Abstract

The “Taiping Tianguo” (1851-1864) was established by Hong Xiuquan. Although it lasted only fifteen years, it was important in the history of modern China for its attempted introduction of various political, social and economic reforms.

In the past, the “Taiping Tianguo” was regarded as a rebellion. However, Dr. Sun Yat-sen was the first to praise it as an ethnic revolution. Then the communist hailed it as a peasant revolution.

In 1949, the mainland China fell to the communist. The communist utilised history for their political propaganda. Karl Marx’s theory of historical materialism was used to interpret history and other views were strictly suppressed.

After 1949, many historians in Mainland China were very interested in “Taiping Tianguo”, more than thousands of essays were written on this topic. However, from what I known, no one seems to have discussed why these Chinese historians were interested particularly in the history of “Taiping Tianguo”. For this reason, the current thesis will analyse the reasons. The scope of study for this thesis is based on materials and essays written on “Taiping Tianguo” from 1949-1966.

My finding lead me to conclude that history was made used by the Chinese Communist for political propaganda. They exaggerated the heroism in peasant revolution. They praised it as “the Great Peasant Revolution”. Furthermore, due to political development in China, their views became more and more extreme. Finally, during “the Great Cultural Revolution”, history was used as a tool to attack and destroy those who had different political views.