

Translation and Communication of Christian Socialism in China

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ABSTRACT

Christian socialism is a school of socialism that was translated into China earlier. Its communication activities are mostly combined with Christian missionary activities, which open the way for the spread of socialism and create conditions for the people to understand and contact socialism. From the current literature, the early spread of Christian socialism in China mainly adopted newspapers, books and organizational communication. This article analyzes and studies the dissemination practice of the dissemination subjects such as simultaneous interpreting of the foreign missionaries and bourgeois revolutionaries, and summarizes the characteristics of different communication subjects. Selective communication, overview communication and Sinicization of interpretation are the typical characteristics of the spread of Christian socialism in China in the late Qing Dynasty and the early Republic of China.

Keywords: *Christian socialism, communication, socialism*

I. INTRODUCTION

Christian socialism originated in the West and came into being in the 1830s. At that time, the socialist thought was popular in Europe. Some thinkers thought that there was something in common between Christianity and socialism, and they were committed to the reconciliation between the two, thus resulting in Christian socialism. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Christian socialism was introduced into China along with other socialist theories. Most of its communication activities were combined with Christian missionary activities, and there was not much valuable literature left in the history. Chinese scholars' researches on this aspect are rare. However, this does not negate its position and role in history. Christian socialism, as an early socialist school, played an irreplaceable role in enlightening the masses.

II. THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM

Christian socialism, also known as monastic socialism and religious socialism first appeared in France, where capitalism was more developed. It has profound historical and social reasons. Since its establishment, Christianity has advocated the abolition of slavery, opposed the accumulation of wealth, advocated equality, freedom and justice, and tried to free the poor masses from slavery. After a period of rapid development of capitalism in France in 1830s, the contradiction between capitalists and workers became

increasingly prominent, and many labor movements broke out. The practical needs of the labor movement gave birth to the popularity of various socialist theories. Some propositions of Christian doctrines had some similarities with the socialist theories prevailing in the early 19th century, and Christian socialism was formed in the integration of Christian socialization and socialist Christianization.

With the emergence and development of Christian socialism, Saint Simon, the utopian socialist, was a symbolic figure. In his later years, he once called "his vision of the future society as "New Christianity" [1]. His disciples inherited his mantle. For example, P. Bishe, a scholar of Saint Simon School, promoted Christian socialism through the establishment of the Europa magazine after his secession. Another influential disseminator of Christian socialism in his time was F Lamennais. In his book "Words of A Believer", he was full of compassion for the suffering people, advocated the establishment of a new society based on the Christian doctrine that "all men are equal before God", and called on workers to unite to get rid of the slavery shackles deprived of their basic human rights. The Christian socialism theories of P. Bishe and F Lamennais had great influences on J. Ledero and J. Morris, etc. On April 11, 1848, J. ledero, J. Morris and others issued a letter to the British working class, which can be called the declaration of Christian socialism. In the letter, they called out: "without morality, there is no real freedom; without religion, there is no real science;

without the fear of God and poor fellow countrymen, there is no industry." [2] This manifesto promoted the rise of the Chartist Movement again, and it was also an attempt of Christian socialism to participate in the political movement. After the 1870s, the Christian socialist movement was gradually submerged in Europe because of the lack of mass base, but the dissemination of his ideas was not stopped.

III. WESTERN MISSIONARIES' GRAFT AND TRANSPLANT

Western missionaries were the first to advocate Christian socialism in China. They regarded the dissemination of Christian socialism as a means to attract the believers. Timothy Richard lived in China for 45 years. He was a very influential missionary in the history of modern Chinese thought. He believed that "the kingdom of heaven is not only built in the hearts of people, but also in all institutions in the world" [3]. In his missionary activities, he not only attached importance to the spread of the "Gospel", but also paid attention to people's secular life, and was keen to rescue the poor people in distress. As early as 1894, there was a clear tendency of Christian socialism in the book "Looking Backward" translated by Timothy. In "Looking Backward", there have many drawbacks of the old society that have been changed by the new society. However, there is one thing that is good in both old and new societies, that is, religion. In the new society, it is still the embodiment of truth and happiness. When comparing the original work with Timothy's translation, it can find that his description of religion is quite complicated. For example, Chapter 26 is about preaching, which is obviously longer than other chapters. In his translation of this book, Timothy combined Christianity with the new utopian socialist society. From the content, it has obvious Christian socialist tendency. He introduced the translation of the socialist theory as "new learning for the people" with the connotation of "equality" and "equal wealth" in his article "Great Harmony". In fact, he took the socialist theory as a supplement to preach the Christian theory of salvation.

Marin, another Christian missionary, is also a key figure in the spread of Christian socialism in China. Ma Zuyi and others called him "the representative of Christian socialism" in the "General history of Chinese compilation". Marin, a Canadian, was born in 1860. Influenced by his mother, he joined Christianity at the age of 24. He came to China in 1886 and has translated more than 20 kinds of Western works for decades. His book "Fumin" has a great influence in China. It is translated from "Progress and Poverty" of Henry George, an American scholar. The theory of "single tax" put forward by Henry George in "Progress and Poverty", also known as single tax socialism, is well-

known in the world. The main purpose of the single tax socialism is to abolish other taxes on the basis of the state-owned land, and only collect the land price tax, and the land price tax collected shall be owned by the public. In chapter three of "Fumin", Marin explained the public nature of land as a means of production in Christian sense. He mentioned in the text, "the land is created for supporting the people." [5] Marin agreed with Henry George's criticism on the polarization of the rich and the poor. He pointed out that "it is better to make the people rich than to make the country rich, and to make the poor rich than to make the people with capital rich" [6]. Marin's expression not only embodied the idea of "common prosperity" advocated by socialism, but also showed his feelings of saving the world and the people as a Christian.

IV. THE HELP OF CHINESE INTELLECTUALS

In addition to some foreign missionaries who introduced Christian socialism to China, Chinese intellectuals in the early 20th century also translated and spread the socialism. For example, Sun Yat-sen, Liao Zhongkai, Wu Zhongyao, Liu Shiwei and Hu Yigu all introduced Christian socialism. As a teenager, Sun Yat-sen studied in a church school and later joined Christianity. It should be said that Christianity had a great influence on him. In his speech of the Chinese socialist party in Shanghai in 1912, Sun Yat-sen classified the socialist factions, pointing out that "in Britain and Germany, there are so-called religious socialism and world socialism." [7] However, he later stressed that "it is not appropriate to limit socialism with the religious world". In his speech, there is no lack of such Christian language that "socialist fraternity and broad fraternity" [8]. In 1906, Liao Zhongkai published an outline of "History of Socialism" under the pseudonym of Yuanshi in "Minbao" (No.7). This article is a section of the "Socialist Manual" written by W.D.P.Bliss, an American Christian socialist. In this article, Liao Zhongkai claimed that Lamennais published his first book on Christian socialism in 1817. In addition, there is a paragraph in the "Outline of the History of Socialism" that specifically describes the relationship between religion and communism. It holds that religion and socialism have supported each other in ancient times. The primitive church of Christianity adopted the communist system, and the system of monks and nunneries in the Middle Ages was mostly of equal production. In the article, Liao Zhongkai also stressed that many Godfathers of Christianity included the theory of communism in their writings.

Also in 1906, Wu Zhongyao published "on socialism" with 22 pages in "Xinmin series". In this paper, he divided socialism into broad socialism and narrow socialism (also known as social revolutionism), and divided narrow socialism into Buddhism socialism, Jesuit socialism and learned socialism. Among them,

Jesuit socialism was based on the holy book of Jesus. In the second chapter, when talking about the causes of socialism, the author talked about five reasons. One of them was about religion. The main idea was that the influence of Christianity in ancient Europe was huge, especially the theory of the soul and the future heaven had great influences on the world. Many rich people wanted to go to heaven after death by doing good deeds. Since Heidegger's atheism, Christianity had declined, and philanthropy had declined considerably. Liu Shipai, the representative figure of anarchism, also talked about the communist consciousness in ancient and medieval Christianity in his article "the similarities and differences between socialism and anarchism in Europe", and thought that religious socialism was one of the three major sects of modern socialism.

Hu Yigu was also a very important figure in the spread of modern Christian Socialism. He graduated from Soochow University founded by the Christian Council in 1906. He served as the Secretary of the YMCA and had a close relationship with Timothy. In 1912, Hu Yigu was entrusted by Timothy to translate "History of Socialism" by "Gangeshi" (kekapu). He adopted the translation of "Taixi civil law", in which civil law referred to socialism. When discussing the relationship between philosophy and religion in the first general outline of civil law in "Taixi civil law", the author pointed out that "although the ethics of civil law are not suitable for Christian law, they cannot be separated from each other" [9], emphasizing the unity of socialist and Christian goals. In addition, in the fourth chapter of the book, the author introduced the early British socialism, focusing on Owen school. At the end of the article, the author pointed out that after the influence of Owen's theory weakened, Christian socialist scholars had sprung up. Like Kingsler, they had written many fables, criticizing the malpractice of capitalist competition. They believed that the key to socialism lied in Christian fraternity, which was the reality of the world. Because of its limited circulation, Hu Yigu's translation of "Taixi civil law" had a limited influence in the society, but its contribution to the dissemination of socialist theory should be paid attention to by the academic circles.

V. INFLUENCES OF EARLY JAPANESE CHRISTIAN SOCIALISTS

The early translated socialist works in China mainly come from Japan, and most of the authors are Japanese Christians, such as Fukui Zhunzo, Murai Zhizhi, Nishikawa Kojiro, and Sen Katayama. "Modern socialism", written by Fukui Zhunzo, was translated into China earlier. The translator was Zhao Bizhen. This book was published by Guangzhi publishing house in 1903. The fifth chapter of the third edition of the book specifically introduced Christian socialism. This

chapter started with the basic Christian ideal of "loving your neighbor as loving yourself", and discussed the similarities between Christianity and socialism from the aspects of equality, fraternity and the power of laborers. When it came to the causes of Christian socialism, it believed that with the popularity of liberalism, unfettered economic development, coupled with the greed of the rich, led to a variety of social injustice. Economists wanted to solve this problem by virtue of ethics, which was one of the causes of the development of Christian socialism. In the second half of this chapter, the author introduced the Christian socialists in Britain, France, Germany and the United States, and the main viewpoints of two Christian socialists, Uchitolelu of Germany and Bullis of the United States, which provided an important reference for future research.

At the same time, "Socialism" (written by Murai Zhizhi) also had a chapter on socialism and Christianity. This chapter started from the incompatibility between modern Christianity and socialism, and believed that modern Christianity had become an aristocratic regime, which was quite different from that of the early period of Christianity and socialism and the concern for civilian politics. The author discussed that the ancient Christianity was actually the representative of modern socialism from the following seven aspects: the unity of various ideals and purposes, the similarity of preaching enthusiasm, the similarity of being abused by the world, the similarity of the speed of dissemination, the world-oriented thought, the tears of sympathy for the poor, and the spirit of all brothers. From the whole point of view, the socialism advocated by Murai Zhizhi had distinct Christian color. He combined the Christian spirit of equality and fraternity with utopian socialism. From this point of view, he was a true Christian socialist. The "Socialist Party", translated by Zhou Zigao, also introduced Christian socialism. The book focused on the situation of the socialist parties and the labor movements in various countries. In the article of the socialist party in Breityi (Belgium), it mentioned that "those who have Corinthians (Collins) began to write a book about the socialism of Christianity" [11]. At the beginning of "Socialist Party", it is mentioned that "from the middle of the 18th century to the beginning of the 19th century, most of the religious experts and Communists of the British, French and German countries migrated to the United States of America. At one time, there were more than 200 domestic villages in the United States." [12]

The early socialist scholars in Japan were mainly influenced by two theories of Christian socialism and national socialism. Among them, Christian socialism was the dominant faction. The Japanese Social Democratic Party (SPD), which was initiated by Sen Katayama and Kotoku Shusui, was founded by Christian socialists except Kotoku Shusui. After the Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895), a large number of

overseas students went to Japan to study. Christian socialists interpreted socialism from the perspective of ethics and morality, which was in line with the thought of "valuing justice over profit" in traditional Chinese ideology and culture, and had a great influence on the overseas students. From the spread of the following socialist theories in China, whether it is bourgeois reformists, revolutionaries or anarchism, there are more or less ethical colors in the translation and dissemination of socialism.

VI. CONCLUSION

Compared with the National Socialism, single taxation socialism and anarchic socialism which were introduced into China in the same period, Christian socialism has a limited scope of influence. There is no organized activity and there are not too many historical traces left. Most people who translated and disseminated Christian socialism did not really want to realize socialism in China. However, based on their own class interests and value considerations, they regarded Christian socialism as a tool. In any case, it really played an important role in enlightening the people at that time. Today, socialism with Chinese characteristics has been widely recognized by the society, and the truth of scientific socialism is beyond doubt. Looking back on history, the historical contribution of Christian socialism to the early dissemination in China should not be obliterated.

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