

The Impact of the Xinhai Revolution on Chinese Intellectuals from 1911 To 1921

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Abstract:

Since 1840, China had come to the greatest panic so far. When Qian Long, the emperor of Qing dynasty, refused to accept any technology or culture from foreign countries, Great Britain used its military strength and eventually opened the gate of China, which had been closed for long centuries. Subsequently, inspired by imperialism and militarism derived from industrial development, Japan, the United States and other capitalism countries attacked China separately. In the 20th century, Sun Yat-Sen, who then became the president of China, realized that China must have a revolution to strengthen itself by eliminating old governing system and getting rid of semi-colonial and semi-feudal society.

History formed nowadays' society, and individuals composed the society. Therefore, analyzing the impact of history on people is important to understand the nature of a society's change. For instance, Sun Yat-sen proposed land reform during XinHai revolution, which gave peasants equal land so that they were capable of developing agriculture after Qing Dynasty's ending. Oppositely, land lords failed to find opportunity to capture enough lands after XinHai revolution. Therefore, the revolution was not successful to them. Rather than a political revolution, XinHai Revolution was actually a huge social change during the period of rapid reforming of the world 20th century.

Most historiography believed that XinHai revolution was eventually failed. Micheal Lynch, an American historian, claimed that Yuan Shikai was in no sense a revolutionary due to the fact that he was motivated to hate republicanism and was tended to reconstruct the empire; After Sun gave his president role to Yuan, he suddenly took control of revolution and established his empire, which eventually made the revolution unsuccessful. However, the purpose of this essay was to emphasize the social impact rather than just political impact, which means that the revolution could be successful in the aspect of individuals and society. Therefore, the entire essay will focus on how did Chinese people think of XinHai Revolution. It could be successful, and it could be unsuccessful as well depends on different people, processors and systems. Has been summed and a carry propagated into the next position. The major speed limitation in any adder is in the production of carries.

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I. MAIN BODY

From the end of 19th century to the beginning of 20th century, there world had experienced a huge change in politics, ideology and society. China, a country that used to be the strongest country in the past 19th century, had become weaker than before because the emperors believed that China was the strongest country among the world. After the Opium

War, the war fought between the Qing Dynasty and Great Britain in 1840, Dao Guang, the emperor of the Qing, realized that China should strengthen itself in order to resist foreign powers. Therefore, the self-strengthening movement occurred by developing technologies. However, such a movement did not actually strengthen the power of the Qing, and it lost the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the Siege of the International legation in 1900. After several unequal

treaties after these three wars, in 1911, China ended up its past and joined the new world with an unprecedented revolution—XinHai revolution, led by Sun Yat-Sen.

XinHai revolution was unprecedented, which was because the well-rounded revolution almost eliminated feudalism, a hierarchy system that was divided into Emperor, nobles and normal citizens, that had lasted for 2000 years, and created New Democrat government, governed by nationalists (GMD). Sun Yat-Sen aimed to eliminate all colonizers from China and to restore China's strength. After Qing Government broke down, Yuan Shikai took over the outcome of XinHai Revolution. At this moment, most historians recognized XinHai revolution failed because Yuan attempted to be the emperor of China, which betrayed the revolution. Nevertheless, XinHai revolution was actually successful because it did change a lot in the aspect of society. Chinese people's life had become completely different from before 1911. The essay is going to discuss whether XinHai revolution was really successful for Chinese intellectuals from 1911 to 1921.

Since Sun Yat-Sen aimed to eliminate Feudal system in China, the founding of Republic of China gained huge supports from Chinese citizens. During 1910-1912, Chinese people was in great freedom driven by the revolution. This broadened the horizons of China's intellectuals' thinking and areas they were focusing on. Before the XinHai revolution, Chinese modern intellectuals were commonly lacking their own thinking way. Chinese feudal system, lasting for about 2000 year, had stepped into its final time. It was, however, restraining Chinese people's thinking by advocating imperial examination, an examination that would test intellectuals about The Four Books and the Five Classics, which would determine whether the intellectuals were qualified to be Jinshi (official candidate). Imperial Examination System blocked the path for Chinese intellectuals to learn more practical knowledge, such as natural sciences

or business. Therefore, only Chinese people who were studying abroad were capable of learning more advanced western thinking and wide range of knowledge. In fact, before these intellectuals went abroad, most of them had learnt abundant of Chinese classics, including The Four Books and the Five Classics. The XinHai Revolution, promoted lots of Chinese educators to develop the education system that is based on general learning, rather than just learning classics, in China, which would enable Chinese intellectuals who were studying abroad. Chinese intellectuals didn't have to keep themselves outside of China to avoid the governing of Qing emperor. They would be capable of learning variety of knowledge and demonstrate knowledge in China since the revolution.

Sun Yat-Sen published new education system after 1911 in order to broaden Chinese intellectuals' knowledge. Such new education system created several approaches of educating methods in China. Furthermore, since Sun Yat-Sen became the temporary president of China, he proposed several plans of protecting schools and developing education. Sun Yat-Sen abolished all traditional norms since Qing dynasty, such as the rule that primary school students must read The Four Books and the Five Classics and rewarding system, a system that justify each students' destiny by giving different levels of rewards. Sun regarded Right & Obligation and ethics of citizens as the core value of Chinese intellectuals. He also announced that male and female students were allowed to study in one school. Until 1913, the Ministry of Education divided education to primary, junior and senior level, which were contemporary primary school, middle school and high school. All level had the curriculum of Chinese, English, math, sciences, humanities and physical education. Obviously, since XinHai revolution, Sun Yat-Sen has made a complete change of the education system. He aimed to cultivate new students who were more open-minded and good at several subjects. Under his education system, intellectuals were capable of learning more

knowledge from different fields. One specific approach was the publishing of Wuyu(五育), also called Five Ways of Life, which were Moral Education, Intelligence Education, Physical & Health Education, Social Education and Art Education. Cai Yuanpei, the headmaster of Peking University, declared Five Ways of Life in 1912, one year after Xin Hai Revolution. Cai was studying in the US and UK from 1908 to 1910. He discovered that in the UK, high school students were required to take military education in order to cultivate potential soldiers. Furthermore, in the US, Cai observed that US high school students and college students were learning practical knowledge in different subjects, such as maths and crafting. Observing students' life in the US and the UK, Cai declared that in a "republic" society, liberal study was becoming much significant in education of Chinese people. He believed that cultivating students that are knowledgeable and social-responsible was the main goal since XinHai Revolution. IWuyu successfully developed students' area of knowledge in high school and university. Students learnt not only knowledge, but also learnt how to be open-minded, how to serve for society, etc, which then cultivated a number of intellectuals that had dream to develop their country. The rise of advocator of liberal education, such as Cai Yuanpei, took a further step in reforming Chinese education, which benefitted intellectuals by requiring them to take different courses in university.

Fundamentally, XinHai Revolution was a large-scale movement that opposed Feudalism and advocated republicanism. During XinHai Revolution, large amount of Chinese intellectuals support the revolution, which served as weapon against feudalism and for the republic, creating their own stories in order to reveal the condition of China during XinHai Revolution, such as prose, fictions, and prose poems to narrate what was happening between 1910-1921 based on stories about characters' life, using the encounter of fictional characters to criticize, reveal and satirize ancient

Chinese feudalism. Furthermore, since Yuan Shikai took over the outcome of the revolution, making the XinHai Revolution failure, Chinese intellectuals also published their attitude on newspaper and journals in order to emphasize Chinese people that keeping the path of reforming China was the essential step to do. XinHai Revolution promoted Chinese intellectual to use their thinking and pencil as their weapons against feudalism. Basically, there were several famous Chinese novelists and newspaper editors who played important role between 1910-1921. They are Lu Xun and Hu Shi.

Lu Xun, born in Shaoxing, ZheJiang provinces, September 1881, was a short story writer, editor, translator, poet and essayist. Hw was the leading figure of modern Chinese literature. During 1911-1921, he wrote lots of prose, fictions and even prose poems about the XinHai Revolution, showing his empathy to Chinese people who had suffered from landlords and feudal system. Different from other novelists at the same time, Lu Xun was the first Chinese novelist using vernacular register instead of Classical Chinese register. Vernacular was a new type of register originated from China during the XinHai Revolution, and its syntax and use of vocabulary were completely different from Classical register, being more concise and understandable rather than complex. In fact, even though XinHai Revolution had outbreak since 1911, the written communication method was still in Classical Chinese register. Lu Xun, different from other Chinese people, used vernacular register to express his own thinking in literature, showing his rebellious attitude towards ancient Chinese literature system. Classical Chinese was the symbol of ancient Chinese culture prior to Qing Dynasty. Lu Xun abandoned this traditional Chinese because he thought that ancient Chinese was too difficult for normal citizens to understand. Ancient Chinese's syntax and logic was difficult for people to remember. On the other hand, vernacular Chinese could demonstrate concise and understandable grammar to most Chinese people. "A Madman's Diary" was the first

vernacular fiction written by Lu Xun. It tells the story of a madman, who were victimized by traditional Chinese nobles in Qing Dynasty, suffered physical and mental pain from Zhao's family, a family that was a true noble. By using self-report, the "mad man" in "A Madman's Diary" revealed the "cannibalism" essence of feudal ethics, and shows Lu Xun's resistance to Chinese feudal culture with feudal ethics as the main connotation. "A Madman's Dairy" also showed the author's deep confession consciousness. Lu Xun deeply reflected on Chinese culture with a thorough "revolutionary democracy" position, and at the same time expresses deep anger at the future of China and even mankind. Since the success of Russia's Revolution, Lu Xun was inspired by Lenin's thinking, and he focused on writing essays and newspapers with some other Chinese intellectuals, such as Li Dazhao, Chen Duxiu and Hu Shi. They promoted new culture, new thinking and new ethics. Furthermore, Lu Xun realized the failure of the XinHai Revolution, taken over by Yuan Shikai, so he expressed his anger, worried and expectations in "A Madman's Diary" as declaration of anti-feudal system.

Hu Shi was a Chinese essayists, philosopher and diplomat. He was recognized by most Chinese people today as a key contributor to Chinese liberalism and language reform when he was advocating of vernacular Chinese as the main language format of Chinese since XinHai revolution. Hu was one of the creators and publishers of the journal of La Jeunesse(New Youth, 《新青年》), a monthly journal published from 1915 advocating Democracy and Sciences. Hu Shi was successfully admitted by philosophy major in Columbia University in 1915. He learnt experimentalism from John Dewey, an American Philosopher and educator. Hu Shi believed that experimentalism is the product of sciences. In the aspects of science, Hu claimed that there was nothing eternally true in the universe and everything was changing, and human should seek for truth in experiments and explorations. Therefore, Hu Shi came up with new thinking that

hypotheses were essential to cultivate creative thinking. This new thinking coincidentally corresponded to the nature of Wuyu declared by Cai Yuanpei, which cultivated Chinese intellectuals creative thinking and critical thinking skills from learning variety of subjects. When the Xin Hai Revolution failed, Hu Shi realized that even though the revolution successfully eliminated the monarchy system in China, it was still just a scorpion because the thinkings and beliefs originated from feudalism was not fully eliminated by Sun Yat-Sen. Tax still remained the same as in Qing Dynasty and the landlord remained powerful everywhere in China after 1911. Hu also believed that the "president" was just a new version of the emperor. Without the complete changing in thinking. The total reformation of China would be impossible. Therefore, Hu Shi came up with the idea that sciences was essential to Chinese people in order to ensure the entire China to get rid of the old thinking from feudalism. In his literature work Tolerance and Freedom(《容忍与自由》), Hu Shi claimed that "the fundamental spirit of science lies in the truth. In the world of life, the truth is forced by the environment and subject to habits, bounding by superstition and prejudice. Only truth can free you and make you stronger, smarter and more holy. Only truth can be enable you to break all the constraints in your environment, making you fearless." With all of his ideas coming up from 1915, he created the journal of La Jeunesse with Chen Duxiu, the leader of the New Culture Movement in 1921. Hu Shi published a land mark artical "Essay on Creating a Revolutionary 'New Literature'" in 1918, which explained that all new literature should abandon Classical Chinese and use Vernacular Chinese instead. Furthermore, Hu also published several sciences and philosophy articles in order to remind people to remember the importance of democracy and sciences, and promoted them to develop an expected society that abandoned feudalism thinking and system. Fundamentally, the failure of the Xin Hai revolution reminded Hu Shi to realize the core problem of it, promoting him to advocate

experimentalism, democracy and sciences to Chinese society to fix all problems, failed to eliminate the feudalistic thinking among society, that were unsolved after the Xin Hai Revolution.

XinHai Revolution did benefited Chinese intellectuals by broadening their knowledge and encouraging them to fight against old society. However, since new revolution changed the education system of China, Chinese Intellectuals had less emphasis on Chinese tradition/classics, which largely degraded the impact of ancient Chinese culture. Such impact was amplified in 1921, when New Cultural Movement occurred. Basically, feudal monarchy had established a bourgeois republic government. However, there were few Chinese intellectuals realized that in such as great revolution for its direction will finally be culture. After the mostly successful XinHai Revolution, Chinese intellectuals aimed to make the culture more rich and colorful, meaning to create new forms of Chinese culture and abandoned traditional culture. Confucianism was one traditional Chinese culture that had been almost devastated after the XinHai Revolution.

Confucianism(儒家思想) was described as a tradition, a religion and also a philosophy in China. Originally, Confucianism was a governing system developed from Chinese philosopher Confucius. Even though the XinHai Revolution had implemented lots of Rebellions towards feudal governing system and monarchy, such as WuChang Uprising on October 10th, 1911, the feudalistic thinking remained unchanged. It was mentioned previously that Sun Yat-Sen came up with new education system that was completely different from that in Qing Dynasty. However, that was the solution of broadening Chinese intellectuals knowledge and cultivating them to contribute for society. There was no action of abolishing old thinkings or cultures in the system. For instance, in Chinese classes of the curriculum, most of the classes were still analyzing The Four Books and the Five Classics, which still

based on Confucianism. Soon, the New Cultural Movement aimed to fix problems unsolved during the XinHai Revolution. It advocated democracy and rebelled autocracy; it advocated sciences and rebelled superstition; it advocated new morality and rebelled old morality; and it advocated new literature and rebelled old literature. In fact, what Chinese intellectuals were rebelling in the aspects of “old morality” was actually Confucianism. Since Confucianism was adapted in Chinese feudal society and it was used as the basis of governing, it was recognized by Chinese intellectuals as the basic theory of feudalistic landlord class, which was what they rebelled. As a result, Chinese intellectuals suddenly pointed their spearhead towards Confucianism while spreading Democracy. Chen DuXiu published an article on the first journal of La Jeunesse about Confucianism and Monarchy. He claimed that “Confucianism had a close relation with Monarchy and Autocracy because Confucius wrote large amount of work in order to support emperors to maintain his position, so it conflicted with democracy.” As a result, from 1919, Chinese intellectuals were promoted to burn all literatures about Confucianism, even destroyed the statue of Confucius in order to show their rebellion to Confucianism. However, the movement of anti-Confucianism was actually too radical and absolute. Confucianism was not only about instruction of governing country for emperors. It also contained large amount of work that was mainly about how to conduct oneself, which was important at any era.

The Analects (论语) was the most famous work of Confucius and his apprentices. It was edited during the Warring Period (战国时代) in ancient Chinese History. Fundamentally, The Analects was categorized in three contents: Social philosophy, Political philosophy and Education. XinHai Revolution promoted Chinese intellectuals to devastate Confucianism, but in fact, they also destroyed the earliest evidence of social education and academic education, which contained large amount of knowledge about teaching human being.

The social philosophy and Education content are significant in Chinese culture because they acted as moral guidelines. In fact, Confucius generally emphasizes the importance of morality for the betterment of oneself and society. The Analects not only aimed to cultivate outstanding feudalistic rulers and emperor, but also provided Chinese people with the teachings of those masters. These were the basis of human being, which gradually became the disciplines of Chinese people in the past 2000 years. For instance, in the Analects, the term junzi, which means “wise people” in Chinese, was frequently used. This term was actually used to symbolize an “ideal moral actor”. “To remain unsoured when his talents are unrecognized, is this not a junzi?” This was one of quotes in The Analects, showing that being junzi is always associated with the moral characteristic of being humble. Being humble was the virtue of Chinese people because they believed that being humble is able to find advantage on other people in order to enhance oneself. Obviously, when the unsuccessful XinHai Revolution’s outcome led Chinese Revolution to fight against the old culture, they also destroyed the virtue of China, which could be adapted in any time period. One negative impact on Chinese Intellectuals of rebelling ancient culture was that most Chinese intellectuals abandoned almost all knowledge from ancient culture, such as The Analects. This process caused them lost their knowledge of ethics. Since 1919, most Chinese intellectuals lost their opportunity and passion to learn, to analyze and to demonstrate ancient culture before Qing Dynasty. As a result, Chinese intellectuals lost abundant of ethical knowledge, which represented Chinese culture and virtue. In fact, after the New Cultural Movement, Confucianism only remained popular in those bourgeois families because they regarded traditional Chinese cultural literacy significantly, and Confucianism was one of the most important element of traditional Chinese culture. Confucianism was no longer active among China until Economic Reform and Open Out in 1978..

II. CONCLUSION

Generally, although the XinHai Revolution was mainly an political movement in transporting from feudalism to democrat, it was also changing the lifestyle of Chinese people, especially on the aspect of Chinese Intellectuals. The revolution was the process of abandoning old knowledge & culture and advocating new knowledge & culture. The XinHai Revolution was the new era of Chinese literature and morality. Furthermore, the notion of seeking for knowledge of Chinese intellectuals after The XinHai was changed as well, from being officials and earning money to serving for society and pursuing democracy; from only learning Chinese Classics to learning knowledge in sciences, humanities, etc. Literature also had its own revolution, from Classical format to Vernacular format. Not only the revolution itself had impact on Chinese intellectuals, but also the aftermath of the revolution, which gave some intellectuals, such as Hu Shi, inspirations to fix what had not been done successfully during the revolution, which was the New Culture Movement. Nevertheless, changing means abandoning old. But old culture still contained lots of valuable knowledge not only for China, but also for the world. The XinHai Revolution almost overthrew these ancient Chinese culture, making intellectuals difficult to access or understand these profound, beneficial knowledge, also degrade their cultural identities since the symbol of Chinese culture——Confucianism——suddenly disappeared during the New Cultural Movement. Therefore, the XinHai Revolution made more Chinese Intellectuals open minded, promoting them to focus on saving China, but also lighten their attitude towards traditional culture..

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