The Experience of *L'Internationale* in Modern China

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Abstract: During the 20th-century Chinese revolution, *L'Internationale* was one of the most important political symbols. After the failure of the Paris Commune in 1871, Eugène Pottier wrote the poem titled "L'Internationale" which was published for the first time until 1887. It was set to music by Pierre Degeyter in 1888 and introduced into China from both France and the Soviet Union (USSR). Qu Qiubai and Xiao San made great contribution to the work of translation that influenced the official version in 1962. From a hymn for the International Workingmen's Association to the revolutionary song of all the proletariats, *L'Internationale* was the historical witness of the National Revolution, the Chinese Communist Revolution and the Continuous Revolution, whose symbolic meanings were connected closely to the tensions between nationalism and internationalism.
Keywords: *L'Internationale*, Chinese revolution, Eugène Pottier, internationalism, the CCP.

During the 20th-century Chinese revolution, if there were any anthems that crossed over the national boundary and left an indelible mark on the course of modern China, *L'Internationale* was undoubtedly one of them.

Initially composed as a poem by the French revolutionary poet Eugène Pottier in 1871, *L'Internationale* was then set to music by Pierre Degeyter, a Belgian proletarian composer, in 1888. Ever since the 1920s when *L'Internationale* made its debut in China, the Chinese translation of its lyrics has been revised for several times and was eventually standardized by *People's Daily*, the official organ of the CCP, in 1962, with the French word "*internationale*" being officially defined as "the international communist ideal" ("*L'Internationale*", 1962: 6).

There are two major features of the Chinese studies of *L'Internationale*, which regard it as a significant political symbol in the process of revolution. Firstly, by translating and introducing primary and secondary references in foreign languages, these studies mainly focus on the social background of the anthem and the life experience of its composer.

Secondly, a particular emphasis is put on its Chinese translations, especially those made by Qu Qiubai, one of the leading figures of the CCP in the late 1920s, and Xiao San, a well-known poet and translator of that time. However, restricted within the framework of the Party history, most of the previous studies employ problematic historical materials due to biased judgment and lack broad coverage and deep insight as they tend to follow old routines. In this connection, my paper systematically collects and analyzes 32 texts of *L'Internationale* in diverse languages like French, Russian, and Chinese to clarify its dissemination in modern China, and at the same time intends to reveal its symbolic meanings in the context of Chinese revolution by disclosing the underlying conflict between nationalism and internationalism.

I. THE ORIGINAL TEXT AND CHINESE TRANSLATIONS OF *L'INTERNATIONALE*

When the last two hundred defenders of the Paris Commune were killed at Père Lachaise Cemetery on 28 May, 1871, their political leader Eugène Pottier was hiding himself in the attic of a worker's house. Overlooking the blood-tinted Seine, he wrote down the world-famous six stanzas of *L'Internationale*.

In the following 16 years, Pottier lived in exile and published *L'Internationale* in *Chants Révolutionnaires* as he approached his end. Although the original work and the published version had the same refrains, 32 out of 48 lines were revised and another 11 lines shifted their places (Brécy, 1972: 587-589; Pottier, 1887: 13-15). In June 1888, Pierre Degeyter, deeply moved by the poem, spontaneously wrote a melody for it and played the tune at a worker rally in Lille. From then on, this anthem started to prevail among the European working class. In 1902, Arkady Kots (Аркадий Яковлевич Коц), a member of the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, translated stanza 1, 2 and 6 as well as the refrain of the text of *Chants Révolutionnaires* into Russian, which, as an abridged version of *L'Internationale*, served as the national anthem of the Soviet Union (USSR) from 1918 to 1944.

L'Internationale was introduced into China from both France and the Soviet Union (USSR), and the earliest Chinese translations both emerged in 1920: one, with the title of "The Labor's Song" (Sha, 1984) was attributed to "Liebei" and published in *Laborers*, a weekly operated by the

communist group in Canton, and the other was "*L'Internationale* for the Laborers" (Zhang Taoyu, 1920) contributed by "Zhang Taoyu" to *Chinese Migrant Workers*, a magazine Chinese students launched in France. Nevertheless, due to their limited circulation and readership, they were hardly known to the public.

The subsequent translation by Geng Jizhi and Zheng Zhenduo was published in *Enlightenment*, a supplement to *The Republican Daily News*, on 27 May, 1921. Divided into three stanzas and entitled "Hymn to the Third International", it proved to be the first version translated from Russian, bearing the signature of "C. Z, C. T, from Russian" (*The Republican Daily News: Enlightenment*, 1921: 2). According to Geng and Zheng, *L'Internationale* was the first poem included in *The Collection of Revolutionary Songs* and they happened to read it in July or August, 1920; in order to showcase Russian literature after the October Revolution, they decided to translate and publish it in China (*Fiction Monthly*, 1921: 236-237).

Although the aforementioned three translations merely focused on the lyrics of *L'Internationale*, the translated versions that emerged after 1923 also attached its corresponding score. As for who "took the lead" to translate *L'Internationale*, Chinese scholars disagreed with each other by claiming precedence for either Qu Qiubai or Xiao San's. In terms of the publication date, Qu's translation was published in the first issue of *La Jeunesse* (quarterly) on June 15th, 1923, whereas Xiao was said to have put *L'Internationale* into Chinese in Russia with reference to its French and Russian versions and then contributed it to *Workers' Reader*, *Road of Workers*, *China Youth*, *Revolutionary Songs*, and other periodicals. However, Xiao's translation was not dated or signed, and the only record came from Xiao's own accounts, who argued the translated version by Chen Qiaonian and him prevailed among Chinese society in the 1920s when Qu Qiubai's work was less known to the public (Xiao, 1940: 34). This paper, as it turns out, hinges on the following comparison between these two translations.

From the perspective of word choices, the aforementioned two texts were quite different from each other, even though they had much in common as a whole. Qu's version was written in elegant classical Chinese; by contrast, Xiao employed vernacular Chinese and made his text more intelligible and more identical to its current counterpart. The key to understanding this textual difference consists in a scrutiny of their sources, namely *Chants Révolutionnaires* published in 1887 and its Russian translation by Kots in 1902.

In the translating process, two major types of changes were made by Kots according to his personal understanding of the French manuscript and Russian grammar points. Firstly, he removed some lines and extended the preceding text to fill the blanks. For example, "Let us group together, and tomorrow" (Groupons-nous, et demain), the second line of the refrain, was ruled out, so was "Enslaved masses, stand up, stand up" (Foule esclave, debout! debout), the sixth line of the first stanza. In replacement of them, the preceding line "This is the final struggle" (C'est la lutte finale) was extended to two lines, "This is our final" (Это будет наш последний) and "and decisive battle" (И решительный бой), and "until realize" (До основанья) in the first half of the first stanza was directly followed by the fifth line "We will destroy this world with violence" (Весь мир насилья мы разроем); "then" (а затем), in a similar way, joined with the seventh line "we will build our new world" (Мы наш, мы новый мир построим), serving as a transitional part. Additionally, in the Russian version, "So that the spirit be pulled from its prison" (Pour tirer l'esprit du cachot), the sixth line of the second stanza, and "Disappear one of these days" (Un de ces matins, disparaissent), the seventh line of the third stanza, were also taken away. Secondly, some French words were replaced to transmit new meanings. For instance, "eruption" (l'éruption) in the third line of the first stanza was changed to "boiling" (Кипит), "breaking neck" (rende gorge) in the fifth line of the second stanza was turned into "to throw down oppression" (Чтоб свергнуть гнет), and "the loiterer" (L'oisif) in the fourth line of the last stanza and "these ravens, these vultures" (les corbeaux, les vautours) in the following line were respectively replaced by "the parasites" (паразиты) and "over the pack of dogs and executioners" (Над сворой псов и палачей), etc. This contrast renders us an insight into the source-texts of both Qu and Xiao's works.

It was evident that Qu's translation kept faithful to the Russian version as many words like "boiling", "parasites" and "great thunder" were accurately rendered and such lines as "Let us group together, and tomorrow", "Enslaved masses, stand up, stand up" and "So that the spirit be pulled out of its prison", which were eliminated from the Russian text, did not exist in Qu's translation either. However, Qu also made three changes from Kots's translation. In the first place, "We will build our new world", the seventh line of the first stanza, replaced the sixth line in the form of "Brightness will be brought by the newly-created society"; likewise, the eighth line "He who has nothing will own everything" (Кто

был ничем, тот станет всем) was extended to be a couplet— "Do not say that we are worth nothing, and we shall be the master of the world!" Secondly, the fifth and sixth lines of the second stanza, namely "To overthrow the oppression with our adroit hands, and to take back what belongs to us" (Чтоб свергнуть гнет рукой умелой, Отвоевать свое добро), were transformed into "We must overcome all oppressions and fight for our due rights". Thirdly, "dogs and executioners" in the sixth line of the third stanza was reconfigured as "all brutal culprits".

Xiao San also based his translation on the Russian source text, as many words like "boiling" and "parasites" were directly translated from Russian. In the meanwhile, he also noticed the missing parts of the French version, such as "Enslaved masses, stand up, stand up", "This is the final struggle", line 7 and line 8 of the second stanza, and line 5 to line 8 of the third stanza, striving to maintain the original meaning and syntax. Moreover, since Xiao's translation included "Do not say that we are worth nothing, we shall be the masters of the world!" as the seventh and eighth lines of the first stanza, which were not seen in both Russian and French versions, it might be highly possible that Xiao also took reference of Qu's Chinese translation in mind.

Then how to understand the relationship between Qu and Xiao's works with those by unknown translators that appeared from 1925 to 1931? By comparison, the existing nine translations of this period were mainly modeled on Xiao's version and were also influenced by Qu's version in terms of word choices. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to tell whose contribution was greater to the spread of *L'Internationale* in China as the Chinese lyrics of this anthem turned out to be a collective creation in the process of its circulation. For example, musicians like Lü Ji, Xian Xinghai, and Sai Ke assisted Xiao San in revising his translation in 1940, and the official version of *L'Internationale* publicized in *People's Daily* in 1962 was finalized by the Chinese Musicians' Association and China National Radio, which led to a fierce debate between Hu Qiaomu and Yu Guangyuan over the choice of words.

With the dissemination of *L'Internationale* in France, Russia, and China, its implications also varied significantly from one nation to another. In *Chants Révolutionnaires* of 1887, Pottier's opening acknowledgement "To the citizen Le Francis, member of the Paris Commune" (Au citoyen LEFRANÇAIS, membre de la Commune)[1] and the quotation from Karl Marx in the third stanza that "'No rights,' says she, 'without their duties,

No claims on equals without cause"' (Pas de droits sans devoirs, dit-elle, Égaux, pas de devoirs sans droits!)[2] both referred to the International Workingmen's Association (the First International) as a new form of governmental organization enthusiastically celebrated by the poet after the failure of the Paris Commune and the real "*L'Internationale*" in his eyes.

Both Russia and China had their distinctive understandings of *L'Internationale*. In *Eugène Pottier (In Memory of the 25th Anniversary of His Death)*, a memorial article Lenin published in *Pravda* in 1913, he stated that "the song, sung by workers around the world in praise of their pioneering warriors and proletarian poets, has become an anthem for the proletariats all over the world" (Lenin, 2017: 291). Qu Qiubai, who used to live in Russia for many a year and met Lenin there, translated the word "*L'Internationale*" as "*Yingtenaxiongnai'er*" and regarded "transliterations of different languages" as "a sign of international union" (Qu, 1923: 6-7). Since then, to transliterate "*L'Internationale*" in Chinese had become a widely-accepted custom until 1962 when the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China officially identified "*internationale*" with "the international communist ideal".

From a hymn to the International Workingmen's Association to the battle song of the global proletariat, the connotations of *L'Internationale* underwent significant changes. During the Chinese revolution, it was reinterpreted and eventually evolved into a singable *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.

II. *L'INTERNATIONALE* IN THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

II.1. *L'Internationale* in the National Revolution

During the National Revolution of modern China in the 1920s, *L'Internationale*, though featuring internationalism as its political agenda, was unanimously recognized as a revolutionary anthem by both the KMT and the CCP.

In 1924, following the order of the Comintern, the newborn Chinese Communist Party decided to join the KMT and reorganize it with the help of the Soviet Union, as was called "the First Kuomintang-Communist Party Cooperation". In this process, the KMT attached great importance to the political influence of *L'Internationale* by imitating the Soviet Union's example.

L'Internationale played a large part in political ceremonies jointly held by the KMT and the CCP. At the beginning of 1925, *L'Internationale* was sung "quite sonorously" at the commemoration meeting in Beijing and Shanghai for the first anniversary of Lenin's death ("Karakhan's Speech at the Commemorative Meeting for Lenin": 7; "Notes on the First Anniversary of Lenin's Death": 14). The first event of the proceedings of the Beijing Commemorative Conference for International Women's Day in March, 1925 was "to stand up and sing *L'Internationale* in chorus" (Jie, 1925: 6). On March 14th of the same year, the Soviet Consulate in Shanghai convened the memorial meeting for Dr. Sun Yat-sen's death, applauding Sun's achievements, claiming to carry on his revolutionary cause, and ending the activity with the melody of *L'Internationale* ("Mourning of Sun Yat-sen's death": 14). It is particularly worth mentioning that the anthem was played twice at the gathering in Beijing for the second anniversary of Lenin's death, where Lenin was referred to as "the leader of world revolution and the mentor of national salvation". Xu Qian, a veteran member of the KMT, took the initiative to deliver a speech, declaring that the commemoration of Lenin would never come to an end until "Chinese revolution forms a united front with world revolution and the imperialists are all beaten down". Subsequently, the Soviet ambassador Lev Mikhailovich Karakhan (Лев Михайлович Караха́н) specified four concerns of the National Revolution—imperialism, domestic reactionaries, popular revolutionary organizations, and foreign support. At last, Li Dazhao, one of the founders of the CCP, encouraged a close collaboration between the adherents of Leninism and those of the Three Principles of the People by highlighting their similarities (Jiangong, 1926: 5-11). Against the background of the First Kuomintang-Communist Party Cooperation, both of the two parties inevitably chose to integrate the mission of national salvation with the ideal of world revolution in their propaganda.

L'Internationale also worked for specific revolutionary activities. When the large-scale anti-Japanese movement broke out in Shanghai as a consequence of the May Thirtieth Massacre in 1925, Ren Bishi, the general secretary of the Communist Youth League, suggested that this protest was an inevitable result of the "imperialist oppression" and "it is of valuable sacrifice and great significance in the history of the Chinese national revolution as well as the international proletarian revolution" (Bishi, 1925: 452). Ren was echoed by two agitating articles from The

Communist Youth League, which announced "let's unite the oppressed people all over the world! Down with all Imperialists! Long live the national revolution! Long live the world revolution! Long live the global union of young workers" and "we should work harder to 'strike while the iron is hot' and fulfill our martyrs' will" (A quote also from *L'Internationale*).

It should be pointed out that the KMT embraced "*L'Internationale*" just for practical uses and it was not the only propaganda tool during the National Revolution. On the midnight of the National Day in 1925, *L'Internationale*, *Song of the National Day*, and the *National Anthem* could be all heard in the city of Beijing (Zhang Jingsheng, 1925: 10) and in 1926, *L'Internationale* and the *Song of National Revolution* were simultaneously played in the parade following the May 1st celebration in Guangdong province (Qiuren, 1926: 8). On May 5th, the 108th anniversary of Marx's birth, the commemorative event ended in the tunes of *L'Internationale* and the *Song of Young Pioneers* (Luo, 1926: 671).

By contrast, the CCP laid more emphasis on the circulation of *L'Internationale* in the May Thirtieth Movement and the later Canton–Hong Kong Strike, even if they had to act in the name of the KMT (Onodera, 2014: 164-165). So far, I have seen nine different texts of *L'Internationale* published between 1925 and 1927 and respectively included in *Workers' Readers*, *Road of the Workers*, *China Youth*, the leaflet for the 55th anniversary of the Paris Commune, *Revolutionary Songs*, and the brochure issued by Wuhan Central Peasant Movement Institute, etc.

II.2. *L'Internationale* in the Chinese Communist Revolution

As the KMT broke up with the CCP, the Nanjing Nationalist Government began to implement "political tutelage" and tried to establish a "one-party state", taking the party flag "Blue Sky, White Sun, and a Wholly Red Earth" as the national flag and abandoning *L'Internationale* in favor of *The Song of the Three Principles of the People*, the later national anthem of Republican China. As the *Central Daily News* once reported, "When pupils sing *L'Internationale* and parade in the street, the crowds are all scared away" (*Central Daily News*, 1933: 2). On the contrary, the Chinese Soviet Republic founded by the CCP in 1931 not only celebrated *L'Internationale* as their national anthem, but also adopted it to boost the morale of the communists on the battlefield.

According to my findings, Liu Yuanxiang from Jinan and eight other

prisoners used to sing *L'Internationale* in August, 1933, and five CCP members, including Luo Yangcai (killed on April 9th, 1927), Xiang Jingyu (killed on May 6th, 1928), Yang Yin (killed on August 30th, 1929), Li Guiwu (killed in 1932), and Qu Qiubai, chanted *L'Internationale* when executed (Zhai, 2010: 191). It was recorded that on June 18th, 1935, Qu "drank by himself, kept optimistic and composed as usual", and walked slowly to the execution ground, singing *L'Internationale* in Russian at Zhongshan Park (*Ta Kung Pao*, 1935: 4).

With the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War in July, 1937, the CCP and the KMT joined together to form the Anti-Japanese United Front, that is to say, Chinese Communists were now united with the bourgeoisie against the Japanese aggression. At the beginning of 1938, Bo Gu, a senior leader of the Chinese Communist Party intended to reconcile nationalism with internationalism by proposing the concept of "revolutionary nationalism" in a magazine called *Liberation*. In October of the same year, Mao Zedong delivered a speech entitled "A Brave New Stage" for the Extended Sixth Plenary Session of the Sixth CPC Central Committee. In discussing "the CCP's status in the nationalist war", he pointed out that the identity of the CCP members as internationalists did not go against their patriotic consciousness and there were two types of patriotism—one promoted by the Japanese and German imperialists, which brought enormous harms to people all over the world and would definitely end in a total failure, and the other was "our patriotism" that could coexist with internationalism for the common purpose of resisting foreign invaders. In the CCP's political discourse of that time, patriotism was considered to be a necessary step for the fulfillment of internationalism, as it supported the nationalist government's anti-Japanese war and helped to achieve national independence and proletarian liberation (Mao, 1991: 519-521).

Furthermore, the CCP tended to behave like "internationalist" in practice. For instance, Norman Bethune, a surgeon and a member of the Communist Party of Canada, came to Yan'an in March, 1937 to serve in a field ambulance in Shanxi-Chahar-Hebei border areas and died from infection on November 12th, 1939. After his death, the CCP called on all party members to learn from Bethune's "spirit of internationalism". The tune of *L'Internationale* sounded again throughout the commemorative conference and the inauguration ceremony of Bethune's mausoleum. Against the backdrop of internationalism, *L'Internationale* was collectively

revised by Xiao San and his companions around 1940.

L'Internationale could be frequently heard on many occasions ranging from the CCP assemblies to soldiers' singing contests after the policy of "art serving politics" was formulated at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art in 1942. Three years later, when Liu Shaoqi reported on the revision of the party constitution at the Seventh National Congress of the CCP, he cited the song's lyrics to demonstrate his opinion that "the people are able to liberate themselves". As he stated, "neither deities, nor emperors or even heroes could help us. The people should entirely depend on themselves for their own salvation; in other words, liberation could only be achieved, maintained, and consolidated by the people's own struggles rather than with others' help or support" (Liu, 1981: 350-351). Mao Zedong also referred to *L'Internationale* to illuminate his perspectives on "instrumentalism" for the development of the party (Mao, 1996: 373-374). Therefore, in this period, *L'Internationale* worked as not only a ritual song for the CCP, but also a symbol of proletarian internationalism and a tool for the explanation and promotion of political policies.

Promoting "proletarian internationalism" in theory and behaving like "internationalist" in practice, the CCP not only dispelled Stalin's doubt about whether they were "true Marxists", but also seized opportunities to win the favor of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the United States. Nevertheless, their nationalist appeals that underpinned the Anti-Japanese United Front had never vanished. Little wonder that Stalin denounced the CCP as "margarine". At any rate, through weathering the difficult time of the Communist revolution and particularly the War of Resistance against Japan, the CCP was able to understand and utilize *L'Internationale* in a more flexible way.

II.3. *L'Internationale* in the Continuous Revolution

The CCP began to embark on a tortuous journey of socialist construction after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. Drastic changes had taken place both at home and abroad around 1962 as the "prevention of revisionism" and class struggles were restated by Mao in the Tenth Plenary Session of the Eighth Congress of the CCP. Against this background, the CCP's central committee took the opportunity of the 75th anniversary of Pottier's death to hold a series of events to celebrate the revolutionary heritage of *L'Internationale*.

It seemed that *L'Internationale* gained a new life owing to official propaganda. In April, 1962, its standardized version was released in *People's Daily* with the endorsement of the Chinese Musicians' Association and China National Radio, and all Chinese people were encouraged to sing this song. In the May of the same year, six poems written by Mao Zedong from 1929 to 1931 were published in *People's Literature*, which described *L'Internationale* as a "tragic" song. According to Guo Moruo's explanation, its tragic character derived from such lines as "Arise, slaves afflicted by hunger and cold! Arise, suffering people all over the world", and under the leadership of the CCP and particularly Chairman Mao, Chinese people rose up and made great progress like a "wild whirlwind" (Guo, 1962: 11). On November 6th, *People's Daily* published another article on *L'Internationale* attributed to "Ma Tieding", foregrounding the anthem's significance for the revolution, class struggle, and political unity (Ma, 1962: 6).

On November 30th, the central committee of the CCP convened a huge conference to commemorate the songwriters of *L'Internationale*. Lu Dingyi and Kang Sheng, as the chief secretaries of the Secretariat, attended the conference; Zhou Yang, the vice president of the Chinese Federation of Literature and Art made the opening speech, and Zhang Guangnian, the chief secretary of the Chinese Writers' Association, also gave an address to the audience. Zhou proposed that "let's unite together, hold the invincible Marxist-Leninist banner high, conform to the *Declaration of 12 Communist and Workers' Parties, 1957* and *Statement of 81 Communist and Workers' Parties, 1960*, further promote the spirit of proletarian internationalism, and further strengthen the unity of socialists, socialist movements and the people all over the world" (Zhou, 1962: 5). Zhang Guangnian, on the other hand, brought history up to the present reality by taking Degeyter's struggle for the copyright of the song as an example and criticizing the socialists of the Second International as well as such revisionists represented by Tito. In their speeches, *L'Internationale* was adopted as a weapon to smash the intrigues of "imperialists, reactionaries and modern revisionists" (Zhang Guangnian, 1962: 5).

L'Internationale played an increasingly important role as the Four Clean-ups Movement was launched throughout China in 1963, which led to a severe conflict between Mao Zedong and Liu Shaoqi, and the diatribes against "revisionism of Khrushchev" were publicized, aggravating the long-existing dispute between China and the Soviet Union. Domestically,

L'Internationale called for a great union of the proletariats as an ideological preparation for the impending Cultural Revolution; globally speaking, it represented Mao Zedong's endeavor to "export revolution" and seek a higher status in the socialist camp.

With the outbreak of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, the political propaganda of *L'Internationale* reached an unprecedented height. It is estimated that the anthem's score was published three times in *People's Daily* and it was also quoted by 600 articles that not only proposed to "clear away all domestic enemies", but also advocated a proletarian world revolution. On January 11th, 1967, *People's Daily* published a commentary titled *Making Maoism Popular around the World*, claiming that "the great Maoism, like a burning torch, illuminates the globe, and like a red flag in the sky, influences the whole world" and "Chairman Mao wisely points out a marvelous prospect for all revolutionaries of this world; now, following the path designated by Mao, they are brave enough to smash the heavy shackles imposed on them and to become masters of the new era; owing to Mao's grand ideal, a new world will definitely emerge in the rotund melodies of *The East is Red* and *L'Internationale*" ("Making Maoism Popular around the World": 4). On March 18th, 1971, the 100th anniversary of the Paris Commune, an editorial was issued on the "Two Newspapers and One Journal", including *People's Daily*, *PLA Daily*, and *The Red Flag*, at the end of which it read, "today, the Commune poet Eugène Pottier's *L'Internationale* can be heard around the world: 'the old world shall be destroyed', 'we shall become the masters of the world', 'unite together for a better tomorrow, and *L'Internationale* will certainly be realized!', 'let the imperialists, jingoists, and all reactionaries tremble in the face of the great storm caused by world revolution', and 'what the proletariat lost in this revolution is merely the chain, and they will win the whole world'" ("Long Live the Victory of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat—Commemorating the Centennial Anniversary of the Paris Commune": 1-4). It is not difficult to discern that the aforementioned lyrics mainly center on struggles and world revolutions, and in this sense, *L'Internationale* turned into a weapon manipulated by politics.

L'Internationale also entered people's daily life with such slogans as "continuing the revolution". Every day, the radio program of People's Central Broadcasting Station always started with *The East is Red* and ended with *L'Internationale*. In this era epitomized by "model plays", apart from the anthems composed for the Cultural Revolution and the melodies

accompanying Mao's poetry, there were only eight revolutionary songs that could be heard in China, including *L'Internationale*, *The East is Red*, *Sailing over the Seas Depends on the Helmsman*, *Three Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention*, the adapted version of *The Graduation Song*, *Peasants and Workers as a Family*, *Anti-Japanese Battle Song*, and *The Sword March* (Zhao, 2004: 312-313). Although *L'Internationale* was sung by the Red Guards in various parades and rallies, its original spirit no longer existed as a tool for political struggles.

At the Ninth National Congress of the CCP in 1969, Lin Biao, "the close comrade and successor of Mao Zedong" as defined by the party constitution, delivered a speech that officially stipulated the guideline of the Cultural Revolution as "continuing to revolutionize Chinese society under the proletarian dictatorship". However, the conflict between Mao and Lin was increasingly intensified after the Second Plenary Session of the Ninth Congress. In the summer of 1971, Mao toured south China to gain support from local cadres. On August 27th, he hummed *L'Internationale* with his entourage on the train, explaining that "this song is truly based on Marxism, and I always regard slaves rather than heroes as the creators of the world; *L'Internationale*, as a song of solidarity, is meant to unite all proletarians across the world" (*Chronicle of Mao Zedong: 1949-1976*, 2013: 393). In order to beat down the "heroes", Mao would rather repudiate his personality cult for the time being. Two weeks later, Lin Biao fled in panic and died in the Mongolian desert. Thereafter, the Central People's Broadcasting Station was ordered to play *L'Internationale* and *Three Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention* over and over again to mobilize the people and reinforce discipline (Yang, 2008: 78). On October 28th, "*People's Daily* published Lenin's *Eugène Pottier: In Memory of the 25th Anniversary of His Death*, the lyrics of *L'Internationale* and *Three Rules of Discipline and Eight Points for Attention*, and an editorial entitled *To Sing Two Revolutionary Songs Well*, which stressed the importance of singing these two songs for the enhancement of the unity among soldiers and between soldiers and civilians, the enforcement of revolutionary discipline, the deepening of people's understanding of communism and internationalism, and the arousal of their consciousness of guarding and implementing Mao's revolutionary principles" (*Chronicle of Mao Zedong: 1949-1976*, 2013: 413). On this account, *L'Internationale* was reduced to a tool to distinguish the "orthodox" and identify the enemy, having little to do with the "communist ideal". Nevertheless, the repeated emphasis on

unity and discipline indicated nothing but a crisis-ridden situation, as the "Lin Biao Incident" marked the failure of Mao's theory of "continuing the revolution" as well as the decline of the Cultural Revolution.

As the Cultural Revolution approached its end in 1975, Zhou Enlai, long the target of political struggles, recalled "unite together for a better tomorrow, and *L'Internationale* will certainly be realized" on his deathbed (*Chronicle of Zhou Enlai, 1949-1976*, 2007: 724). The next year, Zhou Enlai, Zhu De, and Mao Zedong died in succession, and the Cultural Revolution came to a halt with the smashing of the "Gang of Four" and the reverberation of *L'Internationale* in the closing ceremony of the 11th CPC National Congress.

III. CONCLUSION

As it turns out, by examining the spread and utilization of *L'Internationale* from a historical perspective, its symbolic significance for Chinese revolution might be better revealed. Under the influence of the Soviet Union, Pottier's work *L'Internationale*, though initially dedicated to the International Workingmen's Association, was endowed with various implications in modern China with a focus on the tensions between nationalism and internationalism. During the National Revolution, *L'Internationale* served as a propaganda tool for both the KMT and the CCP to overthrow imperialism, testifying to their interpretation of national liberation and world revolution in the First Kuomingtang-Communist Party cooperation. During the Anti-Japanese War, it was *L'Internationale* that enabled the CCP to successfully promote their Communist ideals and maintain an anti-Japanese united front by keeping a balance between nationalism and internationalism; in the Cultural Revolution, it was deployed in political struggles as an ideological weapon to support Mao's theory of "continuing the revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat".

During the nearly 100 years since its introduction into China, *L'Internationale* turned from a historical creation to a revolutionary symbol, and its political implications also became complicated and ambiguous. However, the only thing of utmost certainty is that the song was always employed as a vehicle for people to express their appeals for liberation.

Notes

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[1] Lefrançais was a former member of the International Workingmen's Association and the Paris Commune as well as the comrade-in-arms of Pottier.
[2] This sentence is cited from *Provisional Regulations* drafted by Marx in October, 1864 for the International Workers' Association.

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