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# 近代史研究



Modern Chinese  
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中国社会科学院近代史研究所 主办

# 近代史研究

*Modern Chinese History Studies*

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# Modern Chinese History Studies

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## **The Nationalist Government's Efforts to Recover the Chinese Sovereignty over the Islands in South China Sea after 1945** ..... *Chen Qianping*(4)

After the victory of the War of Resistance, the Nationalist Government made great efforts and overcame many difficulties to take over the sovereignty over the islands in South China Sea from Japan and dispatch troops to station on Dongsha, Xisha and Nansha Islands. In addition to building two weather stations on Dongsha Island and Woody Island, the Nationalist Government sent technicians to survey the islands and map out South China Sea. On December 1, 1947, the Nationalist Government announced the Chinese maritime territory in South China Sea, which was marked out with 11 line segments consisting of a U-shape in map. In this process, the US government adopted a policy of acquiescence. It was China's legal right granted by the United Nations and the Allies and based on the post-WWII international order to recover the Chinese sovereignty over the islands in South China Sea.

## **Policy and Action of the United States Regarding the Affiliation of the Islands in China South Sea (1943—1951)** ..... *Li Guang*(24)

Since 1943, the US government had been thinking over the post-WWII international order. The sovereignty over the islands in South China Sea occupied by Japan during the wartime were one of the problems to be solved. In the late stage of WWII, the US government tended to give these islands to any country that claimed sovereignty over them or have them under international trusteeship. In the early postwar years, nevertheless, the US supported neither of the above options. In the late 1940s and early 1950s, the US hoped to deal with the problem of the islands in South China Sea in a way as vague as possible and not benefiting the new People's Republic of China. At last, the San Francisco Japanese Peace Treaty, drafted under the dominant power of the US government, only demands Japan give up the sovereignty over these islands with out identifying any country to claim the sovereignty. The San Francisco Japanese Peace Treaty represents the formation of the US policy towards the disputes in South China Sea.

## **Herbert Spence's Theory of "Social Organism" and Nationalism in Late Qing: A Study Focusing on Zhang Taiyan and Yan Fu** ..... *Fu Zheng*(34)

Herbert Spence's theory of "social organism" undoubtedly had a great impact to the nationalist thoughts in the late Qing period, but the question is why Spence's theory advocating individualism fueled the intellectual trend of collectivism and nationalism in modern China. Scholars such as Benjamin Schwartz and Frank Dikötter have noticed the conflict between Spence's individualism and his theory of "social organism," which was the theoretical resource of modern Chinese nationalism. Based on the writings of Zhang Taiyan and Yan Fu, this article investigates how Spence's theory of "social organism" became a theory for international competition in China and compare the Chinese people's understanding of "liberty" at that time with Spence's own understanding. For Spence, individual liberty conflicts with the state power; while in China, they are the two sides of the same coin. This difference leads to the destiny of the Spence's theory in modern China.

## **The Expression of Death in Memorial Ceremony of the 1911 Revolution: Interpretation of the Symbol of Skull at the Cemetery of the Huanghuagang 72 Martyrs** ..... *Wu Huanyu*(52)

There is a path decorated with sculptures of skulls in the cemetery of the Huanghuagang 72 Martyrs built in the early

Republican years. Most of the existing scholarship interprets these sculptures as the personal preference of Pan Dawei, the architect of the cemetery. In fact, the death culture was quite popular in the late Qing and early Republican period, so the symbol of skull became a commonly seen signifier, which had multiple meanings at that time. Before the 1911 Revolution, skulls mainly represented people's suffering and brave action of the revolutionaries to change people's misery. In the early Republican years, due to the political chaos, people's suffering was not relieved by the success of the revolution; therefore, the revolutionaries' sacrifice would not lead to the realization of their revolutionary ideal. As a result, the meaning of skull was also transformed from bravery and hope to the emptiness of life. The symbol of skull at the cemetery of the Huanghuagang 72 Martyrs, the revolutionary heroes, thus was imbedded in this dynamic network of meanings. Through the expression of cruelty and scary in the martyrs' death, the design of the cemetery urges people to question the ultimate value of individual life and the fundamental meaning of the 1911 Revolution.

**No Longer “the Trivial” : Litigations of Debts and Legal Adjustment in the Commercial Activities in the Qing Dynasty ..... Zhang Shihui(69)**

The changes in the social and economic order of the Qing Dynasty significantly influenced litigations of debts, which were regarded as “the trivial” for a long time. Litigations of debts in commercial activities were gradually differentiated from litigations of debts between individuals and became “the important” to which provincial governors and the central government paid attention. This process developed from a local phenomenon to a universal transformation. At first, litigations of debts happened in certain businesses such as brokers and money shops and areas, but they would later change the whole commercial arena. This development took place mainly because the changes in the social and economic order had an impact to the existing legal system and governance.

**Zuo Zongtang’s Efforts to Raise Military Funds in Western March and the Wartime Financial Management of the Qing Court ..... Liu Zenghe(84)**

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