

The Kuomintang Left in the National Revolution, 1924-1931



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著者:So Wai-Chor

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The debacle of the Kuomintang regime in Mainland China in 1949 showed that the political course pursued by Chiang Kai-shek had completely failed to meet the

challenges of the time. Since then there has been much speculation on whether the Kuomintang regime would have survived in China if a different political course had been pursued by the party. This kind of curiosity has now drawn historians' attention to the Kuomintang Left, which during 1928-31 had initiated an opposition movement against Chiang Kai-shek's regime in Nanking; it had expounded its own ideological stand and offered an alternative programme to the official policy line. This thesis is a study of the opposition movement of the Kuomintang Left in 1928-31 and attempts to answer the question of whether the Kuomintang Left had propounded a viable alternative to Chiang's course within the political context of the time.

The opposition movement led by the Kuomintang Left started in late 1928 when the Leftist leadership was displaced from the Party Central in Nanking and its positions in the party at regional level were being challenged. The Leftist opposition movement against Nanking can be divided into two important phases. The first phase began with the "Party-Defending and National Salvation Movement" in mid-1929 and culminated in the Enlarged Party Conference in Peiping in July 1930. The second phase started with the summoning of the Extraordinary Party Conference in Canton in May 1931 and ended with the beginning of the "Wang-Chiang cooperation" in January 1932. In these two phases of opposition movement, the Kuomintang Left not only had obtained support from other opposition groups in the party but, more importantly, also had secured alliances with major regional militarists who launched several large-scale military campaigns against Nanking. In the end the opposition movement failed to bring down Chiang Kai-shek's regime in Nanking; ironically its only notable result was to usher in an era of "Wang-Chiang cooperation" in the Nanking regime which on the whole lasted until Wang's defection to the Japanese side during the Sino-Japanese War.

The detailed investigation into the Leftist opposition movement during 1928-31 has led this study to conclude that the Leftist alternative was not viable within the political context of the time. In the first place, the quality of the Leftist leadership left much to be desired. There were remarkable differences in ideological orientation at the top level of the leadership and a lack of firm political will was evident among Leftist leaders. In particular, Wang Ching-wei's ever readiness to make compromises in the long run had undermined the Leftist appeal to the party's rank and file and to the masses in general. Furthermore, though for a time the Left did enlist significant support of the party's ranks and build a constituency among certain sections of the population, its strength in the party could not withstand the onslaught from the Nanking Government and its social constituency was at most marginal. Eventually Wang Ching-wei decided to end the Leftist opposition movement and came to terms with Chiang Kai-shek shortly after the Manchurian Incident. An absence of leadership and inadequate political strength of the Kuomintang Left rendered the Leftist alternative not viable in Chinese Republican history.

作者介绍:

苏维初教授 (Professor So Wai Chor), 香港公开大学中国和国际研究教授。本硕毕业于香港大学, 博士毕业于澳大利亚国立大学, 主要研究领域在于国共党史和外交史, 开设有现代中国、中国近代史 (1840-1949)、太平洋世纪等课程。

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## 评论

澳大利亚国立大学博士论文，王赓武的学生。硕论重要参考书，研究改组派及其思想开创性的作品，把改组派分为两阶段，指出陈公博的第一阶段具有浓厚的马克思主义倾向。我这破学校图书馆英文论著很少，还好有这本。

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断断续续读了两个月，起初是为写陈公博而读，此书早于李志毓的左派研究，很有眼光，看过之后觉得李的若干观点不免滞后。资料上不突出，主要是开创之风，关于陈公博和改组派在王克文的研究里另有延伸，可稍作对比。第三章关于汪精卫的民主理念，将来或可有延伸。

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