MAGGIE CLINTON

Revolutionary Nativism

FASCISM AND CULTURE IN CHINA 1925–1937

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Duke University Press Durham and London 2017

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper ∞
Cover designed by Matthew Tauch
Text designed by Courtney Leigh Baker
Typeset in Whitman and Trade Gothic by Westchester Publishing Services

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Clinton, Maggie, [date] author.
Title: Revolutionary nativism : fascism and culture in China, 1925–1937 / Maggie Clinton.
Description: Durham : Duke University Press, 2017. |
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers:
LCCN 2016043541 (print)
LCCN 2016046041 (ebook)
ISBN 9780822363620 (hardcover : alk. paper)
ISBN 9780822363774 (pbk. : alk. paper)
ISBN 9780822373032 (e-book)
Subjects: LCSH: Zhongguo guo min dang. | China—History—1928–1937. | China—Politics and government—1912–1949. | Politics and culture—China. | Fascism—China. | Nationalism—China.
Classification: LCC DS777.48.C59 2017 (print) | LCC DS777.48 (ebook) | DDC 320.53/3095109043—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2016043541

Cover art: Illustration from *Qiantu* (the *Future*) 1, no. 8, 1933.

FOR ROGER

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Acknowledgments

This book began at New York University, where it was nurtured by a wealth of brilliant mentors and friends. I thank first and foremost Rebecca Karl for her acumen and sustained encouragement. Manu Goswami and Harry Harootunian offered critical insights at every step; Mary Nolan and Andrew Sartori generously helped me refine the project's claims. Faculty including Yukiko Hanawa, Moss Roberts, Kristin Ross, Joanna Waley-Cohen, and Xudong Zhang imparted key ideas. My extended cohort, including William Armshaw, Kristin Bayer, Wei-chi Chen, Sasha Disko, Leigh Claire La Berge, Priya Lal, John Pat Leary, Natasha Lightfoot, Shane Minkin, Osamu Nakano, Michael Palm, Sherene Seikaly, Naomi Schiller, Zach Schwartz-Weinstein, Quinn Slobodian, and Qian Zhu, offered lasting inspiration as well as sharp feedback on the project as it developed.

Colleagues at Middlebury College have likewise been tremendously generous and supportive. I am particularly grateful to Ian Barrow, Rebecca Bennette, Natasha Chang, Nicholas Clifford, Rachael Joo, Joyce Mao, Kathy Morse, Jamie McCallum, Alexis Peri, Yumna Siddiqi, Sarah Stroup, Jessica Teets, Rebecca Tiger, Jacob Tropp, Edward Vazquez, Max Ward, and Don Wyatt. Middlebury students, in their capacities as research assistants and interlocutors, have also helped me write a better book: Allison Bernard, Chime Dolma, Jonathan Fall, Denise Hoffman, Jihad Hajjouji, Steven Luo, Khine Su, Ye Tian, and Winnie Yeung deserve special thanks. By helping me navigate the Middlebury landscape, Claire Wilkinson and Renee Brown also greatly facilitated the writing process.

Questions raised and comments offered in various conference, workshop, and research settings over the years have aided this project in innumerable ways. I especially thank Angie Baecker, Nadya Bair, Doris Bergen, Jia-ching Chen, Wei-chi Chen, Parks Coble, Robert Cole, Alexander F. Day, Mirela David, Dai Jinhua, Geoff Eley, Joshua Fogel, Takashi Fujitani, Jane Hayward, Michael Gibbs Hill, Reto Hofmann, Fabio Lanza, Li Chi-ping, Jane Liau, Andy Liu, Luo Zhitian, Ken Kawashima, Mark McConaghy, Edward McCord, Viren Murthy, Christopher Nugent, Janet Poole, Andre Schmid, Richard Jean So, Joan Judge, Julia Adeney Thomas, Brian Tsui, Ke-wen Wang, Max Ward, Yiching Wu, Qian Zhu, and the late Ramon Myers. Manu Goswami and Greg Grandin have been continuously inspiring, and Rebecca Karl has remained a source of unfailing enthusiasm. Kristin Mulready-Stone gave helpful suggestions for revising the manuscript as a whole. Claire Jarvis, Naomi Fry, Sasha Disko (who also provided this book's German translations), and the rest of our dispersed writing group made these revisions feel like a more collective endeavor, and ongoing conversations with Brian Tsui prompted me to reconsider the project's scope as the revisions went along. Naomi Schiller and Max Ward valiantly read many drafts and answered countless questions; their camaraderie throughout has been invaluable.

Librarians at the National Library of China (Beijing), the Peking University Library, the National Central Library (Taiwan), Stanford's East Asia Library, the Hoover Institution Library and Archives, the Harvard-Yenching Library, and the Middlebury College library provided invaluable assistance. I especially thank Rachel Manning, interlibrary loan coordinator at Middlebury College, for tirelessly sourcing materials for me to consult here in rural Vermont, as well as Middlebury research librarian Brenda Ellis for her patience with all manner of questions.

This project has been generously facilitated by a Mellon/ACLS Dissertation Completion Fellowship, Fulbright IIE, the Blakemore-Freeman Foundation, the New York University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Center for Chinese Studies at the National Central Library in Taiwan, and by Middlebury College. Encouragement has also come from the Clintons, Whites, Pundits, Winters, Bayer-Selas, Chen-hsi Wong, and H. C. Fall Willeboordse. I am most grateful to Roger White for his constant companionship and willingness to talk through all aspects of the project over a seemingly endless number of years, and also for our amazing daughter Helena, who arrived just as this book was coming together as a book. Helena's caregivers at the College Street Children's Center, and especially Alyshia

Murphy and Vivian Yuan Pien, deserve special praise for affording me the time to write.

Finally, I thank Ken Wissoker for his sustained support for the project, Elizabeth Ault for her timely interventions, Mark Mastromarino for preparing the index, and the two anonymous manuscript readers for Duke University Press for their exceedingly generous and exacting feedback. I could not have hoped for more thoughtful interlocutors. The book's shortcomings are of course my own.

Introduction

[The Three Principles of the People] have inherited the morality and essential spirit of ancient China—that of Emperors Yao and Shun, of Kings Wen and Wu, of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius—they employ the native spirit of the Chinese race to lead the revolution and revive the nation.—CHIANG KAI-SHEK, March 1933

From June 1925 until October 1926, a general strike brought work in Hong Kong to a halt, while consumers in the Canton delta boycotted commodities imported via the British colony. The strike-boycott, materially supported by Canton's Soviet-backed United Front government and directed against colonial authorities in Hong Kong, followed a crescendo of anti-imperialist and labor actions throughout mainland China in the early 1920s. Launched in response to the 1925 May 30th Incident, in which British-commanded policemen had killed and wounded Chinese demonstrators in Shanghai's International Settlement, the Hong Kong–Canton strike-boycott signaled not only the sharp escalation of popular anti-imperialism but also the increased power of organized labor.[1] To contemporary observers, its protracted temporal duration and extensive geographical coordination across British colonial and Chinese national space suggested the dawn of a new era of anti-imperialist agitation. Canton's novel experiment in revolutionary organization—in which the Moscow-based Communist International directed an alliance between the Chinese Nationalist Party (Guomindang, GMD) and members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)—had rendered southern China a magnet for anti-imperialist, anticapitalist, and

feminist revolutionaries from across China and around the world, earning Canton the nickname Moscow East.[2] The strike-boycott, as well as Soviet training of soldiers at the newly founded Whampoa Military Academy, signaled that Canton's United Front was emerging as a disciplined fighting force. Less than a decade after the Russian Revolution, Communists had set roots in an important node of global imperialism, shifting the local meanings of revolutionary politics and prompting new forms of reaction within Chinese society and the metropolitan world.

Imperialist responses to the 1923–27 United Front were swift and violent, involving parades of foreign gunboats in Canton harbor, deadly attacks by colonial police forces on Chinese demonstrators, and ultimately the provision of arms to Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist forces to bring the United Front to an official end.[3] Reactions by Chinese merchants to the United Front's intersecting nationalist and class-based goals were more measured, but still vacillated between suspicion and hostility.[4] For many in the GMD, Chinese Communist participation in the United Front prompted fear of the potential derailing of a long-germinating nationalist project focused on developing Chinese industry and infrastructure under the guidance of a powerful state—future aspirations that were predicated on eradicating regional warlords and on liberating the nation from imperialist intervention. The untimely death in March 1925 of Nationalist Party leader Sun Yat-sen rendered the revolution's trajectory even more uncertain. Anti-Communist groups quickly coalesced within the party, but their increasingly vocal opposition to Communism did not dull their own revolutionary aspirations.[5] Instead, a range of longtime party activists as well as a cohort of young military cadets amplified their claims upon its course. Now schooled in Soviet methods of agitation and witness to the seductions of modern life, these revolutionaries renewed their commitment to remaking the Chinese sociopolitical landscape and to forcibly overcoming whatever obstacles appeared to stand in their way. Political pluralism increasingly seemed a luxury that even established imperialist powers could ill afford, and lockstep national unity a necessary precondition for China's revolution to advance at all.

In 1925, the veteran Nationalist activist and translator of Marxist theory Dai Jitao favorably likened Sun Yat-sen's developmental program to "aborting the fetus of a recently impregnated capitalism."[6] Dai's language indexed a growing ambivalence among the GMD right wing regarding the social consequences of the industrial development that they championed, evincing at once a desire to introduce capitalist production methods evenly across China's

vast territory and a fear of their socially anarchic effects. Dai intimated here that Sun's program could rid the Chinese social body of unwanted offspring while still nurturing its productive capacities, in the way that abortion ideally terminates a pregnancy without rendering the woman's body sterile. Dai's concerns were soon amplified by a host of Nationalist strategists who became increasingly convinced that the unified nation, not the proletariat or peasantry, was the proper agent of a properly Chinese revolution. These men, trained at military and technical schools in China, Europe, the United States, the USSR, and Japan, began to champion "native culture" (*guyou wenhua*) as the glue binding this revolutionary nation together. Discomfited by the seemingly unpatriotic thrust of the New Culture and May Fourth movements—which in the 1910s had attacked Confucianism as responsible for China's apparent failure to modernize—they found in Sun Yat-sen's writings a revolutionary program that instead vouchsafed this heritage. There was nothing incompatible between Confucianism and industrial modernity, Sun had stressed. The Nationalist leader had gone so far as to align New Culture / May Fourth critics of Confucianism with China's "oppression by foreign nations," while identifying his own GMD as a defender of China's "native morality" and therefore with "Chinese people" who held these morals dear.[7] After Chiang Kai-shek violently severed the GMD's United Front ties to the Communist Party in 1927, Sun's most virulently nationalistic supporters followed Dai Jitao in insisting that reviving China's native Confucian culture was key to national rebirth in a militantly corporatist form. Confucian culture, as these supporters interpreted it, mandated the kinds of social hierarchies that were natural to China, the kinds of work ethics and consumption practices that were collectively beneficial, and the kinds of people who did and did not belong within the national fold.

This book is a study of the sharp rightward turn taken by revolutionary nationalist groups that operated under the umbrella of the GMD during the 1920s and 1930s. It focuses on the characteristics of the polity that groups known as the CC Clique and the Blue Shirts strove to cement, and why the officers and engineers who led them regarded culture as integral to this project. I use the term *fascism* to describe their politics for several reasons. First, it signals that they were not conservative, predemocratic, or merely authoritarian. Their hostility to liberal democracy was as informed by modern political and economic theories as was their violent hatred of Communism. It was, moreover, inseparably entwined with aspirations to permanently resolve tensions of modern life that scholars have long since

demonstrated gripped major cities like Shanghai and Canton. These plans foregrounded disciplining, under the sign of a Confucian culture now recast as a guarantor of hierarchical efficiency, newly classed and gendered social actors. Second, the term *fascism* allows us to grasp the simultaneously revolutionary and counterrevolutionary dynamics of the political solutions that Blue Shirt and CC Clique militants offered, and hence an opportunity to better understand the historical conditions under which fascism emerges and coalesces. This book does not consider the regime that the GMD established in Nanjing following Chiang Kai-shek's 1927 coup d'état to have been a fascist state, or the GMD in its entirety to have become a fascist party during the 1927–37 Nanjing Decade. It is instead a study of fascist organizations that attained considerable power but failed to fully capture a state or to in turn secure hegemony among a predominantly agrarian and nonindustrial population. It is specifically concerned with the modernism of Blue Shirt and CC Clique aspirations, the violence that they justified to realize them, and the enduring legacies of their efforts to link Confucianism to an anti-liberal, anti-Communist program of state-led industrial development.

Making sense of the violent nexus of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary politics that appeared within GMD ranks after Sun Yat-sen's death requires drawing from conceptual rubrics developed to explain manifestations of fascism in Europe and Japan. Yet these rubrics must also be modified to account for China's colonized circumstances as well as the dramatic unevenness of its socioeconomic landscape, in which ways of life in coastal cities were often more akin to those of the metropolitan world than to those of the national interior to which Chinese fascists laid claim.[8] It is moreover necessary to acknowledge how GMD desires for industrial development and national sovereignty were articulated in the shadow of imperialist racism and ongoing rivalry for access to China's markets and resources. They were seeking to resolve a protracted crisis of political hegemony, one largely induced by imperialist disruptions to an enduring dynastic system. This book builds upon scholarship that has understood fascism as an extreme manifestation of nationalism and therefore regards anticolonial nationalisms as potentially as susceptible to fascist radicalization as their metropolitan counterparts.[9] Conditions in coastal China and the world writ large were volatile and antagonistic in ways that prompted Sun Yat-sen's most ardent devotees to amplify their conviction that the Chinese nation was bound together by an ancient cultural force. They intensified nationalism's Janus-faced historical imaginary—which projects the national community

both forward and backward in time—by distilling Confucianism into a transhistorical "national spirit" (*minzu jingshen*) capable of reenchanting an industrializing world.[10] The synergy between this enduring spirit and Sun's program, they believed, could resolve China's postdynastic sociopolitical crises, recoup masculine authority, restore the nation to its rightful position of world leadership, and more generally allow for everything and nothing about the nation to change simultaneously.

Representing the Future and Its Past

In 1933, several issues of the Shanghai monthly periodical *Qiantu* (the *Future*), published by a fascist organization known to Chinese and foreign publics as the Blue Shirts, ran a vibrantly colored, abstract cover image of an archer atop an ancient chariot (fig. 1.1).[11] The archer, depicted in red against a graphic blue, gray, and white background, drives his chariot beneath a blazing red sun. His arrow is trained on the masthead characters *Qiantu*, which are printed in a geometric font with circles and triangles in the place of dot strokes. Archery and charioteering—two of the six arts required for mastery by scholars during the ancient Zhou Dynasty (1046–256 BCE)—are represented here in a modernist idiom.[12] The image conjures a lapsed Confucian scholarly ideal conjoining physical and mental agility, and suggests the forceful leap required in the present to connect China's militarily formidable past with a radiant new future. Depicting means of violence in an abstract, aesthetically pleasing fashion, the cover evinces a simultaneous yearning for both the ancient past and a modern future. China's national rebirth appears here as an anticonservative "thrust towards a *new* type of society," building "rhetorically on the cultural achievements attributed to the former, more 'glorious' or healthy eras" rather than suggesting a desire to return to the dynastic past as such.[13] Indeed, the cover image highlighted the tangled expressions of nostalgia and expectation contained in pages of the *Future* during its six-year run from 1933 to 1938. There, the two-faced temporal glances that are typical of all nationalist movements assumed particularly mythic and contradictory dimensions, as contributors reckoned with the violence that imperialism had wrought against China's dynastic ways of life, the causes of China's present turmoil, and the fact that a range of political actors contested their authority to craft China's future. While drawing inspiration from traditions associated with the nation's dominant ethnic group, the Han, contributors to the *Future* stressed the

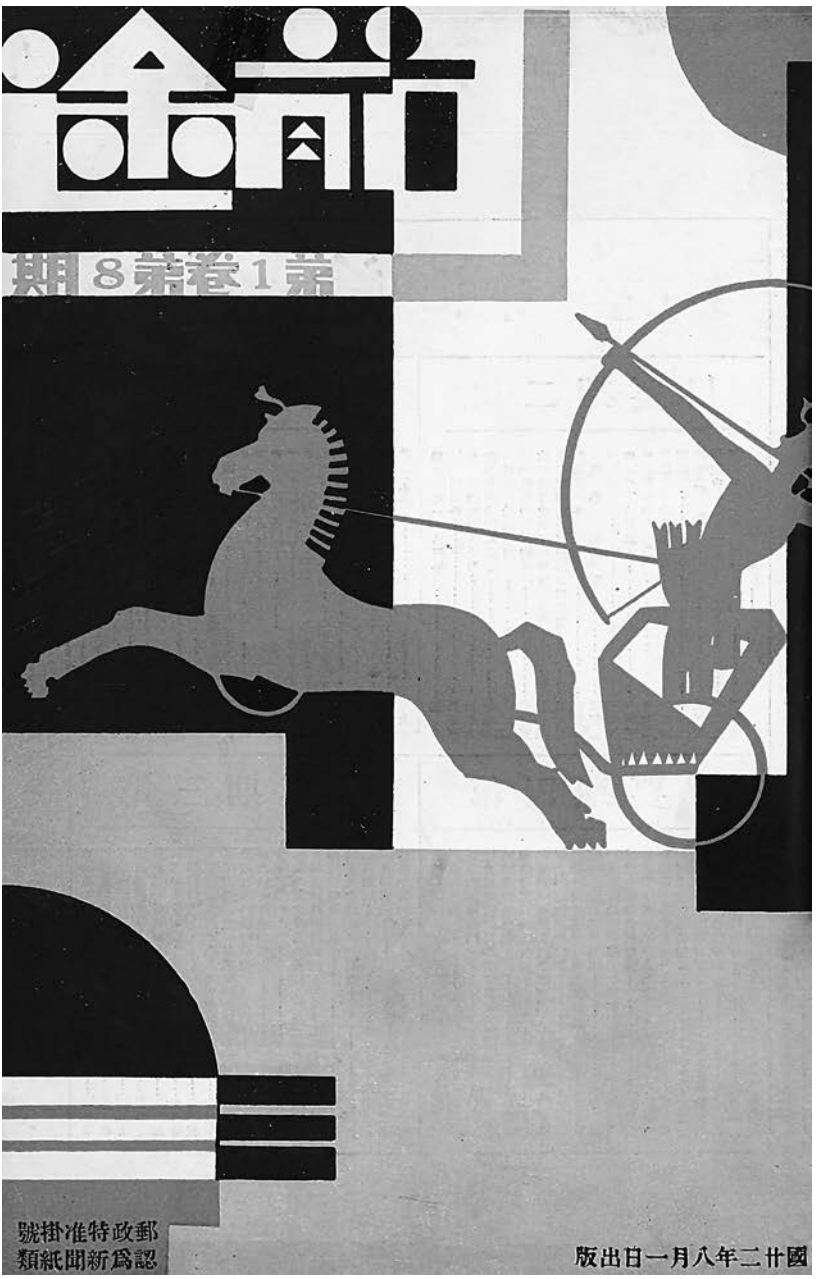

FIGURE 1.1 » *Qiantu* (the *Future*) 1, no. 8 (1933).

imperative to begin history anew by overcoming China's fallen present and building a modern society superior to the unstable, class warfare–ridden conditions into which the West had descended since World War I.

In May 1933, as the *Future* expanded its circulation, a Shanghai-based, popular front coalition of distinguished writers and activists including Song Qingling (widow of Sun Yat-sen), Lu Xun, and the American journalist Agnes Smedley submitted a letter to Shanghai's German legation condemning the violence that the Nazis had unleashed upon Germany since seizing power that March. Collectively signed by the China League for Civil Rights (Zhongguo minquan baozhang tongmeng), the letter cataloged Nazi crimes and condemned the "terror which is crippling the social, intellectual and cultural life of Germany."[14] The league's statement of solidarity with victims of a government then tied to the Nanjing regime described its own mission as one which "fights against the Terror in China, fights for the civil and human rights of the Chinese people, and which allies itself with progressive forces throughout the world."[15] The league's self-consciously internationalist ethos, the links that it drew between Nazi and Nationalist terror, and the fact that it managed to publish this statement in the mainstream Shanghai daily *Shenbao*, quickly caught the organization in Blue Shirt crosshairs. Barely a month after the letter was submitted, one of the league's founding members was assassinated by Blue Shirt–run secret services. Some sixteen months later, Blue Shirts killed the managing editor of the *Shenbao*.[16] These murders were committed not merely to silence critics of the Nanjing regime and to intimidate the press into line but as part of a larger agenda to facilitate China's national rebirth.

The White Terror perpetrated during the Nanjing Decade—the ten-year span from 1927 to 1937 when the Nationalists ruled China from the city of Nanjing—was sustained by the operational and intellectual labor of the Blue Shirts and another fascist faction known as the CC Clique. Both groups worked assiduously to narrow the parameters of national belonging, to expand the range of people subject to state discipline, and to lay claim to leadership of the Chinese revolution. Analyses of the White Terror typically focus on its victims, particularly elite writers and organizers like Ding Ling and Qu Qiubai, as well as the assassinated Civil Rights League founder Yang Xingfo (Yang Quan) and the prominent *Shenbao* newspaperman Shi Liangcai. The stories of these victims are vital to understanding the course of China's revolutions, but so too are the perspectives of the men who terrorized them. There are no victims without victimizers, at least as far

as political violence is concerned. The victimizers in this case left a voluminous public paper trail rationalizing their actions. Although media participation at first seems at odds with Blue Shirt and CC Clique proclivities for clandestine operations, it was in fact consistent with their desires to be heard and appreciated by the public but not accountable to it in ways of which they disapproved. Here, they illuminated the contours of a nation that they believed themselves to be regenerating and why it should inspire self-sacrificial devotion. It was through these vectors, in particular their forays into publishing, that they worked to secure popular consent and foster the same kind of nationalism that they themselves so passionately felt.

In China's vibrant interwar "mediasphere[s]," the Blue Shirts and CC Clique positioned themselves as political vanguards through skillful deployment of revolutionary rhetoric and modernist aesthetics.[17] Art deco and other popular styles of graphic abstraction that scholars have hitherto associated with interwar Shanghai's commercial publishers and left-wing progressives were also embraced by the far right wing of the GMD, whose reputation for cultural conservatism is belied by their enthusiasm for modernist imagery, industrial progress, and technologies of mass communication. Their extensive array of publications, which included newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, books, and pictorials, forged links between the rural front lines on which they battled Communist soldiers, the city streets on which they terrorized liberals and leftists, and the rhetorical battlefields of China's 1920s and 1930s culture wars.[18] Here, they staked a public claim to emergent revolutionary rhetoric and symbolism, communicating that they were more capable than any other organized political group of delivering upon modernity's promises and that they could also prevent the nation from being divested of its unique qualities amid the development process. Read in light of the Blue Shirts' and CC Clique's behind-the-scenes activities, this paper trail reveals how perpetrators of the White Terror articulated national-regenerative fantasies akin to those of fascist movements elsewhere in the world while seeking to resolve locally specific crises.[19]

This paper trail does so via its content as well as its conditions of production and circulation. The fact that the newspapers, magazines, and so on of GMD fascists had to compete in an already-saturated marketplace signaled how far the Nationalist government was from realizing the kind of total control that they desired. Despite their distaste for the very idea of an uncontrolled press and its subjection to market forces, Blue Shirts took out advertisements for their flagship magazine the *Future* in the back of the

Shenbao less than two years before they killed Shi Liangcai, and as they used the pages of their own magazines to rail against the dissenting voices represented there.[20] The limited and fractured sovereignty of the state that they served meant that they had to compete for readers with the sizeable volume of Chinese- and foreign-language material available in China's major cities, including that produced and imported via the colonial concessions. Circulating one's ideas via print media may have been a favored practice of Chinese political activists since at least the late nineteenth century—gaining new force during the May Fourth Movement and reframed through the lens of propaganda during the United Front—but fascists balked at the idea that they should have to vie for popular attention or market approbation.[21] They did not just support censorship but advocated total state control of everything produced and consumed within national borders; they also favored violent direct action against men and women who dissented. The fact that dissenting voices continued to proliferate through the 1930s had the effect of confirming for GMD fascists the nefarious presence of the subversive forces, and hence the rightfulness of their recourse to violence to force people into line. In other words, Blue Shirt and CC Clique activists regarded the continued proliferation of opposing forces as evidence that Chinese society needed ever greater unity and discipline. That citizens of Nationalist China continued to have other political options to which they could turn—of the kind that were successfully foreclosed by fascists in Germany, Italy, and Japan, but could not be in China as long as the unequal treaties remained in effect and vast areas of the country remained beyond Nationalist jurisdiction—made them clamor all the more stridently for cultural control and lockstep national cohesion.

The vanguardism asserted by the Blue Shirts and CC Clique in the pages of their publications shared a politico-intellectual genealogy with that of their Communist rivals, but it is important to recognize from the outset ways in which their agendas diverged and hence the terms over which right and left fought. In place of class struggle fascists emphasized interclass harmony; in place of exploited classes they highlighted an exploited national community; and in place of solidaristic internationalism they stressed unified national struggle within a Darwinist world order.[22] This is not to suggest that there were not overlaps and intersections between the ideas of China's left and right, especially as these positions were crystallizing during the 1920s and as the Nationalists after 1927 struggled to distinguish in legal and practical terms what was revolutionary versus counterrevolutionary.[23]

It is also the case that leftists and rightists were mutually influenced by the New Culture and May Fourth movements as well as by the rhetoric and dynamics of the United Front. As GMD rightists insisted with escalating virulence that the national collective, not a particular class, was the rightful agent of China's revolution, they invoked Confucian culture as the grounds of this nation's cohesion through time and space, gathering the bewildering diversity of people living within China's territorial borders past and present together under a single sign. And in styling their political agenda as antifeudal and anticonservative, they unmoored this culture from specific historical referents, distilling it into an ancient national spirit that could animate a forward-looking, modernizing program of industrial and infrastructural development.

The Nation as Revolutionary Subject

A key element of post–United Front political struggles was the power to define the goals of revolution and to name its primary protagonists. From the mid-1920s onward, right-wing activists within the GMD had insisted that the true subject of revolution was a harmoniously cooperative national body, bound together by culture, acting in concert against a range of internal and external threats. These struggles emerged not from a state of relative social stability, but from the charged conjuncture of an ongoing postdynastic reordering of Chinese society and a volatile world poised between two cataclysmic wars. Arno Mayer has suggested that "students of crisis politics need multi-angled and adjustable lenses with which to examine such unsettled situations. These lenses must be able to focus on the narrow synchronic and the broad diachronic aspects of explosive conjunctures as well as on the intersections between them."[24] In this light, the GMD right wing's narrowing in on Confucianism as the cultural glue that lent the national subject its coherence can be seen in diachronic context as a reaction against 1910s New Culture and May Fourth Movement critiques of China's dynastic past, in addition to a more general rethinking of that past in the wake of imperialism. At the same time, their militant defense of the national-particular was in synchronic step with worldwide forces of counterrevolution against the internationalist ethos of Communism as well as liberal cosmopolitanisms. Following the 1927 party purge, when Communists were violently expelled from the Soviet-backed alliance, both the CCP and the GMD branded each other counterrevolutionary.[25] Militants in the GMD remained committed to

an idea of revolution waged in the name of the nation, and increasingly fought both for and against capitalism, seeking to foster capitalist productive methods throughout China while also taming the social alienations, transformed gender relations, and class tensions that capitalism inevitably generates.[26] Confucianism's stress on social harmony, these party militants maintained, surmounted capitalism's instabilities, and it also sanctioned violence against people who appeared to subvert national cohesion via internationalist, cosmopolitan, or generally degenerate activities.

In the wake of Sun Yat-sen's 1925 death, longtime GMD activists as well as newer recruits moved quickly to define the late leader's legacy and to assert their own power.[27] As Soviet advisers and Chinese Communists watched apprehensively, Whampoa Military Academy cadets formed Sun Yat-senism Study Societies (Sunwenzhuyi xuehui) with branches at universities as far away as Beijing, while anti-Communist party leaders drafted a new party agenda in that city's Western Hills.[28] Collectively, these men commenced the project of identifying why Sun's program was uniquely suited to Chinese social conditions, and conversely why Communism, among other possible political paths, was fundamentally anathema. The GMD would spearhead this theoretical, military, and political project for the remainder of the twentieth century—during the postwar period on Taiwan anchoring and assisting the United States' containment wars from Southeast Asia to Central America.[29] At its point of departure in the mid-1920s, this project was undertaken by militant nationalists seeking centralized state power to launch a sweeping range of modernizing programs that required the thoroughgoing transformation of popular subjectivities and ways of being. It germinated in dialogue with other anticolonial nationalisms across Asia and around the world, as well as with a newly emerging global form of counterrevolutionary reaction. This new form pitted itself against internationalism and cosmopolitanism, eschewed political liberalism and laissez-faire capitalism, valorized the nation and masculine prowess, and distinguished itself from conservatism by its revolutionary militancy and the all-encompassing nature of the change that it sought.

The Comintern agent M. N. Roy, who organized in China during the United Front, pointedly criticized Sun Yat-sen's thought as casting "the ominous shadow of fascism."[30] The fact that Chinese Communists also paid homage to Sun led political scientist A. J. Gregor to dismiss Roy's fascism observation as nonsensical, adding that the "Blue Shirts, like Chiang

Kai-shek and the [GMD], remained resolutely committed to the doctrines of Sun Yat-sen. They were developmental nationalists, absorbed in the economic development and the military defense of the national community" rather than fascistic in any identifiable way.[31] The scholar Maria Hsia Chang similarly argued that "whatever 'fascism' or 'totalitarianism' there might have been among the convictions held by both Sun and the members of the Renaissance Society can be better understood as a functional and contingent response made by developmental nationalists to the urgent problems of an economically backward and politically threatened community."[32] *Revolutionary Nativism* turns such claims around by arguing that, in 1920s and 1930s China, the "contingent response" of these "developmental nationalists" to defend a "backward" and "politically threatened community" was a fascist one.[33] Efforts to rigorously specify the political dynamics and internal complexities of the Nanjing regime, and likewise to avoid caricaturing Chiang Kai-shek and his supporters as they had been for decades in the People's Republic of China, has led some mainland scholars to avoid the term *fascism* entirely.[34] However, the imperative for historical specificity and to avoid unhelpful name calling need not prevent us from identifying political commonalities across different regions of the globe, especially as it is now taken for granted how tightly entwined many parts of Republican China were with the industrialized, metropolitan world. The scholarly rush to identify signs of the modern throughout China in the first half of the twentieth century should render the appearance of this eminently modern ideology there as well ultimately unsurprising.

As historian Margherita Zanasi has shown with respect to the GMD left wing, nothing precludes a developmental nationalism from assuming a fascist form.[35] This does not mean that the Nationalists' or even Sun Yat-sen's personal desire to see China become a cohesive, industrially and infrastructurally developed nation was intrinsically fascistic. It does mean, however, that Sun's ideas were neither static nor transhistorical. They were interpreted and striven for under specific circumstances. To realize the goal of a strong and industrially developed nation-state in the post–United Front period, the Nationalists engaged a formidable range of domestic and international opposition. From the mid-1920s onward, many within the GMD chose to redouble the force with which they pushed back against such opposition, decidedly crossing a nebulous threshold that Mayer identified between "containment" and "counterrevolution."[36] But it is equally true that many within the GMD continued to push forward their revolutionary aspira-

tions with a newly intensified commitment.[37] They sought and found sanction for their actions in Sun's writings, driving Sun's hesitations about class struggle, his belief in national consanguinity, and his interest in reviving China's "native morality" to the extremes permitted and encouraged by a world on the cusp of World War II.

This book approaches GMD politics as an unfolding dynamic rather than as a fixed set of propositions. Such an approach allows us to see anticolonial, developmental nationalisms as historical and hence responsive to the forms of opposition against which they are articulated. Understanding interwar fascism as a nexus of revolutionary and counterrevolutionary politics—a politics that was anticonservative, antiliberal, anti-Communist, antifeminist, and historically rooted—also allows us to see how it was generated from within China's postdynastic landscape rather than imported from Europe or Japan.[38] Chinese fascists were indeed close followers of global events, and many of them studied or traveled abroad in the USSR, western Europe, Japan, and the United States. Their news media constantly reported on happenings from Madrid to Manila, and they were certainly inspired by fascist developments in Germany, Italy, and Japan. However, they were inspired by these developments because they resonated with beliefs already held and because they offered more successful examples of things that they wanted to achieve. Blue Shirt and CC Clique disinterest in precisely replicating metropolitan fascist ideologies in China, or in using imported terminology to describe their own political agenda, was consistent with their nationalism and with the nationalistic thrust of all interwar fascisms.[39] If we characterize Chinese fascists as mere imitators of Europeans or Japanese, we miss the ways in which they engaged with problems of imperialism. They understood China's global predicament to be quite different from that of metropolitan countries, tellingly identifying simultaneously with the agents and victims of metropolitan fascist aggressions. They for instance admired Italian corporatism but were also troubled by Italy's 1935 invasion of Ethiopia, as the latter's status as a nominally independent, nonwhite nation hemmed in by formal colonies appeared to mirror China's own with respect to Japan.[40] They were, moreover, aware of Nazi racism, just as they were aware of the racism that underpins all colonial projects.[41] But this awareness prevented them neither from desiring that China could assert its national will in the manner that Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and Imperial Japan were then doing, nor from advancing a nativist conception of the nation that strictly delimited who belonged and who did not. Examining

fascism's local roots helps us to avoid treating capitalist development as if it were a natural historical course, or attributing the violence employed by the GMD to achieve their developmental ambitions to foreign-inspired fashions or lingering feudal dispositions. We can instead focus attention on the ways in which GMD militants redefined native traditions in a post–May Fourth, post–United Front context and worked to render unthinkable other possible arrangements of social and productive relations.

Over the course of the 1920s and 1930s, right-radicalized Nationalists progressively reread Sun Yat-sen's thought as a modern-day expression of ancient Confucian values. As historian Brian Tsui has underscored, such readings gained traction during the United Front via the writings of Dai Jitao, who channeled Sun's ideas in an overtly anti-Communist, Confucian-culturalist direction.[42] Although Sun himself was a product of colonial modernity—born in the post–Opium War Canton delta, educated in Hawaii and Hong Kong, and an inveterate globe-traveling revolutionary who acknowledged inspirations from Henry George to Henry Ford—Dai emphasized only the indigenous roots of Sun's thought, blanketing his eclectic global influences under a shroud of lapsed Confucian wisdom.[43] Dai Jitao thereby catalyzed the naturalization of associations between Confucianism and a form of economic development coming to be known globally as corporatism, and also laid groundwork for interpreting challenges to Confucianism as nationally subversive acts.

In the chapters that follow, I trace this Confucian-culturalist, or what I call nativist, turn through the complex factional alliances and personal ties that constituted the GMD right wing from the mid-1920s until the 1937 Japanese invasion of coastal China. By *nativist*, I mean the identification of Confucianism as the exclusive core of Chinese cultural and national belonging, as well as attendant efforts to cast other revolutionary projects or forms of political opposition as harmful to that culture and hence to the nation itself. Chiang Kai-shek stood at the apex of the GMD right wing and was devotedly supported by the two factions—the CC Clique and the Blue Shirts—on which this book focuses. Dai Jitao's ideas are discernible in the writings of both factions and in those of Chiang Kai-shek even as these men made nativist ideas their own and amplified them in varying ways. Personal ties—including those based on home provinces, familial friendships, marriages, and shared military and educational experiences—are important to this story. They often informed political allegiances and vice versa within the Nationalist Party structure during its early years. Chiang Kai-shek, for

instance, first met Dai Jitao while studying abroad in Japan in 1909 through the introduction of Chiang's fellow Zhejiang provincial, veteran revolutionary Chen Qimei. Later, Chiang not only adopted Dai Jitao's nativist reading of Sun Yat-sen but also literally adopted a son that Dai had fathered with his Japanese mistress—a fact that renders Dai's 1925 rhetorical analogy between Sun's program and aborted fetuses, as well as his escalating moral sanctimoniousness, all the more worthy of analysis.[44] Before Chen Qimei's assassination in 1916, he had acted as a mentor to Chiang Kai-shek, while Chiang in turn became close with Chen Qimei's nephews Chen Guofu and Chen Lifu. The brothers would go on to found the CC Clique in 1927 and work closely with Dai Jitao throughout the 1930s.[45]

During the 1923–27 United Front period, as Chiang Kai-shek climbed the ranks of the National Revolutionary Army and assumed a leadership role at Canton's Whampoa Military Academy, Chen Guofu worked as a recruiter for Whampoa cadets. In this capacity, Chen Guofu encouraged his younger brother Chen Lifu to return from studying engineering in the United States; the younger Chen traveled to Canton in 1925 and soon became Chiang Kai-shek's personal secretary. That same year, young Whampoa cadets formed Sun Yat-senism study societies under the spell of Dai Jitao's reinterpretation of Sun to rival the academy's Communist cadet organization.[46] Members of these Sunist societies, including He Zhonghan, would soon form the Blue Shirts, and they in turn saw their operations financed in part by a bank chaired by Chen Guofu.[47] The life trajectories of the men who composed the GMD right wing thereby first intersected in United Front Canton, where they learned the powers of Soviet-style organization, military discipline, and agitational propaganda.

It was also in Canton that they grew inspired to theoretically and tactically contribute to Chiang Kai-shek's violent severing of the United Front in spring 1927, in the midst of the antiwarlord military campaigns up from Canton known as the Northern Expedition. The first few months of the White Terror involved the murder of three thousand to four thousand Communist Party members and thirty thousand of its presumed supporters, the imprisonment of twenty-five thousand others and the injuring of forty thousand more.[48] The events of spring 1927 were quickly interpreted by Communists and anticolonial nationalists around the world as a pivotal juncture not just in Chinese but in world revolutionary history: Chiang's coup became a component of power struggles between Stalin and Trotsky in the USSR, and it cast an ominous shadow over the future course of

anticolonial struggles, particularly in Asia, where conflicts between Nationalist and Communist parties soon anchored major hot wars of the Cold War.[49] The nation in whose name they waged this violence was conceptualized largely in response to core debates of the 1910s New Culture and May Fourth movements, and with the aim of creating a hierarchical nation modeled by turns on a rationalized military and an efficient capitalist firm.

Cultural Revolution from the Right

While it at first seems surprising that men who trained as soldiers and engineers took an avid interest in cultural matters, this becomes less curious when we consider the activist milieus from which they emerged and how they understood culture to operate in the world. Their desire to simultaneously revive ancient Confucian values and to thoroughly revolutionize Chinese culture also becomes more intelligible. The 1910s New Culture and May Fourth movements that framed the school-age years of Nanjing Decade fascists had sourced many of China's postdynastic sociopolitical troubles to the patriarchal, authoritarian, and collectivist traditions of Confucianism, maintaining that upending these traditions at the level of writing and scholarship, as well as at the level of everyday thinking and practice, were preconditions for building modern institutions grounded in science and democracy.[50] Despite the range of political and epistemological standpoints that contributed to these movements, they also encompassed what Lydia Liu identified as a "gray area" of "undisputed knowledge" that enabled debates between contending participants to be possible in the first place.[51] This included a general agreement that culture (*wenhua*) no longer merely denoted a state of personal-artistic cultivation as it had during the dynastic era, but now also carried ethnographic meanings.[52] It moreover involved a consensus that Confucianism composed the core of China's national culture. Critiquing Confucianism qua Chinese culture quickly became axiomatic among leftists, especially among those who joined the Communist Party after 1921 and soon migrated south to Canton to join the United Front. At the same time, defending Confucianism quickly became central to the GMD's political project, especially to the young soldier and student recruits who also came of age during the New Culture and May Fourth movements and converged, like their Communist counterparts, in Canton after 1923.[53] If "May Fourth iconoclasm is itself a political and ideological construct that tells us more about the definition of twentieth-century Chinese

modernity than the nature of 'traditional' society," Nationalists who became fascists in the late 1920s and 1930s can be understood as rebutting and inverting May Fourth's presentist picture of the Confucian past.[54] The material that May Fourth thinkers grappled with has been identified by historian Luo Zhitian as an "inheritance within rupture"; ideas and practices that had already been intensely reconsidered amid the sociopolitical upheaval that attended the collapse of the Qing by 1911.[55]

The GMD's turn to Confucianism during the Nanjing Decade has appeared to some as evidence of an enduring despotism. To others, most notably Joseph Levenson, it seemed a kind of "counterfeit of culturalistic confidence" in a tradition whose proper place was now the museum, as if those who championed aspects of Confucianism after 1911 rationally knew better but emotionally could not let go of something whose historical moment had demonstrably passed.[56] With the hindsight of postcolonial criticism, we can see that Nationalist defense of indigenous traditions was largely in sync with elite anticolonial nationalisms elsewhere in the world, more so than was the iconoclastic rejection of them by Chinese Communists. Though Nationalist invocations of spirit did not precisely correspond with those of, for instance, elite Indian nationalists concerned to demarcate noncolonized spheres of meaning and action, the comparison certainly highlights a common reaction against imperialist dispossessions, one that is obscured by Levenson's account.[57] Levenson nevertheless helpfully called attention to nationalism's affective dimensions, pointing us to the ways in which fascists understand themselves to love the nation more than anyone and actively supply themselves with reasons to kill and die for it. The GMD militants on which this book focuses were enraged by the damage wrought to a Confucian inheritance by imperialists from the nineteenth century onward, who had looted its material manifestations and placed them in their own museums while also condemning this inheritance as unscientific, inadequately rational, and generally incompatible with modernity. There is no reason to doubt that their interest in Confucianism stemmed at least in part from the fact that it named a set of shared experiences and beliefs that they had known in some form all their lives.[58] The problem taken up by this book is not whether their beliefs were genuine—as that is impossible to gauge in any case—but how and why they interpreted and defended Confucianism as the exclusive core of Chinese national belonging. The aspects of this richly nuanced politico-intellectual heritage that they promoted explicitly buttressed the remaking of Chinese society in a rationalized,

efficient, and hierarchical fashion. They suppressed or ignored all other schools of dynastic thought in a way that sanitized the historical record and had potentially dire implications for the ethnically and religiously diverse populations within the territory that they claimed as China. And unlike conservative New Confucian philosophers of the same era, they were not interested in openly working through the relationship between historical ideas and modern social dynamics, but rather in asserting their perennial capacity to police the national boundary.

As subalternist critics have interrogated the social dimensions and elisions of the gestures of historical retrieval made by elite anticolonial nationalists, it is important to examine who stood to gain from those made by men like Chen Lifu, Dai Jitao, Chiang Kai-shek, and He Zhonghan. Later in the twentieth century, the Martinique-born Marxist Frantz Fanon would scathingly suggest that "the culture that the intellectual leans towards is often no more than a stock of particularisms. He wishes to attach himself to the people, but instead only catches hold of their outer garments."[59] To Fanon, the "national culture" championed by anticolonial elites was typically a patchwork of superficial gestures of cross-class solidarity, offering little of material benefit to the people invoked. Many aspects of the cultural-revolutionary project of GMD fascists during the 1930s—especially their constant invocations of the Confucian bonds of propriety, righteousness, integrity, and humility—rang like a "stock of particularisms." Still, their self-understanding as national vanguards—simultaneously at one with the masses and leaders thereof—meant that they were attempting a closer connection. As much as they desired to reclaim an indigenous patrimony of which the country was still being divested, they sought to fuse the nation's people into a single cooperative mass. Sometimes conceptualized as a machine, sometimes as an army, and sometimes as a living organism, all worthy parts of this mass were deemed vital to the successful functioning of the whole. Culture gave it shape, delimited its boundaries, and authorized a kind of hierarchically stratified sameness.

When CC Clique leader Chen Lifu called for "a revolution of culture," he was considering in all seriousness how to thoroughly transform national ways of life and restore its ancient glory simultaneously.[60] This revolutionary restorationism markedly differed from the cultural revolutionary aspirations of their Communist opponents, whose anti-Confucianism they now pilloried as an imperialistic and violently misguided legacy of the May Fourth Movement. This revolutionary-restorationist dynamic also distin-

guished Chen Lifu's agenda (along with that of the rest of the CC Clique and the Blue Shirts) from a conservative one. By invoking Confucianism as a transhistorical national spirit, rather than as a historically and textually rooted set of beliefs and practices, this heritage was freed up to animate a state-led program of material and industrial development, encouraging behaviors that would have been unrecognizable to anyone living in centuries past. The purported constancy of this spirit allowed them to simultaneously claim that they were revolutionizing the national landscape while also vouchsafing that everything would remain as it had always been. Under GMD guidance, the nation would become once again a place of comfort and familiarity, and its people would enjoy express trains, electrical grids, machine-powered factories, and militantly defended borders.

Working closely with Chiang Kai-shek's diaries, historian Yang Tianshi has noted how Chiang had been swept up in the reformist fervor of the May Fourth Movement. Yet whereas the dominant May Fourth ethos was strongly critical of traditional Chinese culture, "Chiang Kai-shek was different; although he had internalized the new thought, he was not interested in abandoning classical learning." Yang detected a shift around 1926 in Chiang's reading interests, which turned sharply toward classical texts.[61] By 1933 Chiang would openly exclaim that Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People "have inherited the morality and essential spirit of ancient China—that of Emperors Yao and Shun, of Kings Wen and Wu, of the Duke of Zhou and Confucius—they employ the native spirit of the Chinese race to lead the revolution and revive the nation."[62] Here, Chiang was reiterating passages written by Dai Jitao in 1920s Canton, as well as historical sentiments repeatedly expressed in Blue Shirt and CC Clique writings during the 1930s. By drawing a direct line from China's prehistoric sage-emperors to its twentieth-century revolution, Chiang's words indexed an intensification of the Janus-faced glances toward both past and future evident in Sun's Yat-sen's, and indeed all, nationalisms. The chapters that follow attempt to untangle why the restoration of tradition was construed as both necessary and revolutionary.

Although Chiang Kai-shek publicly denied the existence of the Blue Shirts (the CC Clique was, by contrast, a relatively known government entity), his patronage of both groups as well as their loyalty to him has been amply documented. Chiang was their leader but their influence was clearly mutual. They relied on each other for power, position, and ideological motivation. Nevertheless, as a state leader with a growing international reputation, Chiang was also becoming many things to many people. As Japanese

imperialist designs on China became increasingly territorial, Japanese intelligence services attempted to paint Chiang as a radical nationalist with fascist squads at his disposal and hence as a threat to Japanese interests in China.[63] At the same time, Chiang's Christian, Wellesley College–educated wife Song Meiling was actively painting a picture of Chiang to English-speaking audiences as a democratically inclined general who was doing his best to save his country from Communism and to navigate stormy domestic and international waters—laying groundwork for groups soon known in the United States as the "China Lobby."[64] *Revolutionary Nativism* finds the picture of Chiang as a leader with fascist affiliations to be closer to reality than were the sanitized images circulated to the American public by Song and the *Time-Life* empire of Henry Luce. The proximity of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's own revolutionary ideals and counterrevolutionary actions during the Nanjing Decade to those of the Blue Shirts and CC Clique, as well as his reliance upon these groups for his own political ascent, force us to reckon with his fascist inclinations.[65] However, it is necessary to also recognize the kinds of political compromises that Chiang made to secure his own longevity. He disbanded the Blue Shirts (or at least repurposed them) in 1938 for the sake of again allying with the Chinese Communist Party against Japanese imperialism during the Second United Front, and he went on to lead the GMD for the rest of a turbulent half century. His myriad alliances lent his politics an opportunistic quality. Chiang's public acquiescence to Japanese appeasement policies during the 1930s, moreover, was undoubtedly among the reasons why fascistic nationalism failed to gain a wider public purchase in China, as the Generalissimo effectively thwarted the CC Clique and Blue Shirts from tapping into popular anti-Japanese sentiments and directing them sharply rightward. Chiang, like any leader who aspires to dictatorship, was not a self-made subject. By foregrounding the voices of men with whom he surrounded himself during the Canton and Nanjing periods, and how they conceptualized the relationship between culture and revolution, this book aims to shed new light on a brief but pivotal span of Chinese and world revolutionary history.

Plan of the Book

Revolutionary Nativism analyzes the years between 1925 and 1937 through multiple, overlapping lenses. Chapter 1 charts how the anti-Communist groups that coalesced within the Nationalist Party during the 1923–27 First

United Front transformed into fascist organizations known as the Blue Shirts and CC Clique during the 1927–37 Nanjing Decade. I identify ways in which their evolving ideas of national development reflected the military and technocratic milieus in which they were schooled, and how their covert White Terror operations assumed a very public face via their mass media interventions. These interventions, which embraced modernist aesthetics as well as modern technologies like radio and film, allow us to see how GMD fascists fashioned themselves as anticonservative political vanguards.

Chapter 2, "Spirit Is Eternal: Cultural Revolution from the Right," picks up chapter 1's thread by spotlighting tensions between fascists' modernizing aspirations and their desire to revive ancient Confucian values. I trace how their political position was forged in reaction to the dominant ethos of the 1910s New Culture and May Fourth movements and took inspiration from Sun Yat-sen's affirmation in United Front Canton that Confucianism and industrial modernity were in fact fully compatible. Confucian culture came to be seen as what bound the national revolutionary subject together, and this culture assumed increasingly mythic qualities as it was recast as a national spirit in a manner that helped to differentiate their political orientation from a "feudal" or conservative one. Far from an idle intellectual exercise, their spiritual turn had violent real-world consequences. I address these consequences in chapter 3, which traces the role of nativist discourse in Nationalist military counterinsurgency campaigns of the early 1930s—the starkest example of the Nationalists' counterrevolutionary furor. Here, I highlight the ways in which the Blue Shirts who took charge of political training within the Nationalist military cast Communism as fundamentally alien to China's national spirit. This characterization in turn justified campaigns to exterminate Communists and to incarcerate low-level followers deemed rehabilitable in political prisons called repentance camps (*fanxingyuan*). By figuring Communists as Moscow-directed sexual deviants who threatened time-honored Confucian ways of being and as bandits who lived off the labor of others, Nationalists positioned themselves as familiar, wholesome, productive, and modern. In the repentance camps, inmates ostensibly learned how to become productive members of an orderly Confucian society, while citizens beyond camp walls were instructed to police their own behavior in ways that demonstrated they did not belong inside them.

Chapter 4, "Fixing the Everyday: The New Life Movement and Taylorized Modernity," reexamines the New Life Movement (NLM) launched by the

Nationalists in 1934, focusing on the ways in which it sought to fix everyday life in a twofold sense. First, it examines how the fascists who spearheaded the movement touted rationalized Confucian precepts to foster the national unity that they believed necessary for industrial productivity and military preparedness. Building on Arif Dirlik's assessment of the NLM as counterrevolutionary, it traces the patriarchal, antidemocratic implications of the NLM's perspective on society, which was that of officers and managers who wanted people to act like soldiers in a national army or cogs in a giant social machine.[66] This chapter further looks at how the NLM sought to fix everyday life in a second sense by invoking Confucian values to slot people into legible social roles and eliminate the omnipresent possibility of resistance, inscribing feudalistic social hierarchies into the heart of a modernizing society. Departing from the ideals of social reciprocity intrinsic to dynastic strains of Confucian thought, NLM Confucianism stressed top-down chains of command and the unquestioning loyalty of social inferiors to superiors. The NLM thereby sought to create subjects who would accept state propaganda in intended ways and efficiently enact whatever was asked of them. The movement crystallized fascist ideas of cultural revolution and constituted the Sinophone world's first effort to affirm Confucian values as the bedrock of an alternative form of modernity.

Chapter 5, "Literature and Arts for the Nation," examines how the Blue Shirts and CC Clique worked to create "nationalist literature and arts" (*minzu wenyi*) and how they correspondingly justified kidnapping and murdering left-wing cultural elites as a means of speeding the revolution along. Through readings of Chen Lifu's 1933 tract *The Chinese Film Industry* and CC Clique spy chief Xu Enceng's narrative of his detention of the female Communist writer Ding Ling, this chapter reveals how celebrations of native culture prioritized efficiency—from the interpellating capacities of film to the perceived expediency of kidnapping writers to force them into the Nationalist camp. It is in their prescriptions for nationalist literature and arts that fascism's tendency to be what Roger Griffin called "populist in intent and rhetoric, yet elitist in practice" was especially apparent.[67] The book ends with a brief conclusion sketching reasons for fascism's failure to gain wider purchase in Nanjing Decade China, as well as the postwar afterlives of this period's revolutionary nativism.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Chiang Kai-shek quoted in Deng, *Guomindang hexin zhuzhi zhenxiang*, 322.

1 Chan, "A Turning Point in the Modern Chinese Revolution," 224–41; Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution*, 131–41; Kwan, *Marxist Intellectuals and the Chinese Labor Movement*, esp. ch. 2; Tsin, *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China*, 143–68.

2 The city was also called Red Canton by Western journalists. Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution*, 152; Ho Chi Minh, then known as Ngyuen Ai Quoc, was dispatched by Moscow to Canton in 1925 to assist with local peasant organization and to work with representatives from China, Korea, the Dutch East Indies, and India in forming the Society of the Oppressed Peoples of Asia. Ho remained in Canton until Chiang Kai-shek's 1927 party purge. Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh*, 122, 141–45.

3 Murdock, *Disarming the Allies of Imperialism*, 188–93; Perry, *Shanghai on Strike*, 91; Wilson, "Principles and Profits," 628.

4 Tsin, *Nation, Governance, and Modernity in China*, 103–9.

5 Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution," esp. introduction and ch. 1. Also Tsui, *China's Conservative Revolution*.

6 Dai, *Sanminzhuyi zhi zhexue de jichu*, 15. Slavoj Žižek has identified this as a desire for "capitalism without capitalism," or a system of industrial production grounded in capitalist social relations without concomitant alienation or class strife in *Organs without Bodies*, 165; also see Harry Harootunian's extended historical elaboration on this idea in *Overcome by Modernity*.

7 Sun Yat-sen [Sun Zhongshan], *Sanminzhuyi*, 52–53.

8 This book uses the terms *semicolonialism* and *colonial modernity* to describe the circumstances that Chinese fascists sought to overcome and to prevent from

being overcome by Communism and Japanese imperialism. For an inventory of the forms of imperialist violence and control to which China was subjected during the pre-Maoist period, see Osterhammel, "Semi-colonialism and Informal Empire in Twentieth-Century China," 290–314; also the introduction to Hevia, *English Lessons*. Though semicolonialism and colonial modernity are contested terms, I find both useful for describing China's global predicament, as they recognize China's difference from territories directly ruled by a single colonial power while also acknowledging the forms of racialized violence and external control to which China was subjected by European, American, and Japanese powers. For a review of recent debates, see Barlow, "Debates over Colonial Modernity in East Asia and Another Alternative," 617–44.

9 E.g., Mann, *Fascists*; Mosse, *The Fascist Revolution*.

10 On the Janus-faced nature of nationalism, see Benedict Anderson's discussion of Walter Benjamin's "Angel of History" in *Imagined Communities*, 161–62; McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, 358–60; Nairn, *The Break-Up of Britain*, ch. 9. On the ways in which fascism intensifies the temporal contradictions of nationalism, see Neocleous, *Fascism*.

11 *Qiantu* 1, no. 8 (1933): front cover.

12 Yao, *An Introduction to Confucianism*, 18–25.

13 Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 47; also Griffin, *Modernism and Fascism*, 2. Such a worldview in the German context has also been identified by Jeffrey Herf as a reactionary modernism that eschewed "backward looking pastoralism, pointing instead to the outlines of a beautiful new order replacing the formless chaos due to capitalism in a united, technologically advanced nation." Herf, *Reactionary Modernism*, 2. Peter Osborne has in turn challenged Herf's identification of fascism's modernism with its affirmation of technology, rather than with its paradoxical and "rigourously futural" temporality as such. Osborne, *The Politics of Time*, 163–68.

14 Letter reprinted in Jo-Anne Danzker, "Shanghai Modern," in Danzker, Lum, and Zheng, *Shanghai Modern*, 51–52.

15 Danzker, "Shanghai Modern," 52.

16 Wakeman, *Spymaster*, 175–82.

17 On Shanghai's "mediasphere," see DesForges, *Mediasphere Shanghai*.

18 Dooeum Chung notes that "the Blueshirts founded a variety of mass media, opened bookstores, published periodicals, while propaganda work was performed by publishing newspapers, journals, and books." Chung estimates that between "1932 and 1935 approximately two hundred different periodicals with publications about Fascist propaganda were supervised by the Blueshirts." Chung, *Élitist Fascism*, 146–47; Wakeman, *Spymaster*, 102–4.

19 Key works include Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution*; Chang, *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society*; Chung, *Élitist Fascism*; Deng, *Guomindang hexin zuzhi zhenxiang*; Li, "Culture, Revolution, and Modernity"; Kirby, *Germany and Republican China*; Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution"; Wakeman, "A Revisionist View of the

Nanjing Decade"; Wakeman, *Spymaster*; Xu, "1930 niandai Lixingshe yanzhong de Yidali faxisizhuyi."

20 Deng, *Guomindang hexin zhuzhi zhenxiang*, 155.

21 Judge, *Print and Politics*; Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*.

22 Mark Neocleous succinctly observes how "it is fascist *nationalism* which facilitates the break with liberal and Marxist universalism, and, in the case of the latter, its identification of internationalism as the key to class struggle." Neocleous, *Fascism*, 19.

23 Wang, *Geming yu fangeming*, esp. 67, 118–19.

24 Mayer, *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe*, 5.

25 The coup that brought the Nationalists to power, writes Peter Zarrow, was regarded as such by the CCP, for it "had eliminated the peasant and worker movements that represented anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism, and social justice"—the oppressed classes in whose name the Communist revolution was being organized. Yet the GMD also "saw themselves as loyal to the revolution—whose goal was to build a strong state—because the White Terror had saved the nation from class struggle." Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution*, 245–46.

26 Mao Zedong and the Chinese Communists would invoke the struggles of the "national people" (*quanguo renmin*) during the Second United Front, but this concept never elided class conflicts within China but instead recast these conflicts as contradictions temporarily subordinated to the more pressing contradiction of local and global struggles against imperialism and fascism.

27 As Guannan Li has emphasized, "Ideological battles were constantly fought [among Sun's followers] for an 'original' and thus authoritative explanation of his ideology." Li, "Culture, Revolution, and Modernity," 119. Also Wells, *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen*, 122–40; Harrison, *The Making of the Republican Citizen*, 207–39.

28 Deng, *Guomindang hexin zuzhi zhenxiang*, 50–52; van de Ven, *From Friend to Comrade*, 171–73; Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*, 241; Wilbur and How, *Missionaries of Revolution*, 188–93, 245–46, 714.

29 Gibson with Chen, *The Secret Army*; Peralta, "Central America between Two Dragons," 168.

30 Roy, *Revolution and Counterrevolution in China*, 283; also quoted in Chang, *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society*, 30; Gregor, *A Place in the Sun*, 75.

31 Gregor, *A Place in the Sun*, 81.

32 Chang's analysis aimed to rebut Lloyd Eastman's bold but thinly substantiated claims about fascist tendencies within the GMD. Chang, *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society*, 135. As I elaborate in chapter 1, the Renaissance Society (Fuxingshe) was a Blue Shirt front organization.

33 The argument that the interwar GMD were merely developmental nationalists also sidesteps the extensive literature on European and Japanese fascisms as products of "late development," e.g., Mann, *Fascists*, 48–64.

34 E.g., Yang, *Jiang Jieshi yu Nanjing guomin zheng fu*; Yang, *Guomindang de "liangong" yu "fangong"*; Wang, *Geming yu fangeming.*

35 Zanasi, *Saving the Nation*.

36 Mayer, *Dynamics of Counterrevolution in Europe*, 9.

37 As Brian Tsui has written, "the GMD held dearly to the rhetoric of revolution. . . . Inasmuch as the GMD claimed a monopoly on China's revolutionary course, the rightwing party-state was a reaction against the ascendant Communist movement." Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution," 2.

38 William C. Kirby, for instance, characterized Chinese fascism as a "vogue that coincided with the emergence of a close Sino-German friendship," in *Germany and Republican China*, 175. This characterization is restated in Kirby, "Images and Realities of Chinese Fascism," 267. The sense that fascism was a force external to Chinese social conditions also appears in analyses specifically concerned with the extremes of Nationalist nationalism, e.g., Ni, *"Minzu" xiangxiang yu guojia tongzhi*, 168–73, 299. See also Clinton, "Fascism, Cultural Revolution, and National Sovereignty in 1930s China," introduction.

39 Chang, for instance, in *The Chinese Blue Shirt Society*, 25–54, based much of her argument against regarding the Blue Shirts as fascist on the fact that they preferred not to use the term *fascism* to describe their own politics.

40 On Chinese fascist analyses of the Italy-Ethiopia conflict, see Clinton, "Ends of the Universal," 1740–68.

41 E.g., Xia Dianren, "Deren yanmu zhong zhi Zhonggruoren" [Chinese people in German eyes], *Qiantu* 1, no. 5 (1933): 1–5.

42 Dai was a longtime comrade of Sun who reluctantly joined the United Front in 1924, serving on the Soviet-reorganized GMD Central Executive Committee and heading the party's propaganda department, during which time Dai helped create its Central News Agency. Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 3, 201; also Mast and Saywell, "Revolution out of Tradition," 73–98; Bai, "Jiang Jieshi ruhua sanminzhuyi zhi pingxi," 76–79; Tsui, "China's Forgotten Revolution," introduction and ch. 1; Yang, *Guomindang de "liangong" yu "fangong,"* 79–87.

43 Audrey Wells characterized Dai's neglect to mention the influence of Western political and economic theories on Sun Yat-sen as "difficult to fathom" and likely due to Dai's noted mental instability. Wells, *The Political Thought of Sun Yat-sen*, 136. As the scholars cited above have emphasized, Dai's rereading of Sun was a political rather than a psychological move. Historian Yan Lu aptly termed it an effort to "nativize" Sun's thought in *Re-understanding Japan*, 148–51.

44 Taylor, *The Generalissimo*, 18, 35. Dai's son was raised as Chiang Wei-kuo.

45 For instance, Chiang and Chen Guofu formed a Shanghai investment firm in 1920 with the soon-disappointed idea of speculating in stocks to fund the revolution. Taylor, *The Generalissimo*, 35.

46 Chung, *Élitist Fascism*, 133; van de Ven, *From Friend to Comrade*, 171–73; Zhang, Fang, and Huang, *Zhonghua minguoshi dacidian*, 833–34.

47 Wakeman, "Confucian Fascism," 420.

48 Van de Ven, *War and Nationalism in China*, 119.

49 Ho Chi Minh, for instance, was in Canton at the time of the purge and immediately recognized the imperative to leave China before being handed over to French police. See Duiker, *Ho Chi Minh*, 144–45. Writings that soon appeared on the events of 1927 included M. N. Roy's *Revolution and Counterrevolution in China*, Leon Trotsky's writings collected in *Leon Trotsky on China*, and André Malraux's novel *Man's Fate*.

50 Peter Zarrow has underscored the importance of separating the New Culture and May Fourth movements historically and conceptually, as the former constituted a series of intellectual discussions and the latter a mass social movement. See chapters 7 and 8 of Zarrow, *China in War and Revolution*. However, *Revolutionary Nativism* follows convention by using "May Fourth" to denote the comprehensive intellectual and social ferment of the years 1915 to 1922. Chow, *The May Fourth Movement*; Schwarcz, *The Chinese Enlightenment*.

51 Liu, *Translingual Practice*, 256.

52 Liu, *Translingual Practice*, 239.

53 Chan, "A Turning Point in the Modern Chinese Revolution," 230–31.

54 Ko, *Teachers of the Inner Chambers*, 3–4. As Prasenjit Duara summarized, people during this period engaged with something that was "not an inert inheritance from the past, but equally a range of responses to this inheritance in the contemporary scene." Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation*, 90.

55 Luo, *Inheritance within Rupture*. This is a translation of Luo Zhitian, *Liebianzhong de chuancheng: Ershi shiji qianqi de Zhongguo wenhua yu xueshu* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2003).

56 Levenson, *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*, 99–104, 116.

57 E.g., Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*.

58 Lionel Jensen has argued that the narrowing of this heritage into something bequeathed by Confucius was itself a product of Chinese encounters with European, particularly Jesuit, intellectuals beginning in the sixteenth century. Jensen, *Manufacturing Confucianism*, introduction.

59 Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 41.

60 Chen, *Zhongguo wenhua jianshe xiehui gaikuang yilan*, 1.

61 Yang, *Jiang Jieshi yu Nanjing guomin zhengfu*, 5–6.

62 Deng, *Guomindang de hexin zuzhi zhenxiang*, 322.

63 As Parks Coble has noted, this was the general thrust of a 1937 report issued by the Research Division of Japan's Foreign Ministry (Iwai, *Ran'isha ni kansuru chōsa*). Coble, *Facing Japan*, 226. The report was translated into English during World War II and can be found here: U.S. State Department, Confidential Central Files, China, Internal Affairs, 1945–1949, 893.00/3-3045. See esp. p. 76 of the English translation.

64 Herzstein, *Henry R. Luce,* Time*, and the American Crusade in Asia*; also Mao, *Asia First*, ch. 2.

65 Jay Taylor's English-language biography of Chiang, *The Generalissimo*, maintains that the absence of clear discussions of fascism in Chiang's diaries, coupled with

Chiang's disinterest in replicating Nazi ideology in China, meant that "Chiang was fascist in neither ends nor means." Taylor, *The Generalissimo*, 101–2. I argue throughout this book that Chinese disinterest in replicating metropolitan fascisms on Chinese soil was consistent with their extreme nationalist position, sharing a logic with what Reto Hofmann has identified as a concomitant "fascist critique of fascism" in Japan. Joseph Esherick has compellingly questioned Taylor's portrayal, noting not only that Chiang had "many faces" but also that the biography's generally "apologetic tone is most pronounced in Taylor's discussion of fascism." Esherick, "The Many Faces of Chiang Kai-shek," 22. Also Hofmann, *The Fascist Effect*.

66 Dirlik, "Ideological Foundations of the New Life Movement," 968.

67 Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 41.

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1 Bloch, *Heritage of Our Times*, 64–68.

2 Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism*, 48.

3 Dagmar Herzog, for instance, has argued that "Nazism has been misremembered and misrepresented as sexually repressive for everyone"—as merely affirming long-standing bourgeois morals—"what Nazism actually did was to redefine who could have sex with whom." Herzog, *Sex after Fascism*, 18.

4 The literature on Chinese Communist ideology is vast. For comparative reference, see, for example, Dirlik, *The Origins of Chinese Communism*; Chen, *Zhongguo gongchan geming qishinian*.

5 Sun, *The International Development of China*, 195.

6 E.g., Bodenhorn, *Defining Modernity*; Eastman, *The Abortive Revolution*; Musgrove, *China's Contested Capital*; Strauss, *Strong Institutions in Weak Polities*; Yeh, *Becoming Chinese*.

7 Wei, *Counterrevolution in China*; Coble, *The Shanghai Capitalists and the Nationalist Government*.

8 Fitzgerald, *Awakening China*; Gilmartin, *Engendering the Chinese Revolution*, 149–50.

9 Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 127; Maier, "Between Taylorism and Technocracy," 36; Rabinbach, *The Human Motor*, 272.

10 Boorman and Howard, *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 3, 203.

11 Song Qingling, "Tongchi Dai Jitao" [A bitter account of Dai Jitao], in *Song Qingling xuanji*, 43–49.

12 Song, "Tongchi Dai Jitao," 48. Their discussion of popular rule refers to Nanjing's decision to indefinitely extend what was sketched by Sun Yat-sen as an interim period of "political tutelage," with the idea that the nation was not yet ready to participate in state-level politics and that emergency conditions demanded popular exclusion.

13 Song, "Tongchi Dai Jitao," 45–46.

14 Song, "Tongchi Dai Jitao," 44.

15 Yang, *Guomindang de "lian gong" yu "fangong,"* 266.