

The Prototype of R.O.C Red Heart Association:  
Overview for the the Literature of Shanxi Province Red Heart Association , 1935-1951

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Abstract

In 1935, the Shaanxi Province Red Heart Association 陝西省紅心字會 in Xian was established, and in the framework it was affiliated to the Shaanxi Province Philosophy of Religion Research Society 陝西省宗教哲學研究社. In the fall of 1934, Master Xiao Changming 蕭昌明 (1894—1943) , the founder of Philosophy of Religion Research Society, had sent his disciple Lee Yv-jie 李玉階 (1901—1994) styled himself as Hanjing Laoren 涵靜老人 to Xian to preach teachings, so the society in Shaanxi was later actually originated by Mr. Li. Not until to the spring of next year according to Lee's arrangement that he really not only founded the Province Philosophy of Religion Research Society in Shaanxi, but also its subsidiary of the charity, Red Heart Association, was simultaneously approved by the government. Compared to the society founded by Lee, others were never designed to have such an ancillary organization. Although it seems that Society 社 and Association 會 are separate and different, both of them in fact belong to the whole, and the society members have obligation to participate the association. In this article, I essentially utilizes six kinds of historical documents to probe the developing process of the Shaanxi Province Red Heart Association. Among them, three are kept in Xian Archives 西安市檔案局, including *The Masses Organization Volume of Shaanxi Province Red Heart Association Applying for Registration* 陝西省紅心字會人民團體申請登記冊, *The Guide Volume to Shaanxi Province Red Heart Association* 陝西省紅心字會說明冊, *Documents of Shaanxi Province Red Heart Association in Xian Municipal government Files* 西安市政府檔中的紅心字會史料; another three in Regional History Committee of Tiandi Teachings 天帝教教史委員會, including *Profound Memories at Wide Higher Place Shrouded in Deepness of White Clouds* 上方恩深紀白雲, *Missionary Records of Hanjing Laoren in Lanzhou* 涵靜老人蘭州闢道實錄, and *Red Heart Monthly Magazine* 紅心月刊. I mainly committed to providing Lee's interpersonal network and components of all members: the former contains Lee's friendships with Shao Lizi 邵力子 (1882—1967) , Hu Zongnan 胡宗南 (1896—1962) , Ding Delong 丁德隆 (1904—1996) and Wang Zhiqi 王治岐 (1901—1985) , etc.; the latter aimed at the members' background mentioned in September of 1951 roster, to analyze four aspects such as the native place, the age level, the occupation, and the faction.

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With the continued development of Shaanxi Province Philosophy of Religion Research Society, the scale of Red Heart Association as a subsidiary organization also had been naturally expanded, and both were reaching its peak in about 1943. In perspective of Association's regulation, its members must own higher moral requirements, its Council staffs chosen by Members of the General Assembly, and its fund comes from official grants and several donation. During the period of Anti-Japan War, the Red Heart Association actively devoted itself to charity. In addition to psychiatric treatment, the Association provided nine services deeply appreciated by the civilians, such as Chinese medicine clinic, free summer medicine, gratuitous coffins, Vaccination, relief to the poor, consumer cooperation, righteous people plant, agricultural loan with low interest, rescue after any air strafe. On the eve of the autumn of 1946, all of Lee Yujie's family members returned to Shanghai, Master Lee entrusted Xu Haixian 許海仙 with the agent of the Red Heart Association, and its business all were as usual. However, due to the coming of upheaval situation, Lee had failed to return to Xi'an in 1947, so the 3rd election for Council were not been ultimately held. After the liberation of Xian, the authorities prohibited resolutely folk religions, and that situation caused the Red Heart Association to be caught in jeopardy, so Xu applied to the official for the dissolution of the Association in 1951. Finally, his request was approved.

Besides, on the basis of over 3000 kinds of literature, the central research institution describes features about folk religious groups during nearly one hundred years since the late qing dynasty has gone, and mainly concludes several fork regions to influence the social masses profoundly, including Yiguan Dao 一貫道, Tongshan She 同善社, Jiugong Dao 九宮道, Xiantian Dao 先天道, Dasheng Men 大乘門, Shengxian Dao 聖賢道, Zongjiaozhexue Yanjiushe 宗教哲學研究社, Dade Xueshe 道德學社, Yixintiandao Longhuashengjiaohui 一心天道龍華聖教會, Guigen Dao 歸根道, Yiaochi Dao 瑤池道, Xihua Tang 西華堂, Zhenkong Dao 真空道, Kongmeng Dao 孔孟道. Those regions above had generally originated in the late Qing Dynasty, and traces of their activities were very visible from rural to urban, so they became an important underlying structure of society, and even tightly related with plebeian life. The reasons for the vigorous evolution of these religious groups, in addition to the general public's demand as an intrinsic motivation, a myriad of social network is precisely sufficient to form external conditions. In the case of Red Heart Association, undoubtedly, Master Lee's relationship as the center of associated social network is quite worthy to note that it is the main reason why Association laid the foundation in Northwest China.

## I .Lee's social network

### 1) Shao Lizi 邵力子

While Master Lee had been still a National Government officials and established Philosophy of Religion Research Society in Shanghai, a famous philanthropist Wang zhen 王震(1867-1938) and an outstanding industrialist Wang Xiaolai 王曉籟(1886-1967) became a standing director of the community elected by its Members of the General Assembly, and how extensive friendship Lee was in Shanghai it reflects. Because of this reason, in Northwest China at the start of his missionary, Lee was very dependent on his political connections. As soon as Lee arrived to Xian, he first visited a teacher of school days, the Chairman of Shaanxi Province Shao Lizi (1882-1967) Then. Through Chairman Shao, Master Lee met Lu Hefu 路禾父 (1876-1956), Leader of Changan Jisheng Branch 長安濟生分會, then Lu promised to offer a place for setting up Lee's missionary stronghold. During the period of Shao in Shaanxi did take much care of Lee.

Especially in the spring of 1936 when Jiangshan Event happened, Chairman Shao set aside a ban what the Executive Yuan ordered to outlaw Philosophy of Religion Research Society around the China, because he believed Lee's character and his purpose to establish the Northwest China by moral strength. When Shao's couple arrived to Taiwan from Shanghai and visit Sun-moon Lake in June 1948, Master Lee also accompanied them all the way along. That is verifiable that their friendship didn't remained until 1949 on the eve of separation between Mainland and China.

## 2) Hu Zongnan 胡宗南

After the outbreak of the Anit-Japan War, with the transfer of the of the central government, the Great Rear Area played an increasingly important role. Around such an special atmosphere, Master Lee interacted with the military gradually frequently. "During the period of the war of resistance, generals always gathered in Northwest China, ....They heard Master Lee well versed in the learning of heaven-to human, secluding himself from society and cultivating himself in Hua Mountain. He was filled with fame that many people admired to visit him, so some became his disciples and some made friends with him by exchanging views, and so many people had come and gone. Thus, the Shannxi Society reached a climax with a galaxy of talents." cited from report, titled "The Shaanxi Province Each Religious Group Overview." At that time, although he had lived in seclusion and remained mysterious posture, he still decided to face he national crisis, and expected himself as the spiritual mainstay of the military. Besides organizing several ceremonies to slave the dead, he sometimes revealed his wisdom to point out the right way to someone in astray and even impose psychiatric treatment. It was said that the most popular story that when the Japanese forces had invaded Fenglingdu 風凌渡 to prevent the 34<sup>th</sup> Group Army commanded by Hu Zongnan(1896-1962) from reinforcing toward the south in August to September 1938, Master Lee prayed for the coming of a vast hugeness of fog to aid Chinese troops repairing Tongguan Iron Bridges 潼關鐵橋 bombed by the enemy. Soon, such miracle was spread in the military and political circle. In December 1939, Lee met with Commander in Chief Hu in Yuquan Yuan 玉泉院 near the foothill of Hua Mountain 華山. Two of them just clicked immediately, chatted freely about the current situation and problems with each other for a very long time. Commander Hu admired Master Lee extremely. Since then, through quiet contemplation Lee grasped the strategy of Japanese troop deployments along Yangzi Jiang, Yellow River and the coast, sharing the information with General Hu to carry out his promise. In early morning of May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1940, General Hu suddenly climbed over to Wide Higher Place 大上方 with three retinues, and Master Lee invented them to eat lunch together. Though Lee's monastic life in the mountain is very hard, it is very fortunate that General Hu and some military disciples often transported some flour and rice up to the mountain, and all of Lee's family had no major problem for diets.

## 3) Ding Delong 丁德隆

General Ding Delong, Master Lee's religious fellow, was a subordinate of Commander Hu. Ding, his another name Guanzhou 冠州, born in You County 攸縣 of Hunan Province 湖南省, had been a graduate of the first session in the Military Academy, through the recommendation by Leader of the 78<sup>th</sup> Division, further pursued advanced studies in the 5<sup>th</sup> special class for training senior officers in the Army University. He is always silent, thoughtful and studious. Deng became a disciple of Yuanlong Zhisheng 雲龍至聖 because of the introduction by Qionglong Daoren 惲龔道人, his classmate Wang Zhengcheng 汪正誠. While ordered as Leader of the 1<sup>th</sup> Army, Ding

arranged a special trip up to the mountain to call on Master Lee. In spring of 1943, Ding was elected as the Major Supervisor of Shaanxi Society. In terms of his military career, Ding served as Commander in Chief of the 38<sup>th</sup> Group Army, then of the 37<sup>th</sup> Group Army. In 1947, Ding was selected as a Representative in Hunan Province of the National Assembly and followed the National Government to Taiwan. Since then, he devoted himself to study philosophy, explore principle between Heaven and Human, and converge every creeds including Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. To cultivated himself, he also used to live in the mountain near Xindian 新店 area.

#### 4) Wang Zhiqi 王治岐

General Wang Zhiqi, his another name Fengshan 鳳山, born in Tianshui County 天水縣 of Gansu Province 甘肅省, had been a graduate of the first session in the Military Academy, too. In the middle of June 1940, Wang became a disciple of Master Lee and supported his teacher strenuously. At the end of 1944, he was promoted to Leader of 80<sup>th</sup> Army and also served as Xian Garrison Commander. Simultaneously, Master Lee reached to Gansu for preaching Tianren Teachings 天人教, and wanted to establish a stronghold in the provincial center Lanzhou 蘭州. During the period in Lanzhou, with the help of General Wang, Master Lee was settled in his mansion, and his wife was responsible for Lee's daily life. It shows what a deep good relationship they used to have. Lee was very delighted to hear his disciple's new personnel news. Because Wang was not only an agent of the Major Supervisor in Shiyuan 始院 of Tianren Teachings, but also served as a higher post to defend Xian, General Wang might take more care of Lee. It is unfortunate that good times never last. In late August 1949, Lanzhou was liberated. In Early December of the same year, General Wang surrendered to the Red Army, and his troops were forced to adapt.

## II. background of members

During the period of War against Japan, the northwest hinterland as part of the Great Rear Area 大後方 is relatively stable in social order. Additionally, these objective factors below for Master Lee's works in religion and charity, provides an excellent external conditions, such as the concentration of common resources and the gathering of elites from other provinces. Till the eve of returning Shanghai in 1946, some foundation in Shaanxi were left by Master Lee and later to be ongoing. In Lee's view, his disciples must consider the level of knowledge of the community if preaching philosophy of religion. In the the region of lacking in education, the establishment of the Red Heart Association priority could be more useful- regions in mature condition, for instance, Dali 大荔, Jingyang 涇陽, Baoji 寶雞, Lantian 藍田, Qishan 岐山, Hu 鄠, Weinan 渭南 included. However, in regions of high knowledge level, whether preaching to the public for setting up the Philosophy of Region Society should be depending on the current situation, eg Sanyuan 三原, Baoji 寶雞, Hanzhong 漢中, Ankang 安康 and other counties. If considering from reality, it is naturally easier to promote that the Red Heart Association as a charity must be appropriate due to consistence with the official policy. Apparently also based on this reflections, Master Lee wished to reshuffle the Philosophy of Region Society. If the trend had been unchanged and peaceful situation maintained, it is still possible that Master Lee would have embodied his ideals. From the angle of social network, those about 2000 disciples around China, no doubt would have expected to become Lee's seed members in various regions.

1) native place

Without the complete list of members in Shannxi Society, I can analyze to research the composition in the Red Association through another one that 55 members included, submitted by Xu Haixian on the eve of the dissolution in 1951. In the perspective of native place, 24 members from Shanxi 山西 is first, and 16 from Shaanxi second. In addition, there are 4 persons from Henan 河南, 5 Hebei 河北, 2 Shandong 山東, 2 Sichuan 四川, 1 Gansu, and 1 Zhejiang 浙江. In total of 16 Shaanxi members, 13 from Changan County 長安縣, over 80% estimated in Shaanxi ones, perhaps through the advocacy of Li Jinwu 李今悟. In total of 24 Shanxi members, 9 from Yishi County 猗氏縣 is the most, perhaps through the advocacy of Xu Haixian and Yang Shaoshi 楊紹時. Further considering the professional category among the members of Shanxi can be found businessmen accounted for 54%. In short, there are 40 members from Shaanxi and Shanxi, more than 70% in the list, and they belong to the foundation of the association.

province	number	percentage
Shaanxi	16	29.09%
Shanxi	24	43.64%
Henan	4	7.27%
Hebei	5	9.09%
Shandong	2	3.64%
Sichuan	2	3.64%
Gansu	1	1.82%
Zhejiang	1	1.82%

\*Table 1 Statistics in Native Place

2) age

In the view of age, I distinguish them into seven groups, which they are over 70 years old, the age 60 to 69, 50 to 59, 40 to 49, 30 to 39, 20 to 29, 15 to 19 above. In these seven levels, we can find that there are 18 members belonged to the group of 60 to 69, accounted for the total number of 32.73%; the second is the level of 40 to 49, 14 members, 25.45% estimated; the third for the level of 50 to 59, 9 members, 16.36%. In my rough opinion, the 40-to-69-year-old members is the backbone of the Red Heart Association, but the number of young members comparatively less. Ten years ago to join in the Association, as for the 60 to 69 level, they should have coincided with the stage of a high social prestige and more abundant social contacts. And, as for the 40 to 49 level should have been in the stage with full vigor of life and successful career.

age	number	percentage
Over 70	5	9.09%
60 to 69	18	32.73%
50 to 59	9	16.36%
40 to 49	14	25.45%
30 to 39	7	12.73%

20 to 29	1	1.82%
15 to 19	1	1.82%

\*Table 2 Statistics in Age

### 3) occupation

In occupational categories, I broadly have grouped all members into eight items, such as politics, business, academia, charity, health care, unemployment, unknown and others. Among them, there are 28 members to do business; secondly, 9 members in charity; thirdly, 5 members in politics; each of three items including health care, unemployment, unknown, 3 members; finally, the academia least, merely 2 members. It is noteworthy that the amount of members taken together in business and charity is more than a total of 67%. Even we can infer that the member of businessman is the most important component of the Association. Further, among all of these merchants, 7 members as managers or director is a quarter of this item sum. To consider these merchants in native place found in Shanxi accounted for 46% is quite large In the proportion.

occupation	number	percentage
politics	5	9.09%
business	28	50.91%
academia	2	3.64%
charity	9	16.36%
health care	3	5.45%
unemployment	3	5.45%
unknown	3	5.45%
others	2	3.64%

\*Table 3 Statistics in Occupation

### 4) faction

If observed all of 21 members that didn't still leave, there is 1 person belonged to the Old Alliance 老同盟會, each 1 person belonged to both of the Kuomintang 國民黨 and the Communist Party 共產黨, 2 persons in Limen 理門. In other words, other 16 persons do not have any partisan background. To some extent, the partisan symbol usually signifies the particularity of the elite, which they can master more contacts and resources, and their abilities of calling upon the masses may be larger, but it would have been exceptional if the member had joined the Communist Party then. According to the official files, Xing Shiwu 刑世五 with railway union background might have been more sympathetic to the Communist Party of China, but such described above I indeed make none of comments on. If Xing had participated in before 1949, it is inconvenient with the identity of the party members that he could have been engaged in charities; if after 1949, he could have had little impact on the Association. As for Limen, it is apparently a folk religious group, but I don't understand why Xu Haixian regarded it as a political party. However, it is more worthy to pay attention that religious believers then weren't necessarily stick to single religion, who wandered among different regional groups can be found everywhere, for example, lu Hefe and Chen Rongshu 陳榮叔.

faction	number	percentage
Old Alliance	1	4.76%
Kuomintang	1	4.76%
Communist Party	1	4.76%
Limen	2	9.52%
none	16	76.19%

\*Table 4 Statistics in Faction

Despite Master Lee had obtained great results in region and charity, beyond those statistics some problems within the group could have reflected. In December of 1944, some words below had been written in his diary:

In Shiyuan, none of solid disciples actually handle complex business except Zhizhong 智忠. Alas! Where is loyal cadres? Where is real assistants? Now, how difficult a region is founded I realize. In addition to my wife and children, whom else can I count on? If talents aren't actively assembled, the new religion cannot flourish. Ten years in Xian has gone. With only vanity, without any fundamentalism. In this troubled times, we encountered such vicissitudes of life, and each has bitterness that couldn't be said in oneself. Who can sacrifice to the new religious?

Religion often relying on God, but religionists and believers themselves are not God. In order to change the plight, we still have to make personnel efforts to overcome various difficulties.

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