

***Revolutionary Nativism: Fascism and Culture in China, 1925-1937.* By Maggie Clinton.**
Duke University Press. 2017. xi + 268pp. £20.99.

In the past three decades, scholars have taken a keen interest in the study of Chinese modernity. Thanks to the existing studies on twentieth-century Chinese political and cultural history, we can see the complexity of Chinese modernisation and the plurality of Chinese modernity. *Revolutionary Nativism*, however, takes us to a relatively under-investigated territory, the discursive construction of national salvation from the political right-wing in the 1920s and 30s China.

Maggie Clinton's innovative research brings our attention to the unusual dynamic between cultural conservatism and modernisation. Clinton focuses on the period between 1925 when Dr Sun Yat-sen passed away, and 1937 when the anti-Japanese National United Front between the Nationalist Party (GMD) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was formally announced. During this period, the GMD Nanjing government embraced fascism and engaged in the unremitting attempt of nation-building through eliminating political rivalries within the party, conducting anti-Communist military and cultural campaigns, and reviving the Chinese Confucian tradition as the 'national spirit'.

Revolutionary Nativism presents a detailed textual analysis of the GMD fascist narrative by examining periodicals associated with the CC Clique and the Blue Shirts, among which *Hanxue Zhoukan* (Sweat and Blood Weekly) receives the most attention. However, Clinton by no means restricts the investigation to a study of Sanminzhuyi Wenyi (literature and arts of the Three Peoples Principle) or Minzuzhuyi Wenyi (Nationalist Literature and Arts). The discussion is contextualised in a broader political sense, which involves the GMD's internal political conflicts, ideological confrontations against communism, and the international trend of fascism.

Chapter 1 begins with Dai Jitao's visit to Madam Song Qingling. It depicts a volatile political situation within the GMD after the premature death of Dr Sun Yat-sen and the violent purge of the CCP. It presents the 'worldview' of the right-wing GMD activists, who 'orchestrated the White Terror behind a veil of secrecy' (p. 62). As this chapter elaborates, their anti-communist stand converged seamlessly with their devotion to industrialisation, passion for modern management science, particularly Taylorism, and their infatuation with machine-age aesthetics.

Chapter 2 looks at the rationale behind the GMD fascists' advocating of the Chinese cultural tradition. The key aim of this chapter is to understand the GMD's justification of the compatibility of Confucianism with industrial modernity and it begins with a close reading of Dai Jitao's interpretation of Sun Yat-sen as a Confucian sage in an industrial era. Clinton uses the term 'revolutionary nativism' to distinguish the fascists' desire to restore gender and class hierarchies from what the conservatives had envisioned. She elaborates that, as fervent revolutionaries, the GMD fascists considered Confucian values as the 'national spirit' which not only bore the duty of remaking the Chinese nation anew but also of ensuring historical continuity with the indigenous Chinese 'national culture'.

Chapter 3 brings readers closer to the GMD fascists' 'spiritual frontline' against communism. It looks at the GMD fascists' ideological re-education endeavour in areas retaken from the hands of the CCP. It investigates both the ideological and institutional

methods used by them to eradicate Communism. Discussion in this chapter relies mostly on the published memoirs and the official publications of the Blue Shirts. How the GMD institutionally carried out this ideological pacification remains a mystery.

Chapter 4 reveals the body politics of the GMD's fascist nation-building project. Its main ambition is to understand how the GMD fascists envisioned that the New Life Movement (NLM) could regulate and shape people's daily life for national salvation and industrialisation. As this chapter demonstrates, the GMD fascists' reinvention of Confucian 'national harmony' played a crucial role in justifying the gender and class inequality during the NLM.

Chapter 5 enriches our understanding of what Mao Zedong famously remarked upon in 1940: that the Nationalists had waged a 'cultural encirclement and suppression campaign against the CCP'. It investigates the role of the GMD fascists as both the producers of cultural products and as authoritarian administrators of the cultural marketplace in Shanghai. By examining articles published in major fascist journals, this chapter sheds light on the construction of the theoretical underpinnings of the nationalist literature and arts. This chapter also looks at the personal accounts of encounters with fascist violence from Chinese left-wing writers such as Ding Ling.

The author certainly hopes to engage with the study of international fascism by presenting a Chinese story. However, this enterprise might be better served if the author had consulted with non-Chinese primary materials. Despite this minor drawback, this book still makes an excellent contribution to the existing scholarship on modern Chinese cultural-political history.

Finally, the author is never shy of making links between the CCP's interests in traditional culture in contemporary China and the GMD's preoccupation with reinventing Chinese Confucian tradition for nation-building in the 1930s. Hence, readers who are keen followers of present-day Chinese political development might also find this book inspiring.

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