

## ON A TIBETOLOGIST IN THE MOVEMENTS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL --BASED ON THE ANALYSIS OF YU DAOQUAN'S FILMS IN THE CHINA TIBETOLOGY RESEARCH CENTER

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### Abstract

It's all well known that Yu Daoquan is a famous international Tibetologist, a linguist and an educator. On his way to join the cause of the early Chinese Communist Party and the Communist International, he always had advanced ideas to lead the way. Based on the historical information of Yu Daoquan's photographs in the collection of the China Tibetology Research Center, this paper recorded Yu Daoquan's participation in a series of Communist International activities in Europe from the 1930s to the 1940s in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Through the analysis of the information which carried by the photographs of this series of activities, we can learn that Yu Daoquan put Marx's philosophical theory into practice in the Communist International activities and made silent dedication to the task of the Communist International. We proposes to strengthen the study of the history of the figures in the activities of the Chinese Communist International in the study of the Marxism theory localization in China, which not only opens up the research horizon and broadens the scope of research, but also deepens the breadth and depth of the research object. Therefore, it is of certain theoretical value, historical significance and practical importance to explore the advanced ideas that led Yu

Daoquan forward and his participation in the activities of the Communist International.

**Keywords:** Yu Daoquan; the Tibetologist; the Member of the Communist Party of China; the Movement of the Communist International

### I. Question Mention

In their book *The Communist International and the Chinese Revolution*, Zhou Wenqi and Zhu Liangru (1986) indicate that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has always been a member of the Communist International (CI) from its founding in July 1922 to its dissolution in May 1943, so there is a close relationship between the CI and the CCP which influences the CCP greatly as in the choice of the party line and the revolutionary struggle but there is both success and failure and the choice is not always correct. On the reflection of the dissolution of the CI, Mao Zedong believes that its intention is to make the Communist Parties more nationalized in different countries. In his book *the History of the relationship between the Communist International and the Chinese Revolution*, Huang Xiurong (1989) also illustrates the close correlation between the CI and the Chinese Revolution. He also points that the CI provide great support to the proletarian revolutions in Europe, the liberation movements of the Eastern nations and the establishment of the new type of revolutionary proletarian party by the advanced proletarians in many countries. It is clear that there are close ties between the CI and the Communist Parties in different countries which strengthen their organizations but also nationalize them at the same time according to the actual situation of each country. In *Biographical Dictionary of people in the Communist International*, which is edited by Lazitch, B. et M. Drachkovitch, there is biographies of people in the CI, however, there is no mention of Chinese people and not to mention of Yu Daoquan, who take part in the activities of the CI in Europe at that time. There are some research of it by Chinese scholars of Wang Yao (2010) and Bai Linhai (2017), but there is no extensive research on it at present.

This research attempts to confirm that Yu Daoquan linked his ideal beliefs closely with his practical actions and dedicated himself to the cause of the Communist International quietly through the literature of the Communist International and Yu Daoquan, especially the films- gift from Yu Daoquan- in the collection of the China Tibetology Research Center. Those films are detailed record of Yu Daoquan's participation in a series of activities of the CI in Europe as a member of the CCP and a fighter of the CI. It will make up for the lack of Chinese

people in the *biographical dictionary of the Communist International figures* mentioned above in memory of the obligations and roles played by Chinese Communists in the activities of the Communist International, which will also be of historical and practical significance for the study of Marxist theory and the history of the Communist International.

## II. Early Baptism of the Communist Ideology

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1919, the May Fourth New Culture Movement broke out in China, which shocked China and abroad. As an important movement in the modern history of China, it brought in Marxism, which added new impetus to China. Undoubtedly, this has deeply influenced tens of thousands of young Chinese students at that time. Yu Daoquan was no exception, maybe this is one of the main reasons why he “abandoned science for literature”.

At Peking University, Yu Daoquan studied Sanskrit with Professor Stael-Holstein and worked as Professor Stael-Holstein's teaching and research assistant at the same time. It is not difficult to say how much he had been influenced since he was then in the place where the May Fourth Movement originated.

As we all know, Peking University is known as the cradle of advanced thought in modern Chinese history. It is full of academic freedom and open-mindedness. As a young man who demanded progress both in thought and knowledge at that time, he was influenced by the advanced ideological beliefs, i.e. strong communist beliefs there and he became a member of the CCP secretly in 1924.

Yu Yaohua, whom is Yu Daoquan's granddaughter has even recalled that his grandfather told her that he was introduced to the Party by Comrade Li Dazhao and joined the Communist Party at Peking University when they took a walk in his later years. Although this is only a short and simple oral information, we consider it credible. At that time, China was in a very difficult situation in its modern history. There were both internal and external troubles. The country was torn apart by warlords with each one controlling a region. There were frequent conflicts and attacks among them. What's worse, the imperial powers were carving up China's sphere of influence. The Chinese people were living in dire straits. Later, the Communist Party and the Kuomintang let their former grudges go and had the first cooperation in 1924. In fact, Beijing Communist Group and Socialist Youth League Organization was set up by the Communists of the society of Marxism (established by Li Dazhao) in Peking University in the summer of 1920, Li Dazhao was in charge of party affairs in the northern part of the CPC Central Committee until 1924, when the CPC Central Committee decided to establish the Executive

Committee of the Northern Region of the CPC was established by the CPC Central Committee in Beijing, with Li Dazhao taking overall responsibility. Li Dazhao, as a famous professor of Peking University, was also the head of the northern part of the Chinese Communist Party organization since then. Making full use of his office and other places, he often gave intellectual lectures on the ideas of the communist philosophy to young Chinese students who is in pursuit of advanced thinking and made them became members of the Chinese Communist Party by way of running the New Youth magazine to propagate communism. Undoubtedly, it was natural for Yu Daoquan to join the CCP as a result of Li's effort. In his diary, Yu Daoquan wrote the following words "I was very interested in the articles about the Soviet Union in newspapers and magazines as a result of acknowledging some ideas of the Communist and understanding the socialist Soviet Union correctly. At one time, I was almost reading one article or book immediately when it was available to me." It is thus clear that Yu Daoquan had accepted the socialist ideas and was keen on looking for articles about the socialist Soviet Union and reading them. In addition, Xiao Qian also recalled that he (Xiao Qian) had a fantasy of "being a revolutionist".

While getting to know Li Anzhai, who is one of his fourth cousin's classmates and a member of the Communist Youth League(CY) organization, Xiao Qian borrowed a lot of pamphlets from him. Some of them dissected unequal treaties; others preached the liberation of all mankind. After reading them, he had the feeling that all those words were said by "the poor brothers" like him and he accepted the idea of communism ideologically. At the same time, Li Anzhai encouraged Xiao Qian to distribute the pamphlets to the classmates and other "poor brothers". Later, Li Anzhai and Yu Daoquan introduced Xiao Qian to join the CY. In 1934, when Xiao Qian returned to Beiping (Beijing is called Beiping at that time), he could not be in touch with the CY as the old comrades have been scattered and Li Anzhai and Yu Daoquan were absent...It is thus clear that Yu Daoquan had already become a true member of the Chinese Communist Party and was also one of the leading members of the organization of the CCP in Beiping. At that time, Yu Daoquan had been to France for study and Li Anzhai had been to America for study, too. Thus, Xiao Qian could not meet them in Beiping. Of course, as one early secret member of CCP, Yu Daoquan had to finish all the work arranged by the higher party organization.

He also actively propagated and imported the advanced socialist ideas to his relatives, helped them to establish lofty communist ideals and guided them towards the Chinese proletarian revolutionary camp. Yu Ruomu once said "...Brother

Daoquan was in pursuit of progressive ideas, which had a certain influence on my taking the revolutionary path. He recommended to me Hu Yuzhi's book *Impressions of Moscow*. He always praised the superiority of Soviet socialism, which had a subtle influence on me". What's more, he always influenced his family members by his determined revolutionary will and actions on the road of Chinese resistance and socialist revolution. For example, his little sister Yu Lu Lin and little brother Yu Daoyuan were influenced by him and join the CCP and joined the whole line of anti-Japanese and national salvation and the building of a new socialist China.

It was not until Yu Daoquan's later years that he told Yu Yaohua that he had ever joined the Party in Beijing in the past and had done some work, and went abroad in 1930s and had been abroad for 15 or 16 years. Throughout the war of resistance against Japan and the war of liberation, in the midst of such a brutal and bloody struggle, he was at abroad and could not make any contribution. Now, all would be done well because of the blood of millions of martyrs and the correct leadership of the CCP. At that time, he felt ashamed if he asked for the restoration of organizational record and the identity of party member again. If he did that, he had the feeling that he was just to enjoy the honor of the party, just to be an official, so he was never willing to be done that. Undoubtedly, back in the 1920s and 1930s, having been nurtured by the CCP and influenced by the Communist International Movement, Yu Daoquan became a Chinese Communist and a Communist International fighter. On the one hand, he was engaged in the work of the Party organization, on the other hand, he was engaged in Tibetan language study and research work and paid attention to the situation of the Chinese frontier. Later, he became a firm believer in communism and devoted himself to the good cause of communism silently.

Even during his stay in the University of Paris in France for Tibetan studies in the 1930s, he often communicated with his Communist International friends in Esperanto. He even lived together with them in order to have a thorough discussion on the current situation of the Communist International movement. The author once had an interview with Wang Yao on the topic of Yu Daoquan. Wang Yao especially emphasized that Yu Daoquan was a true Bolshevik fighter as he had internalized the spirit of Marxism and the Communist International movement in himself, and he also took practical actions. And now, the author can provide relevant evidence through examining and analyzing Yu Daoquan's films in the collection of the China Tibetology Research Center.