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REVIEW ARTICLE

Reexamining Wu Tiecheng's Early Post-1911 Activities and First Encounter with Sun Yat-sen

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ABSTRACT

This study reexamines Wu Tiecheng's (1888–1953), a senior statesman of the Kuomintang (KMT) and Republican China, on his early post-1911 Revolutionary activities, with particular attention to his political development and first encounter with Sun Yat-sen between late 1911 and early 1912. Seeking to supplement and clarify existing scholarship, especially the simplified narrative presented in his memoir: *Wu Tiecheng Memoir*, this study focuses on Wu's involvement with the Jiujiang and Jiangxi Military Government during this formative period. Employing a qualitative historical approach, the study relies primarily on documentary and content analysis of primary and secondary sources, notably archival materials from the KMT Party Archives in Taipei. It demonstrates how Wu's early political engagement laid the foundation for his affiliation with the Revolutionary Alliance and later the KMT, as well as for the forging of *guanxi* (Chinese relationships or connections) with Sun Yat-sen, rooted partly in their shared native-place origins in Xiangshan. Particular attention is given to Wu's role during moments of political crisis and reexamining his participation in key national conferences, including conferences held in Shanghai and the pivotal 1911 Nanjing Conference. By reassessing Wu's choices between competing revolutionary leaders between Sun Yat-sen and Chen Qimei, followed by clarifying the circumstances of his first direct encounter with Sun Yat-sen, this study reveals how Wu retrospectively framed these experiences as political capital that later facilitated his rise within the KMT and Republican China.

Contribution/Originality: This paper contributes by reexamining Wu Tiecheng's early post-1911 revolutionary activities using documentary and content analysis of primary and secondary sources, especially archival materials from the KMT Party Archives in Taipei. Drawing on these underused materials, it supplements and clarifies scholarship and revises the simplified narrative in *Wu Tiecheng's memoir*.

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1. Introduction

Wu Tiecheng or Wu Te-chen (1888-1953), one of the senior statesmen of the Kuomintang (KMT) and Republican China. He is Cantonese, a native of Pinghu Village, Xiangshan County which is today Zhongshan County in Guangdong, but was born at other place, Jiujiang, Jiangxi. He was introduced to the Revolutionary Alliance (*Tongmenghui*) by Lin Sen in 1909. From the 1911 Revolution through the early 1930s, Wu held a succession of key party and state posts in the Jiujiang Military Government, Sun Yat-sen's Military Government and Presidential Office, the Generalissimo's Headquarters, Xiangshan County, Canton City, Guangdong Province, the Nationalist Government, and the Kuomintang. From the 1930s to 1949, Wu's political career gradually reached its peak, as he successively occupied pivotal positions at the municipal, provincial, and central levels (Tan, 2016). Some important positions to be mentioned are Mayor of Shanghai and Garrison Command of Songhu (1932–1937), Director of KMT's Department of Overseas Affairs (1939–1941), Secretary-General of the KMT Central Executive Committee (CEC) (1941–1948), Vice President of the Legislative Yuan (1947–1948), Vice Premier of the Executive Yuan and Minister of Foreign Affairs (1948–1949), President for both Nanyang Overseas Chinese Association (OCA) as well as Chinese People's Foreign Relations Association. Wu's career concluded with his death in Taipei in 1953, at the age of 66 (Tan, 2016).

During Wu's foundation period, from 1909 to 1925, Wu had been involved in various crucial party and government affairs within and beyond China. However, existing literature, especially his memoir: *Wu Tiecheng Memoir* (Wu, 1993) presented Wu in a simple narrative style. What had been largely neglected was actually this foundation period which propelled him to become an influential and pragmatic politician in the later years. This study proposes to make several original contributions, particularly to modern Chinese biographical research and more broadly to modern Chinese history, by reexamining a crucial early period in Wu Tiecheng's life: his post-1911 activities and first encounter with Sun Yat-sen, from late 1911 to early 1912. It supplements *Wu Tiecheng Memoir* (Wu, 1993) that was previously presumed as the sole reference for Wu, thus subsequently enhancing academic clarity on the genuine Wu Tiecheng before 1925, with focus on the early post-1911 Revolution. Detailed analysis will be given to Wu's developments throughout 1911 Revolution, especially his roles in the post-1911 Revolution either with Jiujiang or Jiangxi Military Government. This episode will raise discussions especially during crisis and his involvement in national conferences at Shanghai and Nanjing by the end of 1911. At the same time, Wu's party affiliation with Revolutionary Alliance, then KMT, and the forging and development of *guanxi* (Chinese relationships or connections) with Sun Yat-sen are the topics to be thoroughly discussed.

1.1. Research Objectives

The intention of this research to provide an alternative and above all, the academic reference of enhancing academic clarity on Wu Tiecheng's activities in the post-1911 Revolution and his first meet or encounter with Sun Yat-sen. This period is neglected attributable to the fact that it could be *Wu Tiecheng memoir* being presumed as the only exclusive reference for Wu on that period. By utilizing primary sources such as at the KMT Party Archives and newspapers at that time, for example, *Shenbao*, will further enlightens our understanding on some issues around that time to be explored. Invariably, the use of various sources will contribute towards a more impartial and

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objective approach and a better yardstick for seeking historical truth. In this way, it would also provide a better understanding of the role Wu played in these changes within the broader scope of modern Chinese history, focusing on, the post-1911 Revolution and his first meet up with Sun Yan-sen.

2. Literature Review

The main literature for the study of Wu Tiecheng, *Wu Tiecheng Memoir* (Wu, 1993), which in fact has two major sections. It starts with the memoir written by Wu Tiecheng himself classified as primary source, while the next section: "Appendix" pertains to commemorative essays written by Wu's friends, colleagues and former subordinates during the tenth anniversary of his death and classified as secondary sources. Therefore, the memoir could only help us to understand Wu Tiecheng's life story beginning from 1888 until 1926 and it is one of the essential historical sources for the study on Wu during this period. This would mean that in the actual situation of Wu's memoir, whether some are considered to be fact while some are subjective fabrication, such as in the early post-1911 Revolution and his first contact with Sun Yat-sen, further research is required. Nevertheless, Wu's great effort to recollect and draft out his memoir should be recognised.

Chen (2012) *Wu Tiecheng and Modern China* is a publication which in its first section had compiled five academic conference papers. The second section comprises six commemorative essays on Wu, all were taken from either commemorative publication or OCA magazine. For the "Appendix" section, it had inserted the history and development of OCA for the past seventy years that witnessed the early contribution of Wu during the initial years of the association; and this was followed by a primary source: Wu's report in 1941 on his visit to Nanyang (Southeast Asia). However, they are only focused on the beginning which is from 1928. Period prior to 1928 especially before 1925, such as post-1911 Revolution that was pivotal as the core period in building up and determining on Wu's extensive relationship and even his political career, was however neglected. It needs to be explored further.

3. Research Methods

The main field of history for this study is modern Chinese history, which covers the political history of modern China, history of KMT in Mainland China and history of the 1911 Revolution. This study is based on qualitative historical approach in employing mainly the techniques of documentary and content analysis. Although some modern scientific methods, such as *guanxi* and networks, are applied in this research, it is not mainly guided by theoretical consideration, rather it attempts to explain some phenomenon and events that are linked to the important issues that specifically centred around Wu Tiecheng. Those methods are actually used to enrich the connotations of history**.** The sources and documents used in the construction of this study are more varied in that they comprise primary and secondary sources. The source materials will be in two main languages, Chinese and English. These will be derived from the archives and libraries of Taiwan, Mainland China, Singapore and Malaysia. For example, documents from the KMT Party Archives in Taipei. It should be taken note that though *Wu Tiecheng Memoir* (Wu, 1993) which is one of the important sources in this study, it will still be verified with especially primary sources along the discussion.

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4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Wu Tiecheng's Meetings and Preparations Prior to the 1911 Nanjing Conference

Following the 1911 Revolution in China with more than ten provinces occupied by the revolutionaries, the military government of each province proposed to elect its own representatives to assemble and to hold joint discussions on affairs of state. The national conference was initially set at Wuhan, later changed to Shanghai when Hanyang was abandoned and finally to Nanjing after it had been recovered on 2 December, 1911 (Wu, 1993). As a matter of fact, by early November and prior to the conference in Nanjing, there were two efforts, in Shanghai and Hankou, to convene a national conference of 'independent' provinces (Gasster, 2006). Wu Tiecheng recalled how he, Lin Sen and Zhao Shibei, a Cantonese from Taishan and educated in the United States and also an instructor at the teacher-training school in Nanchang, were elected as Jiangxi's representatives (Wu, 1993). Lin and Zhao moved in advance of Wu, who departed for Shanghai only after the deployment of reinforcement troops from Jiangxi to Hubei and Anhui was completed. Wu met up with Lin Sen before making a call on the Military Governor of Shanghai, Chen Qimei. During his stay in Shanghai, he exchanged views and toasts with other representatives and held the position as representative of Jiangxi military government to Shanghai with Chen Zifan as his assistant. One of the aspects of Wu's discussions in Shanghai was whether the national conference should need to await the capture of Nanjing before it could be held there (Wu, 1993).

However, without knowing the whereabouts of Zhao Shibei, it seemed that Wu and Lin Sen had also been appointed to attend the conference in Shanghai since 29 November. This was for those representatives who were not attending the national conference held at Hankou beginning 30 November but had stayed behind Shanghai for liaison purpose. Wu joined the Shanghai meeting as representative of the Military Governor's Office of Jiangxi in early December while Lin Sen subsequently attended two meetings in that period. It is to be noted that Jiangxi representatives were only found in the Shanghai national conference list on 21 November meeting and not the first day of meeting on 15 November (Chen, 1985a). Moreover, if based on Sato (1967) record, these Jiangxi representatives were initially Wang Zhao, Chen Huanyan and Xu Zhong representing the Military Governor's Office of Jiangxi and attending the conference in Shanghai on 21 November, while it had already started. In reality, Ma Yubao succeeded to the post of Military Governor of Jiangxi on 21 November and formally assumed office upon arriving in Nanchang on 7 December. This showed that they were instructed by Ma to represent him on the first day he assumed his office. Liu (1963) recorded their attendance since 21 November but referred them as Jiangbei representatives and Xu Zhong as Xu Zhongling. One of the resolutions at the national conference in Shanghai on 24 November was to invite provincial representatives to attend the national conference at Wuchang (later changed to Hankou) while at the same time those attending as provincial representatives were required to have one or more representatives to stay behind in Shanghai for liaison purpose. There were no Jiangxi representatives found in the Hankou national conference list (Luo, 1958; Gu, 1917; Guo, 1987; Zhang, 2005; Xie, 2000; Zhai, 1993; Chen, 1985b). Zhang (1984; 2002) in sorting out the data in both of his publications showed that Jiangxi representatives: Wang Zhao and Chen Huanyan stayed behind in Shanghai and were absent from the Hankou national conference. However, the only difference in Zhang's two publications is *Parliament in the Early Republic of China* (1912-1913) (Zhang, 1984) stated that three representatives: Wang Zhao, Chen

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Huanyan and Xu Zhong stayed behind while the second of his publication in the later year: *Political Parties in the Early Republic of China, 1911-1913* (Zhang, 2002) had taken out the name of Xu Zhong. Subsequently, Liu (1963) who recorded the conference held at Shanghai since 29 November recorded that Wu only attended the meetings on 6, 9 and 10 December while Lin Sen came in after Wu, and only attended the last two meetings.

Apart from these meetings, Wu's main task in Shanghai was to supply coal urgently for the warship in Jiujiang. The matter was resolved when a local coal trader allocated the coal supply with the help of Chen Qimei, of which part was done through theatrical fundraising. Wu's demand was appropriate at a time when Chen Qimei was active in promoting fund raising campaigns for the northern expedition (Wu, 1993). This campaign carried out after the recovery of Shanghai until January 1912 involved masses, local merchant groups and artist performance (Chen, 1996).

4.2. Wu Tiecheng at the 1911 Nanjing Conference and His First Encounter with Sun Yat-sen?

Wu (1993) disclosed that he and the other representatives departed and reached Nanjing on the following day when it was occupied by the revolutionaries on 2 December. Other sources by Gu (1917), Li (1994) and Mao (2009) revealed that Nanjing was only chosen as the seat of the provisional government during the conference at Hankou on 4 December and that the representatives reached Nanjing between 12 and 13 December, and the subsequent first meeting held on the following day. Another source by Gu and Yuan (2012), however, mentioned the first meeting was held earlier on the 12 December. Nevertheless, irrespective of whether Liu (1963) recorded it as 12 December or Sato (1967) recorded it as 13 December, Wu Tiecheng was unanimously mentioned as one of the Jiangxi representatives who gathered at Nanjing for the national conference at that time. The other four Jiangxi representatives listed are Lin Sen, Zhao Shibei, Wang Youlan and Yu Yinglu. Gu and Yuan (2012), and Zhang (2002) also stated that Wu was one of the Jiangxi representatives in the conference. Indeed, in the curriculum vitae appended to Wu's 1916 letter to Sun Yat-sen had stated that he was the former plenipotentiary despatched by Jiangxi to form the Nanjing government (Kuomintang Party Archives, n.d.). The meeting which was convened for around two weeks ended finally with the acceptance of a modified presidential system and a provisional constitution and the government was termed the provisional government temporarily. Since every province was given a ballot to vote the President, Lin Sen was elected by Wu and Zhao Shibei to represent Jiangxi (Wu, 1993). As a matter of fact, the main issues discussed and approved were the use of the solar calendar starting with Republican year and, reaffirmation of the presidential system. Prior to this, the guidelines of the Organisation for the Provisional Government of the Republic and the constitution were hurriedly set out in Wuchang at the beginning of November and they were not at all precise (Mao, 2009; Li, 1994; Bergere, 1998).

Before the elections, Sun Yat-sen who had been overseas, arrived in Shanghai on Christmas Day, 1911. Prior to that, Sun departed from France on 24 November, stopped by Penang on 14 December and Singapore on 16 December. Then, he was first in Hong Kong on 21 December before reaching Shanghai on the morning of 25 December (Luo, 1985; Zhongguo guangfu shi, 1911). In Wu's (1993) account, Sun received the representatives from every province at Hardoon Garden. This was the first occasion that Wu mentioned had met up with Sun whom he described as his "Great Revolutionary

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Mentor". It left Wu with a deep impression, especially the "revolutionary spirit" which Wu emphasised he remembered forever. However, Sato (1967) record showed that both Jiangxi representatives, Zhao Shibei and Wu Tiecheng on 24 December, a day before the arrival of Sun, had proposed at the Nanjing conference to welcome Sun at Shanghai. The Speaker of the conference then assigned Ma Boyuan, Wang Youlan who was also one of the Jiangxi representatives and Xu Guanyao to carry out this task. Liu (1963) record also stated that on 24 December, these three delegates were assigned by the speaker to welcome Sun but without mentioning any proposal had been given concerning this task. *Shenbao* (Zhongguo guangfu shi, 1911a; Gongdian, 1911a; Sun Zhongshan li Hu sanzhi, 1911b), without mentioning any name, showed that the Jiangxi Military Government had sent its representative to meet Sun in Shanghai, either at his residence or Hardoon Garden. A public telegram from Nanchang to Sun through Chen Qimei showed that the Military Government of Jiangxi province led by Ma Yubao apart from congratulating Sun, had also sent its representative to welcome Sun at Shanghai. When Sun replied to the reporters of China Press (*Dalu Bao*), he disclosed that there were provincial representatives welcoming him apart from ten representatives of Li Yuanhong. During Sun's residence at No. 408, Baochang Road, it was crowded with visitors and when he had his meals at Hardoon Garden on 25 December, it was also crowded with visitors among whom were Huang Xing, Wu Tingfang and military governors. Several sources (Luo, 1985; Bergere, 1998) have mentioned the names of those figures meeting Sun in Shanghai. As such, it could be seen that Wu could have known the details of Sun in Shanghai through his Jiangxi comrade, Wang Youlan or the representative despatched by Ma Yubao. However, there were possibilities that Wu was one of those representatives despatched by Ma Yubao or even he could on his own initiative rush from Nanjing to the scene on the following day. This had indicated that he tried to project himself within that momentous event to show that he was a true and faithful follower of Sun. Nevertheless, he was still one of the key figures to initiate the welcoming return of Sun and we will examine in the following development on how Wu seized the opportunity to achieve his first recorded meeting with his "Great Revolutionary Mentor".

Wu (1993) recorded that he and other provincial representatives had rushed back to Nanjing for the presidential election in which Sun Yat-sen was elected with a majority of 16 out of 17 votes as the Provisional President of China on 29 December. On the new year of 1912, when Sun reached Nanjing to assume his office, he was welcomed by Wu, other representatives and government officials upon his arrival at the Nanjing railway station. Zhang (2005) and Dillon (2010) narrated this event in details. Wu (1993) in his memoir recorded his experience at the age of 24, the youngest representative to participate in the momentous moments of the newly born democratic and independent country, similar to that of the United States Second Continental Congress in 1776. It was the most honoured event in his lifetime. Zhang (1991) also stated that Wu was the youngest among all the provincial representatives.

On Wu's account about himself as one of the Jiangxi province representatives, several sources mentioned previously showed that he in this position attended the Nanjing national conference since 12 or 13 December but, however, in almost all of the sources which are by Liu (1963), Gu (1917), Zou (1989), Zhang (1981), Zhongguo guangfu shi 1911b, Zhai (1993), and, Gu & Yuan (2012), his name was missing in the representatives list for the presidential election on 29 December. The five Jiangxi representatives listed are Lin Sen, Zhao Shibei, Wang Youlan, Yu Yinglu, Tang Yi. It is generally accepted that there are 45 representatives representing 17 provinces in the presidential election,

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which Wu (1993) also stated, apart from stated in sources such as by Xue (2007) and Zhang (2005). Wu's (1993) account however had errors on the attendance of these three representatives: Tang Yi, Yu Yinglu and Wang Youlan. He mentioned they were later sent after Ma Yubao had unified the overall situation at Nanchang and these three only reached after the Presidential election to participate in the Provisional National Council. As mentioned before, Ma Yubao succeeded to the post of Military Governor of Jiangxi on 21 November and officially assumed the office when he reached Nanchang on 7 December. As a matter of fact, according to Zhai (1993), Zhang (2005) and Nathan (2005), only Tang Yi and Wang Youlan, in addition to Wenqun represented Jiangxi in the Provisional National Council which was convened on 28 January 1912 in Nanjing. The only exception regarding Wu's name listed in the representatives list for the presidential election on 29 December came from Yin (1982) which recorded a remark made by Guangdong representative, Deng Qingyang or Deng Xianfu, that Wu was among the six Jiangxi representatives. Deng Qingyang remark was made on a group photo taken at the election of the Republic of China Provisional President which was kept at the Second Historical Archives of China. Wu was listed with other five Jiangxi representatives mentioned above. Although the above sources generally pointed to the absence of Wu in the presidential election, there are still uncertainties on this attendance issue. Li and Liao (2007) mentioned that there were several claims on the attendance of representatives and they adapted Gu's (1917) *History of The Founding of Republic of China*. An in-depth research by Xue (2007) also showed ambiguities on Wu's attendance, though through his in-depth research and based on several justifications, he suggested adapting Wu Jinglian's *Chronicle of the Conference of the Provincial Representatives in Organising the Provisional Government* in which Wu was not included. Even so, when he referred another *Wu Tiecheng Memoir* compiled by the Academia Historica, he falsely assumed Wu as one of the representatives sent by Guangdong province together with Qiu Fengjia and Deng Xianpu. Xue (2007) continued to mention that Qiu was unwell and absent from the election without elaborating further on the attendance of Wu and Deng. In fact, Wu himself however revealed that apart from the absence of Qiu and the attendance of Deng, Wang Chonghui represented Guangdong. In the sources listed previously on representatives attending the presidential election, Qiu who was absent was excluded. There were actually only two Guangdong representatives, Wang Chonghui and Deng Xianpu. As such, despite the fact that Wu's (Kuomintang Party Archives, n.d.) 1916 curriculum vitae had stated he was plenipotentiary despatched by Jiangxi in forming the Nanjing government, his attendance in the presidential election was doubtful as there was no reference on the issue.

Overall, Wu Tiecheng was the leading Jiangxi representative in the Nanjing national conference since 12 or 13 December but not for the 29 December presidential election as he was absent. Apart from this, Wu's emphasis on his participation in the conference and more importantly empty boast on his involvement in the presidential election (though indirectly through Lin Sen) had two implications. Wu would like to exaggerate his contribution in the making of Sun Yat-sen as the Provisional President of China. He thought that this would enhance his status and prestige within the party in addition to KMT and Republican history.

4.3. Wu Tiecheng in Early 1912: Between Chen Qimei and Sun Yat-sen

Wu returned to Shanghai to manage his duties after he had accomplished his role as a representative in Nanjing. His duties were actually setting up the Jiangxi Military Government Office in Shanghai, named as Nanchang Association for liaison purpose, a

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task he completed before 21 January (Wu, 1993; Gongdian, 1912a; Jiangxi dianbao, 1912). There was a public telegram from the Military Governor of Jiangxi, Ma Yubao at Nanchang to Military Governor of Shanghai, Chen Qimei and the local press. Chen Qinsheng and Zhang Wuchen were appointed as secretarial officers of this association. Their appointment letters were sent out later. It would seem that Wu's previous experience in networking and persuasion especially in Jiujiang, Jiangxi had made him a suitable candidate to be entrusted with organising and leading an association solely for liaison objectives (Tan, 2016).

Wu (1993) had also indicated that when he was managing public and private affairs in Shanghai, he was however, prepared to return to Jiangxi. He proceeded when he was summoned by both Ma Yubao and Jiang Qun to return. He revealed that during his transit in Nanjing, he had paid a call on Sun Yat-sen to report on the situation in Jiangxi, to request the confirmation of the appointment of Ma Yubao and to bid farewell to Sun. His return to Jiangxi was certain, but sources (to be discussed later) would show contrary to Wu's account on either this transit or earlier, on Christmas Day of 1911, his first recorded meeting with Sun only happened after his return to Jiangxi. It was deemed inopportune for Wu to build up *guanxi* with Sun at a time when the latter would feel uncomfortable to know Wu's intention in supporting and helping Chen Qimei against the Revolutionary Alliance.

Prior to Wu's return, he was actually having a friendly relationship with Chen Qimei who still retained the position of Military Governor of Shanghai and he was impressed with Chen's courageous and chivalrous personality (Wu, 1993). Chen (1994) had described Chen Qimei, his second uncle as courageous, smart, and cool-headed. Chen Qimei who was also a native from Zhejiang, during January 1912, was involved in raising funds, not only for the army of each province for organising the northern expedition, but also for the Nanjing Provisional Government which was facing financial difficulties (Guo, 1985; He, 1976). The *guanxi* between Wu and Chen was evident with Wu backing up Chen's plan to transform the Revolutionary Alliance into the Principal Republican Party. This could be regarded as his expression of gratitude to Chen who had helped him to solve the coal shortage problem as previously stated. This Principal Republican Party should be distinguished from the Republican Party established in May 1912 (Young, 2005; Zhang, 2002).

Chen's plan had its origins in one of the complex political developments after the 1911 Revolution: to reshuffle the Revolutionary Alliance from a secret revolutionary society into an open parliamentary party. Differences however, arose on this proposal. One proposal was to dissolve the parties set up before the revolution and Chen was one of the Revolutionary Alliance leaders influenced by this suggestion, to be carried out by moderates from the Revolutionary Alliance to form a new political party, an entirely separate entity from the former organisation. This suggestion was strongly opposed by Sun Yat-sen who desired to retain the former party which was neglected by Chen and some other comrades. Chen within the first two months of 1912 launched the transformation of the Revolutionary Alliance into the Principal Republican Party at Shanghai with the objective of assisting and supervising the administration of the new government. Nonetheless, the plan was dropped later when the Revolutionary Alliance was reshuffled into political party, occurring in March of the same year (Li & Li, 1987; Yang, 2008). The Revolutionary Alliance had officially transformed itself from a revolutionary society into an open political party in March 1912. Their organisational meeting was held on 3 March in Nanjing by passing general statutes and formulating

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political programme (Young, 2005; Guo, 1979). Chen was often said to have disagreement with Sun Yat-sen before the 1913 Second Revolution as Sun was not fully trusted by him. However, this had changed after the failure of the 1913 Second Revolution when he understood Sun's views were indeed more appropriate than others (Shao, 1987). Apart from the above development, it is to be noted that from the beginning of the republic and before a new government could function in Beijing, newly formed political parties had emerged in Shanghai, Wuhan, Nanjing and other areas occupied by the revolutionary army, especially Shanghai as its centre (Liu, 2008).

Wu's support for Chen Qimei had successfully put the plan into action when on 21 January, a *Shenbao* public telegram showed that Wu who was in Jiangxi had informed Chen that both the Military Governor of Anhui, Sun Yujun, and the Military Governor of Jiangxi, Ma Yubao, as well as his Revolutionary Alliance comrades, Cai Gongshi and Jiang Qun, had supported the plan to form the Principal Republican Party. Furthermore, Cai and Jiang had even volunteered to set up a party branch and to raise funds, while hoping that the general regulations of the new party could be drafted soon. Ma Yubao, at the same time, had also informed Chen Qimei that he had heard about the new party arrangements from Wu and had fully agreed. In addition, Ma would also help to set up the party and to provide funds, apart from telegraphing the military governors of the other provinces regarding his support on this matter (Gongdian, 1912a; Hu Junzhengfu dianbao, 1912). Guo (1979) compiled *Daily Records on Historical Events of The Republic of China* showed Wu and Cai Gongshi's plan to reshuffle the Revolutionary Alliance into the Principal Republican Party as agreed upon by Ma Yubao and Sun Yujun. This had actually happened two days earlier, on 19 January 1912.

Wu's actions actually had two implications. Firstly, he was skillful enough to persuade Ma Yubao and his comrades in Jiangxi, but also Sun Yujun in Anhui. Secondly, it seemed that Wu's party spirit and affection for the Revolutionary Alliance was not sufficiently strong during this period, whereas this party was after all a loose umbrella organisation with many splits and internal fights which even targeting on Sun Yat-sen in the pre-revolutionary period (between 1905 and 1911) (Cui, 2007). Furthermore, he was merely following the political trend as in the case of Chen in particular and to a certain extent he was also influenced at that time by the reemergence of new political parties with divergent purposes leading to chaotic and political confusion, a significant political phenomenon in the early years of the republic (Zhang, 2002). Xiao-P (2012) summarised that political parties of the early Republic had no precise political programs which distinguished them from each other, their social base was generally weak, and their members often belonged to several parties at the same time. Nonetheless, Wu's plan, without waiting for Chen to drop it around March, had come to a halt. He had turned back into supporting and developing the Revolutionary Alliance in the following month, February 1912. This happened after Wu in the end of January had finally met up with his mentor, Sun Yat-sen, who had not only influenced his decision to follow Sun and to abandon his plan, but had also become a force in determining his career in subsequent years.

Almost a week after the public telegram which indicated Wu's involvement in the Principal Republican Party, a telegram from Wu, Cai Gongshi and Huang Xizhen to Sun Yat-sen (Sang, 2012a), and *Shenbao* public telegram (Gongdian, 1912b), both revealed that Wu who was in Nanjing on 26 January with Cai and Huang, all as Jiangxi survey officers, were instructed by Ma Yubao to pay a call on Sun Yat-sen. They were to report on all matters pertaining to Jiangxi, difficulties faced by the province and to examine the

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provisional administrative statutes and internal works rules of every captured province. They were grateful with the introduction of military and government personnel by Sun to assist them. In addition, the Nanchang Association, set up by Wu in Shanghai at this time had begun to function as Wu had requested the military government of every province to send copies of statutes and rules to the Association for reference.

4.4. Wu Tiecheng's 'First' Encounter with Sun Yat-sen

In Wu's (1993) account of his meeting with Sun in Nanjing, it was recorded that Sun was surprised that Wu, a Cantonese youth, had been appointed as a representative of Jiangxi in the previous presidential election and gave him every encouragement. He was again impressed with Sun's kind and charming personality. Knowing that he was a Cantonese subsequently placed Wu in a dominant position within the party and a prominent role in Sun's strategy. This was due to the prevalence of regionalism in Chinese Republican politics and political factional strife. It could be surmised that Sun, a Cantonese, had either intentionally or unintentionally built up his elite leadership and followers from the literati and professional military personnel with the Cantonese as a majority dominant force. This was realised when Guangdong was honored as a "place of revolutionary origin" after the reorganisation of KMT in 1924 (Wang et al., 2012). This is the Cantonese and Guangdong connection would be useful during Wu's first return to Canton. Furthermore, this was especially obvious when Wu and Sun shared the same origins from Xiangshan. Having the commonality in the origins of native place, from the same county was actually more important than from the same province. Nathan (1976) viewed that among each broad type of *guanxi*, there were infinite shadings of importance and degrees of emotional commitment. Hence, coming from the same province and coming from the same county would both be categorised as a form of locality tie, yet the first was of less importance than the second. It was clear that locality *guanxi* or relationship of native place between Wu and Sun had gradually become apparent. Wu's network from Jiangxi would later expand to forge another new and larger network: native-place network, into Xiangshan, Guangdong and overseas to Honolulu. Subsequent developments would show how and whether Wu had benefited from this native locality identification as he gradually moved away from Jiangxi, and through his efforts not only attempted to enhance his position in Guangdong, among Cantonese faction and, importantly, the recognition of Sun.

It was unsure whether Wu in this first meeting with Sun had obtained confirmation for the appointment of Ma Yubao as military governor as mentioned by Wu but Ma's letter to Sun in March had disclosed that he had been presented with the appointment letter in February (Sang, 2012b). Despite Cai and Huang who previously were with Wu on the same mission in Nanjing, it looked as if Ma was only satisfied with Wu. Wu, in early February, was reappointed as representative for consultation with Sun in Nanjing to resolve the financial problems in Jiangxi. The proposal to mortgage the Nanchang-Jiujiang Railway to secure a foreign debt to be shared between the Jiangxi Military Government and the Nanjing Central Government which had been agreed by Sun, nevertheless was later called off at the Jiangxi Provisional Provincial Assembly in order to obtain clarification from Sun (Wu, 1993; Gan Yihui fankang jielu yakuan, 1912; Sang, 2012a). The Jiangxi Provisional Provincial Assembly thought this proposal would increase the people's burden and viewed it as being dogmatised by Ma Yubao without getting the consent from both the assembly and the railway shareholders. As such, the assembly opposed and sent a telegram to Sun in order to clarify: whether the sharing policy applied to every province, Ma Yubao's view in deciding the amount of debt bore

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by the military government and whether this proposal was suggested by the railway major shareholders. On the financial condition, Young (2005) pointed out that financial difficulties were common as the charge on provincial revenues was greatly increased by the expanded armies of the revolutionary aftermath. In this second opportunity to meet Sun, Wu was diplomatically skillful in convincing Sun and the central government to support the Jiangxi Military Government financially. The central government, in return, could also have benefited from the loan on sharing basis, thereby indirectly pushed forward Sun and Wu *guanxi* in spite of the fact that the proposal was then opposed. Furthermore, Wu's subsequent contribution for the development of the local Revolutionary Alliance in Jiangxi had reinforced their *guanxi*.

After his return to Jiangxi, Wu had set up an office for the Revolutionary Alliance Jiangxi Provincial Branch in Yi Garden, Nanchang around mid-February followed by the participation of Ma Yubao. Wu in his capacity as the president of the branch with Yi Ciqian had informed Sun Yat-sen and Feng Ziyou on its progress and indicated that those important local figures in military and government sectors would successively join the branch (Sang, 2012a). At this juncture, Wu's conversion from the Principal Republican Party back to the Revolutionary Alliance and Sun within a month was swift. It could not be denied that Sun had his charisma and influence to draw Wu on his side but at the same time, Wu was pragmatic enough to sense the importance of locality *guanxi* to function under an influential leader, Sun. Furthermore, Wu's ability and pace in recruiting the locals, colleagues or comrades and even Ma Yubao into both the Principal Republican Party and subsequently the Revolutionary Alliance just within a month also witnessed his influence and how strong his *ganqing* (affective component or emotional component of a *guanxi*) had been successfully nurtured within the locality *guanxi* and network of place of birth / place of residence, together with *guanxi* and network among bureaucratic colleagues.

5. Conclusion

The determining factor or justification for Wu to link himself with those post-1911 Revolution meetings and conferences, especially 1911 Nanjing Conference in December was mainly attributed to the party de facto leader Sun Yat-sen. At the same time, the decisive one for him to link with Sun Yat-sen was the commonality in the origins of native place, Xiangshan, for both Sun and Wu. In fact, from the same county was actually more important than from the same province. This was Wu's ascendancy over those Cantonese who were non-Xiangshanese, as this closer commonality could pull Wu and Sun *guanxi* closer. This locality *guanxi* of native place-county with Sun was Wu's political asset and even continued after Sun's demise. Simultaneously, the priority of Sun in appointing Cantonese into his party and government apparatus until he was so heavily relied on this group to push further his revolutionary task. Sun's preference had not merely made the Cantonese a majority dominant force during Sun's era until 1925, but also transformed Guangdong into the "place of the revolutionary origin", concurrently both Sun and KMT's strong base during the "Canton Decade" (1917-1927), a period which was demarcated by Chan (1996). Thus, apart from identity and group to be associated with the Cantonese, the place of Canton and Guangdong were Wu's centre of interest after this episode as it could advance Wu's political career.

In the beginning, Wu after setting up the KMT Jiujiang Liaison Division by the end of 1912, later involved himself in Guangdong politicking in the 1913 national election but the attempt was unsuccessful. However, he never gave up and would return in the

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future. Subsequently, Wu's Xiangshanese identity had enabled him to be entrusted by Sun to oversee the Honolulu party affairs (1914-1916) where large proportion of Xiangshanese resided at this birthplace of the Chinese revolution, while Wu could apply their *guanxi* strengthened in increasing distance from Xiangshan. After the Honolulu party affairs, Wu's Xiangshanese identity had again made way for him to be indirectly chosen by Sun Yat-sen to administer his native place, Xiangshan (1921-1922). Instead of continuing his service at Xiangshan in early 1923 of which Wu relinquished after a short period so as to enable him to station at Canton / Guangdong since that year he was under Sun Yat-sen and also working alongside Sun Yat-sen' son, Sun Fo. As such, this study demonstrates how Wu narrated and positioned his participation in the pre-1911 conferences and 1911 Nanjing Conference, as well as his first encounter with Sun Yat-sen, as political capital that later facilitated his rise as a senior statesman of the KMT and Republican China.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This study did not require ethics approval or participant consent, as it is based exclusively on the analysis of primary and secondary historical sources and did not involve human participants, interviews, or the collection of personal data.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares there are no conflicts of interest.

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