1. The origins of modern Chinese education

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INTRODUCTION

China underwent transition in the later nineteenth century. The Opium Wars forced the Qing Dynasty to open the door and exposed its vulnerability, while China’s defeat in the Sino-Japanese War (1895) devastated the nation. In these circumstances, educational reform was seen as an instrument of national salvation. The nation was called upon to change; this was the keynote of educational development in the last century. Many students went abroad, new academic institutions were established or reformed, and educational legislation was passed. This process was associated with models from Japan and from Western countries. The purpose of this chapter is threefold. It first gives an overview of the educational system and of the development of basic education in the Republican period. Next, it considers higher education in the context of national and global forces. Finally, it looks at the reshaping of teacher education and considers how two representative teachers’ institutions were influenced by the visits of scholars from abroad. While the initiatives for reforming basic education were largely internal, higher education was strongly influenced by models from Japan and from the West. Teacher education stands between the two, drawing on China’s educational tradition of respect for teachers and the European concept of the ‘normal’ school, with the Chinese term shifan, or ‘the teacher as a model’, used to translate it.

THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM AND BASIC EDUCATION

The Beginning of Reform from 1840

After 1840, the aim was to save the Qing Dynasty from collapse, through introducing practical subjects, combined with classical Confucian learning. When China began educational modernization under the ‘Self-Strengthening Movement’ between 1861 and 1894, the aim was a new educational system, yet preserving elements of classical education. The academies or shuyuan and middle schools (zhongdengxuetang)
became early modern colleges and secondary schools respectively under the Manchu government, while traditional *xiaoxuetang* became elementary schools. However, in curriculum, the reformers saw no need to break away from tradition. The way to reconcile tensions between national development and cultural tradition was to accept Western learning for its usefulness, and maintain the learning of Confucian orthodoxy (Chen, 1979a, 271). In 1901, all modern schools taught the *Four Books* and the *Five Classics* of Confucianism, as well as Confucian ethics, while history, Chinese and foreign politics, science and technology were subsidiary. According to Zhang Zhidong, even though some practical knowledge from foreign countries was integrated into the curriculum, the school regulations were only moderately revised, and the slogan ‘Chinese learning for basic principles, Western learning for practical use’ was dominant in that period. Traditional education was regarded as key to stability by the Qing Dynasty authorities (Zhang, 1898 [1963], 203).

**The Strengthening of Reform**

The Revolution of 1911 replaced the Qing Dynasty with a democratic republic and provides a landmark in the history of education in China. According to the Ministry of Education in 1912 (see Figure 1.1), the aim was to inculcate the following virtues: loyalty to the Republic, reverence for Confucius, and devotion to and respect for what is practical (Fairbank et al., 1986, 388). A child could enter kindergarten and then follow four further levels. The four-year lower primary schools aimed at producing the ‘right kind of citizens’, the curriculum being: morals, the mother tongue, mathematics, handwork, drawing, singing, and physical education. Sewing was added for girls. In the higher primary schools, students were taught the same subjects with the addition of Chinese, history, geography and natural science. Agriculture and commerce were added for boys and English lessons were given in some schools. The curriculum of the four-year middle schools was essentially advanced work in the subjects taught in primary schools. More emphasis was laid on foreign languages, usually English, and on the natural sciences. Women’s education lagged behind that of men, except for a few missionary schools for girls. The highest level, including universities, professional schools, and higher normal schools, aimed to train students for the service of the state (Bailey, 1990, 134–136).

Further changes took place between 1912 and 1919, one of the chief being a move towards co-education. State colleges and universities were opened to female students, although few were admitted. The government still provided more schools and colleges for men despite demands for the
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equal treatment of women. Furthermore, not all the courses offered to men were available to women because of limited teaching resources, and a tendency to underestimate women’s potential. However, the New Culture Movement of 1915 and the May Fourth Movement of 1919 challenged the traditional ideology of Confucianism as more and more Western-educated returning students achieved positions of leadership (Wang, 1966, 72).

A Modern System Established

In October 1921, the seventh conference of the National Educational Association was held in Guangzhou, bringing together the educational associations of various provinces for the first time. One result was the redesign of the educational system, as follows: (1) to develop the spirit of education for the common people on the basis of republicanism; (2) to adapt education to the needs of a progressive society; (3) to develop the diverse characteristics of the students by adopting an elective system; (4) to meet the financial resources for education demanded by the people; (5) to offer opportunities for local adjustments; and (6) to make universal education easier.

This new structure had three levels: elementary, intermediate and higher

Source: Chinese Students’ Alliance (1922, 25).

Figure 1.1 Structure of the school system, 1912
education (see Figure 1.2). It brought changes, with vocational and normal schools introduced at the secondary level and above, integrated within a structure that allowed six years for primary school, three for lower secondary, three for upper secondary, and three to five years for specialist
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colleges or universities (Qian and Jin, 1996, 284–300). This followed the American system and was called renxu xuezhi (Li, 2015, 33).

The greatest change was in the middle school. The new plan called for a six-year period of secondary school rather than the four years of the 1912 system. This was divided between three years of general education and three years of specialized vocational training. This made it possible to prepare some for higher education, while providing vocational training for those who were to leave school. The system remained stable, though slightly revised for educational or political reasons, and China’s educational system still reflects the patterns put in place in 1922.

BASIC EDUCATION

Primary Education

In July, three months prior to the 1911 Revolution, the first conference of the Central Education Council was held in Beijing. A scheme for compulsory education embodied in 18 clauses was adopted officially (Council of International Affairs, 1936, 134), although the Revolution prevented the scheme from being introduced. Up to 1910, the number of children enrolled in primary schools, including kindergarten, was 1,416,206, about 2 per cent of school-age children in the country (Ministry of Education, 1910 [1921], 315).

After the Republic was established, the government emphasized that education was essential to a modern system, with primary schools the foundation. Dr Wu Ting-fang, the first Chinese Minister to the United States, expressed this new spirit: ‘Education, basic education, is our first need and our greatest need; it is the imperative need of any country where the people rule. To better govern presupposes trained minds, think what a republic of 400,000,000 educated people will make!’ (Chinese Students’ Alliance, 1914, 373). Half-day schools were opened for those whose schooling had been neglected and compulsory education was adopted as policy. This was endorsed by an Emergency Central Educational Conference in Beijing between 10 July and 10 August 1912. On 31 July 1915, compulsory attendance regulations were included in the ordinance on citizenship education at lower primary school (Chinese Students’ Alliance, 1922, 22). In the following year, a complementary set of regulations was passed, comprising the following sections: schooling age, obligation for attendance, exemption from the obligation, school census, and enforcement of compulsory attendance (Chinese Students’ Alliance, 1921a, 316). The number of trained teachers and normal schools was to be increased to meet the demands of district schools. Similar programmes were introduced in various provinces.
Handbook of education in China

Table 1.1 Increase in compulsory education enrolment, 1913–1917

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of children enrolled</th>
<th>Increase over the preceding year</th>
<th>Increase over 1912–1913</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1912–1913</td>
<td>2 756 857</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913–1914</td>
<td>3 444 205</td>
<td>687 348 (24.93%)</td>
<td>687 348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914–1915</td>
<td>3 875 292</td>
<td>431 088 (12.52%)</td>
<td>1 118 436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915–1916</td>
<td>4 086 962</td>
<td>211 669 (5.46%)</td>
<td>1 330 105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916–1917</td>
<td>4 122 878</td>
<td>359 16 (0.88%)</td>
<td>1 366 021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education (1920, 155).

Table 1.2 Compulsory enrolment in four provinces, numbers of children, 1915–1916 to 1918–1919

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>289 269</td>
<td>317 346</td>
<td>317 346</td>
<td>360 238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shanxi</td>
<td>318 071</td>
<td>318 743</td>
<td>333 330</td>
<td>326 569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yunnan</td>
<td>189 400</td>
<td>186 254</td>
<td>198 457</td>
<td>173 981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hubei</td>
<td>229 740</td>
<td>267 873</td>
<td>270 984</td>
<td>138 526</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Chinese Students’ Alliance (1922, 22).

(see Table 1.1). By 1917, the number of children enrolled in lower and higher primary schools for the whole country was 4 122 878 (Ministry of Education, 1920, 155), including those in missionary schools, with the latter standing at 159 974 (China Continuation Committee, 1918, 137). The total enrolment was 4 282 852 or 6.39 per cent of school-age children. The school enrolment nationally and in selected provinces can be seen in Tables 1.1 and 1.2.

In primary education the emphasis was on combatting illiteracy, but it was 1935 before a five-year plan for compulsory education was adopted by the Nationalist Government, effective until 1939. The Anti-Japanese War, in July 1937, made it impossible to carry out this programme as planned. While there had been advances between 1919 and 1937, Table 1.3 shows the drop in primary school attendance and in the number of teachers between 1937 and 1940.

Secondary Education

In traditional China the education system had two levels. It was not until 1898 that the intermediate level of ‘middle school’ was included in a set of regulations governing the establishment of educational institutions. These
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were revised and amended in the first national legislation of 1902, *renyin xuezhi*, when a four-year term for middle schools was stipulated. Industrial education was added to the curriculum during the third and fourth years. Normal schools were also attached to middle schools. In the 1903 legislation, known as the *guimao xuezhi*, which revamped the *renyin xuezhi*, the term of study in middle schools was lengthened to five years. Agricultural, industrial and commercial vocational schools at the secondary level which offered similar five-year courses were also established (Chen, 1981, 67).

In 1912, educational legislation, or *renzi guichou*, was passed whereby the length of schooling for middle schools was returned to four years, while normal schools with a five-year programme were put under provincial governments. Regulations concerning the establishment of middle and normal schools for girls were promulgated. A four-year course of study was instituted in vocational schools. The term ‘secondary education’ included three kinds of schools from then onwards: ordinary middle schools, normal schools and vocational schools. The term ‘middle school’ included both junior and senior grades, according to their nature and sources of income, with both public and private middle schools. The public schools might be at national, provincial, municipal or county level. Almost all normal schools were public.

Secondary education was revised again in 1922, with the new regulations stipulating a six-year course for middle schools and normal schools. The middle schools were divided into junior and senior grades, each for three years. Junior middle schools could be established independently, but integrated junior–senior middle schools were declared preferable. Senior schools could offer courses in agriculture, industry and commerce. The Nationalist Government in 1928 modified secondary education whereby equal emphasis was laid on arts and sciences. For provincial governments, legislative encouragement was given for establishing both lower and higher vocational schools focusing on agriculture or industry. By 7 July 1937, China had 3264 secondary educational institutions, of which 1296 were in areas occupied by Japan after the war began. The pre-war institutions of secondary education included 1958 middle schools, 814 normal schools

Table 1.3 Primary education statistics, 1937–1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of schools</th>
<th>Number of teachers and staff</th>
<th>Number of pupils</th>
<th>Number of graduates</th>
<th>Annual appropriations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1937–1938</td>
<td>229,911</td>
<td>482,160</td>
<td>1,284,792</td>
<td>24,973,78</td>
<td>734,445,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938–1939</td>
<td>217,394</td>
<td>432,630</td>
<td>1,228,183</td>
<td>27,338,46</td>
<td>649,329,10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939–1940</td>
<td>218,758</td>
<td>427,454</td>
<td>1,269,997</td>
<td>30,278,85</td>
<td>658,70,491</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education (1948, 50–51).
and 494 vocational schools, while the number of secondary educational institutions was 2819 in 1941, according to the Ministry of Education. Of these, 2158 were middle schools, 374 were normal schools and 287 vocational schools. As for private institutions, 250 were Christian middle schools (Ministry of Education, 1948, 13–15). The number of students and graduates from secondary educational institutions in the academic year 1940–1941 is shown in Tables 1.4 and 1.5.

Several characteristics may be seen. First, in almost every decade, the system underwent reforms that influenced both primary and secondary schools. Secondly, the numbers of schools and graduates were linked to higher education expansion and modifications in that system. Thirdly, the successive educational reforms were aimed at expanding the population of

### Table 1.4  Number of students by category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Number of students, 1940–1941</th>
<th>Number of graduates, 1940–1941</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of students</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Middle schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior middle schools</td>
<td>96214</td>
<td>524395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior middle schools</td>
<td>428181</td>
<td>28109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Normal schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal schools</td>
<td>17597</td>
<td>59431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village normal schools</td>
<td>2163</td>
<td>635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplified normal schools</td>
<td>23900</td>
<td>5368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simplified village normal schools</td>
<td>15771</td>
<td>1599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Vocational schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher vocational schools:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>2917</td>
<td>17287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industries</td>
<td>7883</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>3393</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home industries</td>
<td>2754</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>340</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower vocational schools:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>8495</td>
<td>21687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industries</td>
<td>5521</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce</td>
<td>4449</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home industries</td>
<td>3111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>111</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>622800</td>
<td>82407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Ministry of Information (1943, 389).*
students and there was a focus on implementing governmental regulations and promoting teacher education. The initiative for these changes was largely from within, though external models and ideas had some influence.

**HIGHER EDUCATION**

A modern Chinese higher education system emerged, gradually influenced by Western learning. Although such influence on Chinese higher education was profound, the system still had classical elements. The literal term in Chinese for higher education is *daxue* which, according to the great twelfth-century scholar Zhu Xixue, means the learning offered to students during the Song Dynasty (Zhu, 1182 [1983], 28). Throughout the Ming and Qing dynasties the basic functions of traditional academies or *shuyuan* paralleled the universities that developed in Europe. The earliest introduction of Western higher education ideas in China goes back to the Jesuit missionaries of the seventeenth century (Reynolds, 2001, 88) and to the Protestant missionaries of the early nineteenth century (Lutz, 1971, 25).

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**Table 1.5**  
*Annual expenditures of secondary educational institutions by category, 1936–1940*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Annual expenditure ($)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>29935112</td>
<td>46561868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal schools</td>
<td>8897029</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational schools</td>
<td>7729727</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>20866634</td>
<td>30396758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal schools</td>
<td>5313267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational schools</td>
<td>4217857</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>24615400</td>
<td>34647885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal schools</td>
<td>5691929</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational schools</td>
<td>4340556</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>32027520</td>
<td>44889288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal schools</td>
<td>7397214</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational schools</td>
<td>5464554</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>43984272</td>
<td>64356462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Normal schools</td>
<td>11101958</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vocational schools</td>
<td>9270232</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>220852261</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Belief in a state that maintained bureaucratic orthodoxy was not broken until China’s defeat by Japan in 1895. This led to a readiness to learn from foreign cultural models in the hope that this would lead to national salvation. Japan was the first to gain attention and many promising young Chinese were sent there. Another interesting feature was the large number of books translated. The number of students rose from 13 in 1896, to 500 in 1902, 1300 in 1903 and approximately 13000 by 1906 (Chen, 1981, 163). The books translated from Japanese relating to education included 76 titles, or 20 per cent of the total of translated works (Sanetou, 1980, 45). These included *The Education Regulations of Tokyo University* (1898), *The Newly Established Japanese Education System* (1902), *The Regulations of Tokyo Normal School* (1902) and *The Outline of Japanese Education* (1902) (Zhu, 1987, 27).

Japanese higher education patterns were thus introduced, including the University of Tokyo model that had itself absorbed French and German influences and which appealed to conservative political leaders (Hayhoe, 1994, 362–384). As the first comprehensive national university, the Imperial University of Peking, founded in 1898, was almost the only institution under the influence of progressive intellectuals involved in the Hundred Day Reform Movement of 1898 to survive the conservative backlash following the Boxer Rebellion (1899–1901). At the same time, knowledge for military self-strengthening was incorporated into the new educational system, with the founding of Beiyang University (1895) and Nanyang University (1896), both focusing on engineering (Bastid, 1988, 232). Christian higher education institutions were also established under foreign Christian leadership. Men such as Young J. Allen, Timothy Richard, Gilbert Reid, John Fryer and W.A.P. Martin had provided guidance to the reformers. In 1912, however, there were only three government sponsored Imperial Universities, and eight Christian institutions (Lutz, 1971, 531).

The influence of Western higher education was seen in the growing number of Chinese students in the United States of America (USA) and Europe between 1908 and 1912. The first preparatory school for students to study in the USA was established in 1908, becoming Tsinghua College in 1911 (Pan, 2009, 68). It was supported financially through the Boxer Rebellion Indemnity Scholarship Programme (BISP). By 1912 the number of students sent to America through government sponsorship reached 190, while the total number of students supported by public and private funds was over 600. Between 1909 and 1925, 1031 Chinese students were sent to the United States with government support (Wang, 1966, 112), while the total number was about 2200 (Chinese Students’ Alliance, 1921b, 36–82).

These efforts were ‘initiated from within’ (Liu and Shi, 2010, 355), but...
in response to global circumstances, rather than as simply a transition between two different education systems (Harrison, 2000, 6). The aim was, yet again, to introduce modern patterns from Japan or the West, while preserving Confucian social harmony, with the principle of Chinese learning as the essence (ti), and Western knowledge for its usefulness (yong) (Lee, 2000, 212, 335). Yet there was a trend towards more and more ‘Western knowledge’ being accepted for its usefulness, from ships and cannons, to science and mathematics, to industrialization, and finally to schooling.

These modifications in educational perspective were a ‘silent revolution’ preparing the way for the revolutionary changes of the twentieth century (Biggerstaff, 1961, 135).

Educational Change under the Republic of China, 1911–1927

Western educational ideas and theories were diffused throughout the educated nation, with American higher education models having the greatest appeal. Comprehensive higher education was introduced in association with ideas of democracy and a scientific spirit. Peking University and Southeast University provide two typical examples. Peking University was established as the Imperial University by the late Qing government in 1898. After Cai Yuanpei was appointed chancellor in 1916, the university was shaped as a scholarly community rather than as a ladder into officialdom, the role it had played in the final years of the Qing Dynasty. The principle of academic freedom was introduced to ensure a diversity of perspectives and to stimulate student initiative and creativity (Li, 2012, 62). Cai Yuanpei’s emphasis on education for a world view was a striking aspect of his vision for student development. Under his leadership Peking University became the first government university with a comprehensive array of modern disciplines. Cai’s years at the universities of Leipzig and Berlin had influenced his vision (Cai, 1917 [1984], 130).

The second significant university was Southeast University under the leadership of Guo Bingwen. As the first Chinese to obtain a doctoral degree in education from Columbia University, Guo aimed to develop Southeast University as a top university with the motto ‘striving for perfection’. It followed the American model, and Guo’s ability to attract 50 outstanding returned students as academic staff gave impetus to the institution. It was recognized as being second only to National Peking University (Keenan, 1977, 57).

Higher educational change may be summed up as follows. First, it emphasized the cultivation of students’ personalities. Secondly, the reshaping of universities according to Western models led to the emergence of Western philosophical ideas and a more comprehensive
range of disciplines. Thirdly, missionary universities were influential in cultivating students. These included Yen-Ching University, Beijing; St John’s University, Shanghai; Jinling University, Nanjing; and Canton Christian College, Guangzhou. These missionary universities were also pioneers in co-education (Lutz, 1971, 116). The private universities, Nankai University in Tianjin, and Amoy University in Xiamen, may also be cited as prestigious examples (Ministry of Education, 1934a, 28).

Higher Education Development, 1927–1937

Educational legislation was in development when the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang) became the government in Nanjing in 1927. Institutions recognized by the newly established Ministry of Education as universities were of three categories: national universities, provincial universities and registered private universities (Hayhoe, 1991, 110). Those in the first two categories were the best-equipped and financially supported by the national government and provincial governments, respectively, with university presidents appointed by public authority and administration under public control. For private universities, registration with the Ministry of Education led to formal government recognition and permission to enrol students. By 1931 there were: 39 universities: 13 national, 12 provincial and 14 private institutions; 17 colleges: 2 national, 6 provincial and 9 private; and 23 professional schools: 3 national, 15 provincial and 5 private.

Of the 28 677 students in universities and colleges, 36.7 per cent were studying law and political science and 22.5 per cent liberal arts. By contrast only 11.5 per cent were in engineering, 9.7 per cent in natural sciences and smaller percentages in commerce (6.2 per cent), education (6.1 per cent), medicine (3.1 per cent) and agriculture (3.1 per cent) (Hayhoe, 1989, 65). In the science disciplines an increasing amount of scientific equipment was provided for universities, while in the humanities new approaches to Chinese literature were developed. Throughout the 1920s and especially after 1927, returned students from the West held most of the leading administrative and academic positions, including those in the Ministry of Education, the provincial education bureaux and in the higher institutions themselves. In terms of the constitution of colleges within each university, the regulations called for colleges of humanities, social sciences, science, law, education, business, agriculture, engineering and medicine. For an institution to be recognized as a university it needed at least three colleges in the above subjects, with one being a college of science, agriculture, engineering or medicine. Universities with more than three colleges had the privilege of postgraduate departments. After 1935, 26 departments of graduate studies with 45 courses were established in 12 institutions (Ministry of Information, 1943, 384).
One characteristic was the use of regulations that emphasized quality improvement. Soon after the Nationalist Party took over in Nanjing in 1927, the government launched a university district system on the French model. Cai Yuanpei was appointed as the director but, unfortunately, it was abolished following the reorganization of the Ministry of Education in October 1928 (Yeh, 1990, 168). Cai had hoped to foster autonomy for universities, but the Nationalist authorities were determined to maintain strong control over such a sensitive sector. Another change was a credit system in February 1932, to ensure students reached a recognized standard. The system required students to attend a set number of lectures, and obtain the necessary scores in the annual examinations over four study years to meet graduation requirements. This was the first time the credit system was used (Hayhoe, 1996, 47). It is notable that many institutions established graduate programmes even though the Ministry of Education had set out stringent requirements in 1929. Only those institutions deemed as having made significant contributions toward the advancement of learning and with an annual budget of at least US$1 million, and with sufficient library and laboratory equipment, and qualified staff were permitted to offer graduate studies (Ministry of Information, 1943, 392).

A second aspect was the conviction that a reformed higher education was essential to China’s modernization. The country’s modern universities developed in a variety of ways and achieved a degree of autonomy and intellectual freedom (Bastid, 1992, 14–17). An example of change can be seen at the National Central University founded in Nanjing in 1915. The disciplines covered were increased to 32, organized in eight colleges. Another significant change was that Peking University, Tsinghua University, the National Central University and Zhejiang University were granted the right to establish research institutions which enrolled graduate students. The educational changes of this period may be understood in terms of the tension between dominant Western models and China’s classical traditions (Biggerstaff, 1961, 37).

To sum up, the characteristic of this period is independence of educational thought with a focus on educational transformation in systematic and institutionally effective ways (Keenan, 1977, 41). However, when a group of European experts from the League of Nations visited China in September 1931, they found aspects that, in its opinion, needed improvement. The experts criticized the organization, educational standards and methods of Chinese higher education after visiting institutions in Beijing and Shanghai as well as Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Hubei provinces. It observed that China was influenced too strongly by American models and needed to develop its own system. Its reform proposals touched on administration, academic staffing, and finance and emphasized the need for different
institutions to cooperate more closely (League of Nations, 1932). Even with these criticisms, the reforms undertaken were very important to China’s higher education development (Ding, 2001, 161). The period may be regarded as a ‘golden age’ when higher institutions enjoyed a comparatively high degree of autonomy.

The War of Resistance, 1937–1949

In 1937, during the war of aggression launched by Japan against China, two notable characteristics of higher education were a rigid governance system and, at a later point, higher education in exile. The first objective was to stabilize the power of the Nationalist Party through strict control of the education system. In November 1938, the Ministry of Education issued lists of obligatory courses to reinforce traditional Chinese morality. The courses in Nationalist Party doctrine were renamed as ‘Three Principles of the People’ (nationalism, people’s democratic rights, and people’s livelihood) and Western theories of freedom and democracy were viewed as obstacles to Nationalist discipline. The second aspect of higher education under wartime conditions was the mass migration of institutions inland. Numerous institutions were combined with universities in hinterland areas such as Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu and Yunnan provinces (Ministry of Information, 1943, 370).

This radical change made greater autonomy and academic freedom possible in some universities (Hayhoe, 1996, 57). Two of the most famous combined institutions were the Southwest Associated University and the Northwest Associated University. The former was a combination of Tsinghua University, Peking University and Nankai University relocated to Yunnan province under the leadership of Jiang Menglin and Mei Yiqi (Israel, 1998, 12). Owing to effective academic guidance and the perseverance of the students, this university cultivated a remarkable quality of scholarship across many disciplines, although under a local warlord government, but away from the interference of national authorities. The Northwest Associated University was comprised of Peiping University, Beijing Normal University and Beiyang Engineering University in Xi’an (Hayhoe, 1996, 55). Apart from these two associated universities, among the national institutions, Zhejiang University, Tongji University, Zhongshan University, Jiaotong University, Xiamen University and Hunan University were also relocated inland. Provincial universities situated near the battlefields, such as Northeast University, Shandong University, Shaanxi University and Anhui University, were also moved inland. The private and missionary universities, Fudan University, Daxia University and Guanghua University were associated together in
### Table 1.6  The number of universities and colleges, 1917–1928 and 1931–1943

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>University (Total)</th>
<th>Independent Colleges (Total)</th>
<th>Technical Colleges (Total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>2 national universities (Peking University, Peiyang University), Tsinghua University, 8 other public and private universities</td>
<td>34 public colleges and universities, 13 private universities and colleges</td>
<td>74 in total (university and independent universities, technical colleges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>University (39)</td>
<td>Independent colleges (17)</td>
<td>Technical colleges (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13 national</td>
<td>2 national</td>
<td>3 national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(79 in total)</td>
<td>12 provincial</td>
<td>15 public, provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 private</td>
<td>6 provincial</td>
<td>5 private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>University (42)</td>
<td>Independent colleges (34)</td>
<td>Technical colleges (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16 national</td>
<td>5 national</td>
<td>6 national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(108 in total)</td>
<td>7 provincial</td>
<td>16 public, provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14 private</td>
<td>8 provincial</td>
<td>10 private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>University (41)</td>
<td>Independent colleges (46)</td>
<td>Technical colleges (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22 national (including 7 nationalized after 1938)</td>
<td>16 national</td>
<td>17 national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(133 in total)</td>
<td>10 provincial</td>
<td>16 public, provincial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19 private</td>
<td>20 provincial</td>
<td>13 private</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** 1938: 97 in total; 1939: 101 in total; 1940: 113 in total; 1941: 129 in total; 1945: 141 in total.

**Source:** Ministry of Information (1943, 397).
Jiangxi province for a time, while Jinling University and Jinling Women’s College relocated to Sichuan province (Pearson, 2010, 42).

Despite extremely poor living conditions and great losses in terms of material and financial resources, it is quite striking to see that higher education experienced remarkable growth in enrolments and in the number of institutions over this painful period (see Table 1.6). By 1945, when Japan surrendered, there were 141 institutions, including universities and colleges, both national and private. Of 38 universities, 22 were national and 16 were private; among 45 colleges, 17 were national, 12 were provincial and 16 were private. The total enrolments were 83,498, approximately double those of 1936 (Ministry of Education, 1948, 1400). The search for ideal educational models was a painstaking process for the nation and its intellectuals, under conditions of military invasion and subsequent civil war, yet the efforts did not stop. In fact, according to Chen Lifu, the Minister of Education, the expenditure on higher education ranked the second largest in the national budget after military expenditure during the 12 years of Nationalist rule, 1937–1949 (Chen, 1994, 13).

The Communist Party’s educational model at Yenan had two goals: cadre training and mass education to enable peasants to take part in the revolutionary struggle (Hayhoe, 1984, 33). In 1941 Yenan’s higher-level schools were of two types: for Communist Party members and for those supporting a ‘united front’. Institutions that also played an important role were the Anti-Japanese Military and Political College (K’ang-ta) and the LuXun Academy of Art and Literature, the Natural Science Academy, the Chinese Medical University and the National Minorities Institute (Pepper, 2000, 150). The rationale was a ‘new education’ combining Marxist theory with practice through short-term cadre training, both civilian and military (Pepper, 1996, 150), of which more will be said in Chapter 2.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher Education in the Late Qing and Republican Period

In the late Qing and in the Republican periods there were ambitious programmes to build a national teacher education system. The first modern teacher institution in China had been established in Shanghai in 1897 by Sheng Xuanhuai, who led the 1898 reform. In addition, a teachers’ college (shifan guan) was part of the Imperial University, from its establishment in 1898. Soon afterwards, a teachers’ school (shifan yuan) was affiliated with Nanyang University in 1900 as a pilot programme copied from Japanese models (Chen, 1979b, 167–202). On 21 May 1902, the first independent
normal school, Hubei Normal School, was founded by Zhang Zhidong. In the same year Tongzhou Private Normal School was founded by Zhang Jian in Nantong, Jiangsu Province (Cong, 2007, 154). In 1902, an independent teacher education sub-system was included in the first national educational legislation, the renyin xuezhi which aimed to create a modern school system (Ng, 2009, 38). The number of teachers’ schools had increased to 541, compared with 74 specialized colleges (zhuanmen xuetang), 137 vocational schools (shiye xuetang), and 398 regular middle schools (putong zhong xuetang) from 1902 to 1907 (Ministry of Education, 1934b, 19–22, 25–26).

After the 1911 Revolution, legislation was passed that reconstructed teachers’ schools as a unified educational system. This included nationalizing higher teachers’ colleges and placing secondary teachers’ schools under the control of provincial governments. These initiatives were effective in providing a vision for teachers in newly established institutions. In the early Republican era, there was also pressure for women’s greater participation in society. The evolution of normal schools for females was led by Beijing Women’s Higher Teachers’ College, founded as a secondary-level teachers’ school in 1908. The enrolment increased from 145 in the first year to 196 by 1911. The school changed its name to Beijing Women’s Normal School after it enlarged its campus and added a kindergarten education department, while there was a steady increase in student numbers. In June 1919, the Ministry of Education issued a special order that Beijing Women’s Normal School be upgraded to the Beijing Women’s Higher Teachers’ College (Ministry of Education, 1919 [1994], 1036–1042) and in 1924 it became the Beijing Women’s Normal University (Beijing Normal University School History Writing Group, 1982, 50–51). It was not just a pioneering institution that promoted higher education for women, but was an indication that women’s education was now part of the formal educational system (Li, 2015, 41).

Although the 1922 educational legislation is praised for its flexible structure, operational adaptability, and profound influence, teacher education remained restricted (Sun, 1971, 539). In 1922, the number of teacher education institutions was 183, with 5013 teachers and 43,846 students. The higher normal institutions had departments of Chinese, English, history and geography, mathematics and physics, chemistry and biological sciences. The students took majors in the different departments, while common courses were offered in ethics, educational psychology, English and physical culture (Chau, 1922, 22–30). However, from the 1930s more children and youth had the chance to attend modern schools because of the growth in teacher education. China’s institutions of teacher education increased from 667 with 65,695 students in 1929 to 814 schools with 87,902
students by the mid-1930s. In the 1930s, the number of schools almost doubled and the students in teachers’ educational institutions roughly tripled (see Table 1.7).

Before 1937, normal schools were classified as normal schools, village normal schools and simplified village normal schools. All such schools offered a three-year course, and only graduates from junior middle schools were eligible for ordinary normal schools, while graduates from higher primary schools could be admitted to simplified normal schools. Aside from the national normal schools, other normal schools were financed by provincial, municipal or country governments. Given the relocation of universities and colleges during the Anti-Japanese War (1937–1945), the government felt it necessary to restore teachers’ colleges and expand secondary teachers’ schools to satisfy demand. In 1938, the Ministry of Education convened a national education conference which recommended that the teachers’ colleges be attached to universities. As a result, teachers’ schools at the tertiary level were strengthened and teachers’ education at both tertiary and secondary levels was carried out in independent schools to train qualified teachers for local middle schools and promote modern education (Liu, 1985, 43–153). By 1946 the number of normal schools was 902, with 245,609 students. Three years later there were 205 teachers’ education institutions at the higher level, among which twelve were independent teachers’ colleges or normal universities.

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**Table 1.7 Teachers’ schools in China, 1928–1936**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>(1) Total number of teachers’ schools</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>(2) Full-fledged teachers’ schools and village teachers’ schools</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
<th>(3) Simplified teachers’ schools and simplified village teachers’ schools</th>
<th>Total number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>236</td>
<td>29,470</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>65,695</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>82,809</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>94,683</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>73,808</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>20,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>99,606</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>66,477</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>33,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>100,840</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>41,834</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>59,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>876</td>
<td>93,675</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>30,825</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>62,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>84,512</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>33,946</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>50,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>87,902</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>37,785</td>
<td>616</td>
<td>50,117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher education became an important part of the modern Chinese education system. The term *shifan*, which translated the word ‘normal’ and literally means ‘the teacher as a model’, resonated with China’s own educational traditions. China established a comprehensive teacher education system that met the needs of basic education of different types and levels. In terms of teacher nurturing, almost every normal school offered a systematic curriculum, providing theoretical knowledge and a strong preparation in various subjects, together with practice. At the tertiary level, some higher normal schools were merged with comprehensive universities, as happened with Southeast University in Nanjing in 1921, on the American model, while some developed as national normal universities, on the French model. This was the case with Beijing Normal University that resulted from a merger between Beijing Women’s Normal University and Beijing Normal University in 1931, both having been higher normal schools (Hayhoe, 2006, 264).

**American Progressivism and Teacher Education**

In terms of external influences, modern Chinese teacher education institutions became centres that attracted influential educational thinkers from abroad. Beijing Higher Normal School and Nanjing Higher Normal School were two typical institutions that were caught up in ‘John Dewey’s Storm’ (Keenan, 1977, 37). In the years before the American educator John Dewey arrived in 1919, there had been debates about Western philosophy that led to the May Fourth movement, often known as the Chinese Enlightenment. Dewey’s ideas had been promoted by returned students in speeches and articles published in journals before he arrived (Schwarcz, 1986, 121). Between 30 April 1919 and 11 July 1921, Dewey addressed Chinese audiences in 78 lectures. Several of these were series of between 15 and 20 lectures. The majority were given at two higher normal schools in Beijing and in Nanjing (see Table 1.8). Dewey’s philosophical ideas were also disseminated through Chinese journals and literary supplements and in five book editions.2 *How We Think* and *Democracy and Education* were collected during the two semesters of lectures at Beijing Higher Normal School, while *The Educational Philosophy of John Dewey* was based on the recordings of lectures at Nanjing Higher Normal School.

The three most significant themes related to philosophy, education and political theory. Dewey defined the scientific method as the experimental method in school teaching and broadened the concept of knowledge through a discussion of the ‘Five Stages of Thought’. As for values, openness, intellectual honesty, and responsibility were seen as essential to fostering a scientific view of the world. Dewey also emphasized the
### Table 1.8  Speeches delivered during John Dewey’s visit

#### Dewey at Nanjing Higher Normal School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture dates</th>
<th>Lecture topics and professional activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring–Summer 1920 (arrived in April and stayed through summer session)</td>
<td>‘Experimental Logic’ Visiting Professor at Nanjing Higher Normal School. Delivered a series of c.18 lectures ‘Three Majors’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Dewey at Beijing Higher Normal School

Visit from autumn 1920 to summer 1921. Professor John Dewey at the graduate school at Beijing Higher Normal School Lectures by Dewey using *Democracy and Education* as a text. The book *Democracy and Education* is based on class notes from Dewey’s lectures at Beijing Higher Normal School. The translator took the notes in English, and then translated them into Chinese, with elaboration (Chang Daozhi, 1922).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecture dates</th>
<th>Lecture topics</th>
<th>Professional activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 June 1921</td>
<td>‘On Chinese Fine Art’</td>
<td>Delivered to the Fine Arts Club of Beijing Higher Normal School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 June 1921</td>
<td>‘Impressions of South China’</td>
<td>Delivered to the Beijing Higher Normal School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 June 1921</td>
<td>‘Present Opportunities in the Teaching Profession’</td>
<td>Dewey’s final public talk in Peking ‘Farewell Address’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>‘Philosophy and Education’</td>
<td>Society of Mass Education/ Beijing Higher Normal School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

individual in children’s development as the basic element of democratic education and the main contribution of schooling to social progress. He pointed out that living in community requires individuals to subordinate their own interests at times to broader social interests. The concept of modern education proposed by Dewey was one that should be children-centred, with schools extended to the real-life environment, to prepare children for society and to build an open, democratic nation. This perspective is given in *Democracy and Education*: ‘Since life means growth, a living creature lives as truly and positively at one stage as at another, with the same intrinsic fullness and the same absolute claims. Hence education means the enterprise of supplying the conditions which ensure growth or adequacy of life’ (Dewey, 1916, 25–26). Dewey defined an ideal society as one that encompasses experimentation, studies of individual events, and the application of knowledge and intelligence to social change. Two journals were established at Beijing Higher Normal School during Dewey’s visit: *Pingmin Jiaoyu* (Mass Education) and *Jiaoyu yu Shehui* (Education and Society). Several Chinese educators at Beijing Higher Normal School, including Li Jianxun, Chang Daozhi and Meng Xiàichéng, were advocates of Dewey’s ideas.

Paul Monroe, again from Teachers’ College, Columbia, also visited the two higher normal schools. *Shìjì Jīaoyu Diàochàshè* (Society for Practising Educational Research) was founded at Beijing Normal Higher School to prepare for Monroe’s arrival in September 1921 (Chen, 1981, 282). George Twist and Helen Parkhurst introduced the Dalton Plan that encouraged community within classrooms, and worked with Chinese educators at both Beijing Higher Normal School and Nanjing Higher Normal School. Thus, aspects of American progressivism became a core part of China’s ‘normal’ (*shìfàn*) education tradition, even though American normal colleges were absorbed within comprehensive universities by the early twentieth century and the term gradually disappeared in the Anglo-American world (Hayhoe and Li, 2010, 80–81).

**The Shift from Borrowing to Indigenous Educational Theory**

In the 1920s, Beijing Higher Normal School developed into an influential force in teacher education. In 1922, it became Beijing Normal University, while Beijing Higher Women’s Normal School was also given the university title in 1924, with the two institutions merging in 1931 (Hayhoe, 2006, 263–265). It published two documents of national importance for teacher education: *Beijing gāoshì guìchēng* (Beijing Higher Normal School Regulations) and *Beijing gāoshì wùnián jīhuàshū* (Beijing Higher Normal School Five-Year Plan) in 1912 (*Beijing shìfàn dàxué xiàoshì xièzu*, 1982,
What is notable in these regulations is the reaffirmation of a commitment to following the American education system. Chen Baoquan, principal from 1912 to 1920, said: ‘We have to stress the importance of constructing educational research facilities and teaching laboratories by following American models’ (Cai and Liu, 1996, 132). Approaches to teacher training were thus developed along the lines of American progressivism during this period. Most notable was the emphasis on a scientific approach, which can be seen in the courses introduced in areas such as educational statistics, educational testing, educational psychology, school management and administration, from 1920 to the early 1930s (Li, 1924 [1993], 36–37).

Though the Beijing Normal University was Western influenced, it remained a unique institution with its own identity. This can be seen in several initiatives. Given an insufficient number of teachers for secondary education, it was successful in creating Experimental Districts for Social Education that made it possible for qualified teachers to nurture others and guide the implementation of social education (Li, 1996, 22–31). Many of its scholars adapted Western theories to the Chinese context and developed their own texts rather than depend on translations. This was although more than 30 texts had been translated, 60 per cent from the United States and others from Europe and Japan (Li, 1924 [1993], 130). One example is The General Introduction to Education compiled by Wu Junsheng and Wang Youzheng (1935). This work not only reorganized the ideas of Dewey, but added indigenous psychological applications responding to the major problems found in Chinese education. Meng Xiancheng, an influential Chinese educator and professor at Beijing Normal University, commented in a newspaper article of 1923: ‘In fact, the need to seek strategies going beyond borrowing, and the application of theory to our local context constitute a long journey but this is an indispensable approach to making our own achievements’ (Meng, 1923, 26).

The rethinking of ‘normal education’ was also stressed in other teacher education institutions. As the new educational thought of Western educators influenced China, scepticism developed, notably in Nanjing Higher Normal School, which had become Southeast University in 1921. Critical reflections from thoughtful Chinese educators cautioned against uniform prescriptions and rote-style borrowing from foreign models. This development may best be illustrated by a comment of 1923 by Tao Xingzhi, a returnee from Teachers’ College Columbia: ‘At first China sacrificed everything old for the new, sacrificed our uniqueness for universal using, gradually she came to a realization that the old and our own characteristics are not necessarily bad, the new and western instructions are not necessarily good’ (Keenan, 1977, 91). Tao came to believe that China’s great Ming neo-Confucian scholar, Wang Yangming (1472–1529), had
promulgated progressive ideas as early as sixteenth-century China. While in America he coined the name Tao Zhixing (Tao Knowledge Action) for himself, but later changed this to Tao Xingzhi (Tao Action Knowledge) in a reflection of China’s own traditions of educational progressivism (Hayhoe, 2006, 26).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored the efforts of educators to bring about a renaissance in education, not only to restore China’s past glories, but to enable her to lead the world in educational practice. It showed the swings between tradition and progress, between mechanical adherence to Western educational models and energetic adaptation to China’s indigenous context (Pepper, 1990, 183). The Republican period was crucial in laying the foundations of modern education in China, with change being the motif of the period (Sung, 1954, 44–46). As the following chapters show, there was to be further change and indeed bitter struggle following the People’s Liberation in 1949. Since the country opened again to the world in 1978, its educational civilization, often defined as the Confucian heritage, has been recognized as having much to offer the world as well as China. This has been noted by Gu Mingyuan, China’s leading scholar of comparative education:

Gu made the point that there were many aspects of the Confucian value system that supported China’s modernization, and then went on to . . . the striking conclusion that a general theory of modernization, which could supersede the . . . dominant Euro-centric one, would not be possible until China carried forward its modernization process in a self-conscious and self-analytic way, and shared with the wider global community the contribution its rich civilization could make to global wellbeing. (Hayhoe, 2013, xiii)

The chapter focused also on three distinctive aspects of the origins and development of modern education during the late Qing and Republican eras. For basic education, it is clear that the main initiatives came from within, with the conviction that education for all was essential to a strong China. By contrast, higher education drew heavily upon Japanese, European and American models, with the leadership dominated by Chinese intellectuals with higher degrees from overseas. They took seriously the task of adapting foreign examples to China’s needs and made strides in shaping a modern Chinese model of the university, even under the stress of war. It was probably teacher education, however, that saw the most balanced integration of elements from China’s educational
civilization and progressive educational ideas from the West. The term *shifan*, the teacher as a model, was used to translate the word ‘normal’ and despite Anglo-American influences which banished this term when integrating teacher education into national or local comprehensive universities, it persisted in China and was revived under Soviet influence in the 1950s. China’s teacher education is now led by five national normal universities, as well as many provincial and local normal institutions.

China’s intellectuals are beginning to do what Gu Mingyuan hoped: explain the educational dimensions of the Confucian heritage to a world that has only recently become interested. Examples include two recent special issues of the influential *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (2011 and 2014) on linguistic philosopher Wu Zongjie’s ‘Confucian pedagogy’ (Deng, 2011, 561–568; Deng, 2014, 301–304) and a volume entitled *Re-envisioning Chinese Education: The Meaning of Person Making in a New Age* (Zhao and Deng, 2015).

In a context in which knowledge is largely viewed as a crucial element in economic competitiveness, the authors included in this *Handbook* introduce an alternative approach that sees knowledge as a wellspring of inspiration for person-making, an approach to education that is oriented towards human flourishing and embodies harmony and sustainability. Finally, to paraphrase the provocative ideas of Wu Zongjie, Confucian pedagogy is presented as embracing an integrated learning of the mind, body, spirit and emotions that goes deeper than propositional or logical representations of truth and nurtures a profound sense of responsibility to serve the good of family, community, and the world of nature (Hayhoe, 2016).

After a century of intense effort and struggle that began even before the Revolution of 1911, Chinese education is finally coming into its own and the foundations for a Chinese version of modernity, laid by progressive intellectuals of the Republican era, are undergirding a series of lively and provocative debates around themes such as Chinese education models for a global age (Chou and Spangler, 2016) and education for a global community (DeBary, 2014).

**NOTES**

1. Between 1914 and 1918, most provinces created teachers’ school sub-districts and established or planned to establish a corresponding teachers’ school for each district.

2. The five book editions collecting Dewey’s work were: *Five Major Lectures of Dewey*, Peking, Chenpaoshe (Morning Daily), 1920; *Three Major Lectures of Dewey*, Shanghai, TaiTungTuShuGuan (Taidong Library), 1920; *Collected Speeches of Dewey and Russell*, Shanghai, TaiTungTuShuGuan, 1921; *Democracy and Education*, Shanghai,
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Commercial Press, 1922; The Educational Philosophy of Dewey, Shanghai, Commercial Press, 1922b.

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