Sinology Specialized School Monthly[N], vol. 4, No. 1, p. 77.

¹⁵ Wong Hon-man. Remembering Mr Tang Wenzhi [M]. Jiangsu Literary and Historical Materials Selected Nineteenth Series, 1987(8).

of two feet, on which was engraved a couplet made by Tang Wenzhi who personally blended the classics of Confucius and Mencius: “To learn well is close to wisdom, to do hard work is close to benevolence, and to be aware of shame is close to courage...Never be corrupted by wealth or status, depart from principle due to poverty or humble position, or bow down to power or force...”¹⁶ The campus also built the ‘Zunjing Pavilion’, and will be the Confucian classics of famous quotations and sages in the portrait hanging around for people to look up to. After the “September 18 Incident”, Tang Wenzhi wrote an article to rebuke the rulers of the misguided country, and to wake up people’s hearts. And he hung a plaque in the dining hall of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, on which he wrote inspiring sentences to remind the whole school teachers and students. After the Japanese occupation of Shanghai, Tang Wenzhi has been inspiring the teachers and students of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School to maintain the temperament, wrote “Noble Spirit” and other words and couplets. Wuxi Sinology Specialized School through the rendering of this series of cultural atmosphere, motivate the students of patriotic salvation consciousness, the students of intangible patriotism education.

In terms of spiritual culture, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School actively promoted “dispositional education” and enlightened the people’s self-awareness through national education. How to realise “dispositional education”? Mr Tang’s thinking is quite special, that is, with the help of reading and writing articles, complete the students’ personality shaping. In order to help students feel the ‘true nature’ of ancient literature and rhetoric, Tang Wenzhi combined with Wu Rulun’s concept to create a “Tang tone” reading method, requiring students to read the text of the first to seek its fate where the intention, and then test its voice, in order to seek its spirit. Deeply imbued with the “Tang Tone”, the students of the National College gradually developed a national language skill that was hard to reach by students from other schools, forming a unique campus culture of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School: “In the double-basic training of reading, every student of the National College can recite at least 500 or 600 long ancient texts by heart...Most of the students knew how to feel the beauty of the wording and structure of the texts in the rhythm of the tones. No matter in the morning or in the evening, inside and outside the classrooms of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, there was always the sound of reading. Such a “traditional academy-style” method of reading, ignoring the ridicule of rote learning, formed Wuxi Sinology Specialized School’s own style of learning, which was really rare when looking at liberal arts universities at that time.”¹⁷

In 1948, Liu Yizheng, who was then the curator of the First Library of Jiangsu Province (the Library of National Studies), inscribed the graduation commemorative magazine with the words “to enlighten the people with the sinology”. This can be regarded as Liu Yizheng’s great expectation for the graduates of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, as well as his great affirmation of the achievements and academic influence of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School in the past thirty years. As one of the many institutions of higher learning in modern China, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School’s emphasis on fostering cultural life also reflects an indisputable historical fact, that is, famous universities in modern China generally attach importance to building and fostering campus culture. Before the outbreak of the war of resistance, many famous modern Chinese universities generally formed a campus culture with its own characteristics. University campus culture has a wide and far-reaching influence on the cultivation of specialists, academic heritage and development, and social and cultural progress in a subtle way. The richness and diversity of its manifestations and the powerful and far-reaching influence of its functions are enough for the future generations of colleges and universities to actively learn from and reflect on.

3.2 Actively carrying out anti-Japanese salvation activities

In the course of its development, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School has witnessed a number of student anti-Japanese salvation movements. While studying, the students of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School did not

¹⁶ Wu, Tiannan. *Wuxi Sinology Specialised School and Modern National Education* [M]. Hefei: Anhui Education Press, 2010:35.

¹⁷ Wu, Tiannan. *Wuxi Sinology Specialised School and Modern National Education* [M]. Hefei: Anhui Education Press, 2010:128.

forget to pay attention to the affairs of the country, standing up for the nation in times of national crisis, contributing generously to the masses in times of disaster and distress, and upholding justice and integrity when confronted with coercion and enticement. All these performances were inseparable from the purpose and measures of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School. Under the leadership of Tang Wenzhi, the talents cultivated by Wuxi Sinology Specialized School were full of patriotic feelings, and took up the important task of saving the country and the people at the time of national crisis.

In August 1931, there were torrential rains in Suzhou and Anhui Province for several days, and the victims were displaced. Wuxi Sinology Specialized School "Student Self-Government Council resolved to reduce the Mid-Autumn Festival food expenses by fifteen yuan to provide relief for the victims."¹⁸ It also petitioned the authorities to collect special donations for disaster relief from amusement parks and restaurants, so that a small amount would add up to a large amount to help with the disaster relief. In 1932, at the board meeting of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School, the issue of how teachers should instruct students to engage in active national salvation work was also discussed, "At this time of national difficulties, headmasters and teaching staff should be asked to do their best to instruct students to engage in active national salvation work, to study effectively, and to store up talents for the country."

As Japan's invasion of China intensified, the government's concessions prompted the outbreak of the December 9th Movement in Beiping. In order to support the student movement in Beiping, the students of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School called for a strike, which was supported by the headmaster Tang Wenzhi. 'President Tang was usually very strict in his management of students, but always sympathised with and supported students "patriotic activities, so there was never any obstruction to students' participation in patriotic movements in Wuxi Sinology Specialized School." In 1936, "Suiyuan Campaign" began, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School for the aid of soldiers, students initiated their own food donations, teachers also put forward two per cent of their salary remitted to the front. In addition, the students of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School also went to Nanjing to petition the government to send troops to fight against the Japanese. President Tang Wenzhi personally sent the students who went to Nanjing to show their support to the entrance of the school.

Teachers and students of Wuxi Sinology Specialized School closely linked their personal destiny with the rise and fall of the country, and proved their patriotic sentiment and responsibility with practical actions. This spirit is not only a vivid embodiment of the purpose and measures of national college, but also the common voice and action of young students in that era. Under the leadership of President Tang Wenzhi, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School has cultivated a batch of talents who are full of passion and courage. They stepped forward at the critical moment of national crisis and shouldered the important responsibility of the times to save the country and the people, and contributed their strength to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

3.3 Resisting invasion with education and promoting civilian education

Wuxi Sinology Specialized School has always valued popular education among the people. It held popular literacy classes and assigned students to teach. In organising anti-Japanese propaganda activities, they often sent their students "to give speeches in tea houses and places of public entertainment, or to have individual talks in various shops, in different ways but with the same goal in mind. The students were enthusiastic in their work and never tired of it...In total, the lectures lasted for a week and were listened to by tens of thousands of people, which was a boost to the popular education in extraordinary times". In September and October 1937, when the internal relocation was about to take place, the situation in Wuxi was already very dangerous, and the Battle of Songhu was going on fiercely, the students still participated in the work of the Wuxi Backup Association in an organised way, while insisting on attending classes. On the way to Guangxi, despite the dangers along the way, the students and teachers still distributed leaflets and propagandised the war of resistance.

After Wuxi Sinology Specialized School entered the period when Gui School and Shanghai School were

¹⁸ *A Record of Recent Events in Disaster Relief - A District Office Collects Clothing and Reduces Meals for Wuxi Sinology Specialised School Students* [N]. New Wuxi (新无锡), 1931, 9(26): 3.

established side by side, Gui School went through a period of hard time, but its teachers and students insisted on organising the resumption of classes actively in every place. At the same time, the Shanghai school also immediately resumed classes and recruited new students under the leadership of Tang Wenzhi. At the time of dislocation, Wuxi Sinology Specialized School always remembered the responsibility of “resisting aggression with education”. Wuxi Sinology Specialized School actively set up a popular education hall, opened civilian education classes, set up patriotic associations, and always adhered to the intention of “saving the country without forgetting to study, and studying without forgetting to save the country”. Yan Qingtian wrote in his article: “We set up a popular education centre in the school, and the students were in charge of everything. We had already set up a civilian education class in the school, but later we discussed with the mayor of the village and extended this movement to the whole village. The spirit of the students is also exceptionally excited, almost every student has a responsibility that he or she can take on, so it can be said that all the students are mobilised.”¹⁹ During the period of the war of resistance, its popular school was still handled in a very formal manner, formulating statutes, compiling and printing teaching materials and handouts, and combining the propaganda of the war of resistance with the education of culture and knowledge, which was generally praised by all walks of life in the local community.

In addition, the teachers and students of Wuxi Sinology Specialised School frequently planned speaking engagements. They also took the opportunity of promoting civilian education to post slogans, cartoons and portraits of war heroes, provided popular books and pamphlets on general knowledge of the war, and organised cultural and recreational activities and evenings. While enriching the cultural and recreational life of local villagers, they actively encouraged the anti-Japanese sentiment of the people. Teachers and students went into the countryside to publicise the military service campaign and to collect donations to support the front line of the war. A student recalled, “We paid a lot of attention to propaganda work. Often, we seized important anniversaries and set off to the countryside to spread propaganda. The villagers regarded us as university students, so our words were more credible than those of primary and secondary school students, and the results were often unexpected. The school authorities also made use of the summer and winter holidays to set out the propaganda programme, assigning us to work at home, and when we returned to the school after the holidays, we held review meetings and practised self-criticism. In March this year, we were ordered by the Ministry to collect funds, and under the mobilisation of the whole group, we were actually able to collect more than one thousand one hundred yuan within two days, which was an unexpected achievement in a remote and cold village and we were deeply touched by it.”²⁰

Wuxi Sinology Specialized School was in a difficult situation, but it never bowed to humiliation. In 1943, in order not to be registered with the enemy authorities, into the colonial slavery education system, the name of the school will be restored to the original name. According to the relevant archives, there were eleven private universities in the Shanghai Concession that were not registered with the Ministry of Education, and Wuxi Sinology Specialised School was one of them. This deeply reflects the Wuxi Sinology Specialized School people defy power, righteousness and national integrity. As Wang Tongsun said, “The righteousness of loving the country and the nation and sharing the same hatred with the enemy, which was expressed in the anti-war migration, undoubtedly also deeply infected the students, and the flame was passed on to achieve the purpose of inheriting and spreading the cultural heritage.”

Conclusion

Wuxi Sinology Specialised School has always been inspired by the national crisis, and has taken up the

¹⁹ Yan Qingtian. *Wuxi Sinology Specialised School in the War of Resistance*[M]// Wang Juoyuan. *A bird's eye view of universities in China during the war*. Shanghai: Independent Publishing House, 1941:354.

²⁰ Yan Qingtian. *Wuxi Sinology Specialised School in the War of Resistance*[M]// Wang Juoyuan. *A bird's eye view of universities in China during the war*. Shanghai: Independent Publishing House, 1941:350.

mission of saving people's hearts and minds and safeguarding national self-respect. The educational practice of Wuxi Sinology Specialised School is also a reflection of the concept of 'Education for National Salvation' in the field of higher education. The concept of 'education for national salvation' is the ideological foundation and basis for the dedication of the majority of educators to education since modern times. It is also under the support of this concept that they have made education their lifelong pursuit, and have made the development of education as the "road to freedom" for China to get rid of slavery.

The spirit and practice of "cultural salvation" in Wuxi Sinology Specialized School and other universities injected a strong force into the cultural and educational front at that time, demonstrating the responsibility and social mission of China's higher education in the moment of national crisis. Based on the national culture and nurturing national integrity, it is an important part of the educational struggle, and an important basis for rebuilding cultural identity and national identity. The educational struggle carried out by Chinese universities is committed to awakening the people's national self-esteem and confidence, and improving their resistance consciousness. More importantly, this struggle also provided strong support and inspiration for the national liberation movements of various countries, and even more, provided valuable experience and lessons for the global anti-colonialism movement.

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