

“Fu Chen Project” and Academic Turn of Kuomintang’s Interpretation of 228 Incident

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ABSTRACT

In order to counteract overseas, Chinese Communist Party, and non-party discourses on the 228 Incident, the National Security Bureau (NSC) shifted from defensive to offensive and initiated a project called “Fu Chen Project” in 1983. The project was an attempt to repackage the discourses on the 228 Incident in academic standards. This article uses the declassified files of the NSC to restore the background, implementation structure and process of the “Fu Chen Project.” Through this case, we can understand how the intelligence agency operated cultural and educational projects and analyze the historical interpretation of the 228 Incident produced by the “Fu Chen Project.” This author accidentally discovered from the intelligence files that the world’s first English academic book on the 228 Incident, *A Tragic Beginning: The Taiwan Uprising of February 28, 1947*, written by Lai Tse-han, Ramon H. Myers, and Wei Wou, is also related to the “Fu Chen Project.” The first half of this article points out that the Kuomintang authorities did not attempt to guide and control the historical interpretations of the 228 Incident by means of infiltration and manipulation, but by the methods and principles of academic research. Internally, the NSC used its established system of intelligence and psychological warfare to compile *Fu-ch’ü li-shih ming-ching chung te ch’ên-ai* 拂去歷史明鏡中的塵埃 [Flicking the Dust off the Historical Mirror]; externally, through trusted academic connections, the NSC collaborated with Ramon H. Myers, Senior Fellow of Hoover Institution, to write a monograph on the 228 Incident in English. In the second half of this paper, the author discussed the continuity and change in historical interpretations regarding the background, the process of repression, and the investigation on responsibility of the 228 Incident in the three works with official backgrounds, namely, *Fu-ch’ü li-shih ming-ching chung te ch’ên-ai*, *A Tragic Beginning*, and *Research Report on the February 28 Incident*.

Keywords: 228 Incident, Fu Chen Project, National Security Bureau, Hoover Institution