

The Spread and Influence of the Communist Thought in Early Taiwan

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Abstract: The early communist movement in Taiwan was closely connected with the mainland, and had important influence and status. The early Taiwan Communist Movement was influenced by Japan and the Communist International, which gave birth to a series of social groups including the Communist Party, created a group of communist revolutionaries and disseminators who remained famous for thousands of years, promoted the spread of Marxist classics in Taiwan, and also triggered a large-scale movement of Taiwanese workers and farmers.

Keywords: Taiwan; Communist movement; The Communist Party.

1. Introduction

In the 1920s, the communist trend of thought spread all over the world, and the CPC and the Taiwan Communist Party were established one after another. In the history of the international communist movement, although the communist movement in Taiwan was rarely known, it was still an important force to promote social progress, with profound historical impact. Taiwan's communist movement has its unique historical background, and there are multiple influential forces behind the scenes. In this movement, a large number of social groups and heroes were born, but after all, it was a flash in the pan and finally ushered in the end of failure.

The second year after Taiwan was ceded, Japan introduced a bill to establish Japan's autocratic leadership in Taiwan as the governor. The governor oppressed and ruled through the omnipresent Japanese police, such as restricting people's association and parade, participating in public disputes, and limiting publishing. This has become a huge obstacle to the spread of communism in Taiwan. Japan also carried out land inventory, confiscated landless land, etc. to attract Japanese investment in Taiwan. After the change of industrial structure, a large number of Japanese capitalists also gave birth to a large number of Japanese communists. Taiwan capitalists became the vassals of Japanese capitalists. The living conditions of Taiwan's workers are worrying, and they are unable to compare with Japanese workers in a state of poverty and disease.

2. The influence of the Comintern and Japan on the spread of communist ideology in Taiwan

The guidance of the Comintern is the main reason for the establishment of the Communist Party of Taiwan, as well as the important reason for the spread of Marxism and communist ideology in Taiwan. Taiwan became a Japanese colony during the Japanese occupation. With the increasing strength of Taiwan's workers and peasants, the Japanese Communist Party and the Communist International have always wanted to develop their own strength in Taiwan. In the early 1920s, with Lenin's impetus, the Comintern put forward the strategic policy of helping the independence movement in

the colonies and supporting the national liberation movement by the proletarian parties. Lenin expanded the connotation of proletarian revolution, pointing out that national independence is also a part of proletarian revolution, and national revolution needs the leadership of the advanced class. This has laid a theoretical foundation for the establishment of the Taiwan Communist Party. The Program of the Japanese Communist Party drafted by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union clearly put forward the idea of independence of the Japanese colony, and the Program of the Communist International on Taiwan also clearly put forward the call to establish the Taiwan Communist Party and promote the independence movement of the Taiwan colony. Through the Comintern order, the Japanese Communist Party established the Taiwan Branch, and the Taiwan Communist Party came into being. Oriental University in Moscow also welcomed a group of early leaders of the Taiwan Communist Party. Oriental University is a university that propagandizes Marxism and communism and cultivates the backbone of the revolution. There, they received the Soviet Union's education, learned the advanced theory of communism and revolutionary theory, and laid a solid foundation for the revolutionary movement and communist practice after returning to Taiwan. (Zhang, 2007)

Japan had an important influence on the spread of communism in Taiwan, not only promoting the establishment of the Taiwan Communist Party, but also promoting the social movement in Taiwan. Under the influence of the October Revolution of the Soviet Union, Japanese communist groups were established one after another, and a large number of progressive young people who supported communism emerged. Progressive organizations such as the Tokyo Taiwan Youth Association were established one after another. Some Taiwanese students studying in Japan, such as Peng Huaying, have joined organizations that promote socialism and organize workers' and peasants' movements. Under the influence of communist ideology, Xu Naichang, Yang Yunping and other Taiwanese students in the Tokyo Taiwan Youth Association gradually developed their communist beliefs. (Song, 2012a) In 1926, the New Culture Society of Taiwan was established under the guidance of Marxism. One year later, the "Social Science Research Department" was established to organize secret meetings and book discussions.

They got in touch with Taiwan's cultural associations and other organizations, organized meetings, lectures, etc., and disseminated Marxist theory. Taiwanese who are active in Japan have had a profound impact on the spread of communism. For example, the young Taiwanese Su Xin joined the Japanese Communist Party and completed the preparatory work for the Taiwan Communist Party. The Japanese side actively supported the development of the Taiwan farmers' movement, helped the Taiwan farmers' associations and other farmers' organizations to carry out the farmers' movement, put forward suggestions, sent consultants to attend meetings, and provided possible help for the struggle of Taiwan farmers. In 1927, the leaders of the Taiwan Communist Party Xie Xuehong and Lin Mushun were arranged by the Japanese Communist Party to go to Tokyo to provide guidance for the establishment of the Party. The Taiwan Communist Party also contacted the Soviet Union and Singapore of the Japanese Communist Party and established a Marxist group to provide the Taiwan Communist Party with possible reserve forces. The Japanese Communist Party also sent its members to participate in the party building work in Taiwan and gave active guidance to the establishment of the Taiwan Communist Party. However, the guidance of the Japanese Communist Party to the Taiwan Communist Party is very limited. The Japanese Communist Party itself has been encircled and suppressed by the Japanese police for many times. The "March 5" incident, the "April 16 incident" and so on have severely damaged the organization of the Japanese Communist Party. Under the condition that its own security is difficult to guarantee, the guidance to Taiwan is also very limited, often intermittent. The Taiwan Communist Party is mainly under the command of the Central Republican Communist International.

3. China's influence on the spread of communist ideology in Taiwan

China has made great contributions to the spread of communism in Taiwan and provided a large number of fresh troops and reserve forces for Taiwan's revolutionary practice. A large number of Taiwan's democratic progressives have studied at Chinese universities, such as Shanghai University. At that time, the school trained a large number of early backbones of the CPC, and early leaders of the Communist Party of China, such as Qu Qiubai and Deng Zhongxia, were teachers in the school. In a short period of schooling at Shanghai University, a large number of Taiwan Communists, such as Xie Xuehong, Xu Naichang, and Lin Mushun, were trained. The CPC also continued to send Taiwan's outstanding talents to the Soviet Union for training. At the same time, a series of revolutionary and progressive organizations have also been established in Shanghai, such as the Shanghai Taiwan Students' Federation, the Taiwan Youth Reading Association etc., in order to develop and strengthen Taiwan's revolutionary and progressive forces. The CPC selflessly helped the preparatory work of the Taiwan Communist Party, not only selecting young people to join the Taiwan Communist Party, but also providing material support for the establishment of the Taiwan Communist Party. The CPC also sent Peng Rong, its representative, to discuss the platform for the founding of the Taiwan Communist Party, attended the founding conference, and gave instructions to the work of the Taiwan Communist Party. It can be said that the CPC has made great contributions to the spread of communism in

Taiwan. Without the support of the Communist Party of China, the establishment of the Communist Party of Taiwan would be even more difficult. (Song ,2012b) Of course, the late leftist mistakes and blind armed riots of the Taiwan Communist Party led to the failure of the revolutionary practice, which was also affected to some extent by the Communist Party of China. In the late 1920s, there were many left-wing wrong lines such as Li Lisan in the CPC, which led to the left and right divisions within the CPC, the loss of the principle of the united front, the domination of wrong theories in policy, and the irreversible consequences of the collapse of the Taiwan Communist Party. In short, Taiwan's anti-imperialist, patriotic and independent movement is part of the Chinese revolutionary movement, and China has also made great contributions and support to Taiwan's communist revolutionary practice.

4. Taiwan Social Groups Promoted by Communist Thought

In the early 1920s, with the spread of the enlightenment trend of the May 4th Movement and the influence of the wave of the October Revolution in the Soviet Union, Taiwan successively set up organizations such as "Inspiration Association" to publish progressive journals and publicize advanced theories. The famous "Taiwan Cultural Association" was also established in February. This association gradually evolved into the leading core force of Taiwan's anti colonial national democratic movement. In 1927, the Taiwan Cultural Association split between the left and the right. A part of the bourgeoisie and nationalists withdrew from the cultural association and set up another right-wing organization, the People's Party, which was later disbanded. The Cultural Association organized activities such as preaching, which had won a large number of audiences, and therefore had also been vigorously suppressed by the Japanese authorities. Many senior cadres of the Association had been arrested and died in prison. In 1931, the Cultural Association accepted the Communist Party's program, announced its cancellation, and established the Popular Party to carry out mass movements. The Cultural Association has encouraged young students to publicize progressive ideas. With its help, the Taipei Youth Association, the Taipei Youth Reading Association, the Taipei Youth Sports Association, etc. Had been established. The Cultural Association had also helped young students to study abroad. Such as the Shanghai Taiwan Students Federation Reading Association, and the China Taiwan Solidarity Association had been established in China and Taiwan to promote left-wing ideas.

Eighty percent of Taiwan's population were farmers, who were the main force against the Japanese aggressors. Farmers had participated in the struggle against exploitation and monopoly in Taiwan. At the beginning of the 1925, the sugarcane farmers' federation was established, which was the first farmers' association in Taiwan, and made a request to protect farmers' rights, and then its members were arrested by the Japanese authorities in Taiwan. In 1926, under the guidance of Marxism, the Taiwan Farmers' Union was established in Fengshan, and developed more than 20000 members and more than 20 branches. Since the early 1920s, Taiwan has set up its own trade unions. Workers' organizations from all walks of life have sprung up like bamboo shoots after a spring rain. Machine trade unions have emerged in Taipei, Kaohsiung and other places.

In April 1928, Taiwan Communists studying in Japan and some Communists trained on the Chinese Mainland established a Taiwan Party organization in Shanghai. For example, Xie Xuehong and Lin Mushun, members of the Taiwan Association of Literary and Art Circles, once sneaked to Shanghai to participate in the May 30th Movement and also went to Soviet Russia to study. After returning, they began to establish the Taiwan Communist Party together with Cai Xiaoqian and Wang Zesheng. At the beginning, it was called "Taiwan National Branch of the Japanese Communist Party". The Party's goal is to confiscate the land of the landlords, confiscate imperialist property, and overthrow Japanese imperialism in Taiwan. Some slogans demanding freedom and democracy have also gradually begun to spread. Its goal of anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism is completely consistent with that of the CPC. (Zhang, 2008) With the leadership of political parties, Taiwan's farmers' associations and trade unions began a series of resistance movements and struggles, which contributed to the climax of Taiwan's revolutionary movement. The Communist Party of Taiwan sent Party members to participate in the peasant movement, held a reading party, etc., to publicize communist ideas. Communist Party members have appeared in the literary association, trade unions and peasant associations. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Japanese authorities carried out a crazy campaign of encirclement and suppression against the Communist Party, causing many bloodsheds. (Hai, 1991) In the "2.12" incident, more than 1000 Communists were arrested. In the 1931 mass prosecution campaign, more than 100 people were arrested, including many leaders of the Taiwan Communist Party, such as Xie Xuehong and Lin Rigao. Although the Japanese colonial authorities carried out a series of strangulation campaigns, and the Taiwan Communist Party was forced to stop its activities in Taiwan in the 1930s, Taiwan's anti-Japanese patriotic movement has been continuing, such as Zheng Qingshui, Yang Wanbao and others, who tenaciously attacked the Japanese aggressors. The establishment of the Communist Party of Taiwan has had a great impact on the development of the revolutionary movement, attracting a large number of Taiwan revolutionary forces to join the Party, spreading Marxism and communism in Taiwan, and making other revolutionary groups affected by communism. After Chiang Kai shek's regime was forced to retreat from Taiwan, the Taiwan Communists also carried out a democratic movement against dictatorship.

5. Dissemination of Communist Classics in Taiwan

The spread of the communist trend of thought also promoted the spread of Marxist classics in Taiwan, providing theoretical and practical guidance for progressive people. Such as Communist ABC, Communist Manifesto, etc. (Yang, 2020) During the arduous struggle of the Taiwan people against the Japanese invasion and rule, the early Communists contributed to the translation and dissemination of communist works. After the founding of the Communist Party of Taiwan, in order to improve the knowledge quality and communist belief of its members, the Communist Party of Taiwan had organized many groups in various parts of the island, such as reading clubs, to publicize such communist classics and documents as Capital and the Communist Manifesto. The Communist Manifesto and other works provided theoretical guidance for the struggle against Japan and imperialism.

Some progressive people who returned from studying in the Soviet Union and Japan also brought a large number of books, such as Lian Wenqing, Yang Kui, and Taiwan Communists Xu Naichang and Xie Xuehong, who were representatives of the early dissemination of the Communist Manifesto. They either selectively absorbed the Japanese version of the Communist Manifesto, or brought it to Taiwan through developed regions of China after the May 4th Movement.

6. The Workers' and Peasants' Movement in Taiwan under the Influence of Communist Thought

Under the influence of Taiwan's various left-wing ideas and left-wing groups, Taiwan also launched a large-scale labor movement. Under the coordination and command of the Taiwan Cultural Association and the People's Party, the Taiwan workers' movement came to a new stage, which had dealt a heavy blow to the Japanese colonial invaders. (Song, 2016) Since April 1927, Lian Wenqing and Wang Minchuan of the New Literary and Art Association have successively set up left-wing trade unions in Taiwan, such as Taiwan Machinery Workers Association, Taiwan Timber Workers' Federation, Taipei Printing Trade Union, Changhua Federation of Trade Unions, and carried out a series of struggles against capitalist stripping, promoting the rights and interests of workers. In 1927, Jiang Weishui and others set up the "Taiwan People's Party" to launch the workers' movement. After its establishment, the party resolved workers' disputes in various parts of Taiwan in the form of lectures, and fought for rights for workers. Organizations in the name of "Workers' Associations" also appeared in Taipei. The number of workers' organizations under the leadership of the Taiwan People's Party had increased to more than 20, with thousands of workers. The Taiwan Communist Party also actively carried out the labor movement, focusing on the major industrial sectors in the island, such as the establishment of trade unions in the northern mines, railways and other major transport organs. They recruited Party members in forest farms, mines and other places. However, the workers were scattered and not concentrated enough, and the Japanese aggressors and the government suppressed trade unions and forced them to dissolve. The Taiwan workers' movement could not escape the fate of failure.

At the same time, Taiwan carried out a vigorous farmers' movement. Farmers had been cruelly exploited during the Japanese colonial period. Japan carried out a vigorous land nationalization movement, and a large number of farmers' land was nationalized. Taiwan farmers also carried out a series of spontaneous struggles, such as the fight against the bamboo forest incident in which Japan occupied the bamboo forest land, the fight against land recycling by the Fengshan farmers' group, and the fight against a series of unequal provisions of the sugar making association. (Song, 2013) A series of scattered peasant struggles were mostly hit by the Japanese authorities. Under the guidance and influence of the Japanese Workers' Party and the Japanese peasant association, the Taiwan peasant association was established. The organization was a left-wing organization guided by Marxist thought and launched hundreds of protest events. Later, under the positive influence of Xie Xuehong, the Taiwan Communist Party gradually recruited Party members in the farmers' groups, and most of the managers of the farmers' groups became part of the Taiwan Communist Party. After the

disagreement between the non-Taiwan Communists and the Taiwan Communists, most of the non-Taiwan Communists were expelled from the organization, and the farmers' association was completely controlled by the Taiwan Communist Party, becoming a group led by the Taiwan Communist Party. The Taiwan Communist Party actively publicized communist knowledge among the peasant groups, and fully implemented its own policies therein. Later, under the guidance of the "Left" erroneous ideology of the Communist International, the farmers' group showed a sense of adventurism. They believed that the crisis of capitalism had come, and they should actively carry out the revolutionary movement. Their whereabouts were discovered by the Japanese authorities, which eventually led to the failure of the action. The main reason for failure was that they made rash advances blindly.

In a word, the spread of communist ideology was the result of the joint action of Taiwan's desire to resist Japanese invaders, pursue national independence and self-improvement and the tide of the development of world history at that time. Driven by the Communist Party of Japan and China, Taiwan's communist movement flourished and leaders emerged in endlessly. With the establishment of the Communist Party of Taiwan and other organizations, they complied with the general wishes of the Taiwan people, carried out a series of revolutionary struggles, brought systematic, scientific and correct communist revolutionary theories to the Taiwan people, pushed the Taiwan revolution to a new era, and made the Taiwan revolution have systematic and organized leadership. The workers' and peasants' movements had been carried out, and Taiwan's heroes have also left a magnificent mark in the history of the Communist

Movement. Although in terms of the outcome, the Taiwan Communist Movement is increasingly declining, we should give high recognition and evaluation to this history.

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