

A Study of Liu Zhidan's View of the Masses

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Abstract: The view of the masses is the embodiment of the political position and value orientation of political parties towards the people. Liu Zhidan, in his practice in the revolutionary base areas of Shanxi-Gansu border, gradually formed the mass viewpoints centered on “for the masses, relying on the masses, penetrating into the masses, and developing the masses”. Under the guidance of Marxism, these views have been continuously improved through close contact with the people and revolutionary practice, promoting the construction of the base area, and are still of great practical significance.

Keywords: Liu Zhidan; View of the masses; Value connotation

Introduction

According to Marxism, the masses are the decisive force in the historical progress of society. After the reform and opening-up process, the concept of “the masses” has been expanded to include workers, peasants, intellectuals and other strata, constituting a fundamental connotation in contemporary China. The concept of the masses reflects the political stance and value orientation of a political party towards the people. The CPC's view of the masses, which has been gradually developed in the course of revolution, construction and reform, is “the starting point and destination of the revolution for communists.” The Shanxi-Gansu Border Revolutionary Base was founded by Liu Zhidan and others, and its success could not be achieved without the support of the people. Liu Zhidan developed a unique view of the masses in his close contact with the masses.

1. Sources of the formation of Liu Zhidan's view of the masses

1.1 The influence of the environment in which he grew up

Liu Zhidan was born in northern Shaanxi, where the land is barren, the politics is dark, and the people suffer. Since his childhood, he lived in the masses, he was well aware of the plight of the people. Influenced by the family education, grandfather Liu Shijie for the Qing Dynasty Bugong, character tough, advocating justice, deeply respected by the people. Under his grandfather's teaching, Liu Zhidan developed his sympathy for the people and his antipathy for the old powers at an early age. In addition, his contact with the elders of his family allowed him to hear many stories about corrupt officials and leaders of the righteous army, and these experiences profoundly influenced his view of the masses.

1.2 Enlightenment of Marxist Thought

In 1922, Liu Zhidan received his Marxist enlightenment at Yulin Middle School. Under the influence of Communists such as Wei Yuchou and Li Zizhou, he studied Marxism in depth and tried to combine theory with practice, establishing a communist worldview based on the people. In organizing the “School for the Common Man” and leading the campaign against the old forces, he deeply realized that the power of the revolution originated from the people, and once said, “The pillars of society are the peasants and workers who feed us; if they all rise up to make a revolution, how can the Chinese revolution not succeed?”

1.3 Deepening in Revolutionary Practice

Liu Zhidan gradually summed up his experience in revolutionary practice, and deeply realized that the masses are the fundamental driving force of revolutionary victory. In the process of leading the Weihua Uprising and creating the revolutionary base in Shanxi-Gansu, he clearly pointed out that “without a strong party organization and mass base, purely military action is bound to fail.” He always insisted on relying on the masses, believing that difficulties could be overcome as long as the policy was correct. Liu Zhidan had no personal special interests and always put the interests of the Party and the people first, forming his unique view of the masses.

2. The value connotation of Liu Zhidan's view of the masses

2.1 For the masses

To serve the people wholeheartedly is the fundamental purpose of the Communist Party of China, Liu Zhidan has always been a faithful

representative of the fundamental interests of the broadest number of people, with no personal interests in his heart, and “to make the whole country live a good life” is the goal of his life's struggle. Liu Zhidan had a close relationship with the masses, and he firmly believed that “the people are the masters, and he and the Red Army are the sons and servants”. Although he was a leader, he was always humble enough to ask the masses for advice, stay close to them and stand where they needed him most. He emphasized the relationship between the army and the people, the need for soldiers to be disciplined, rewarding those who were disciplined and severely punishing those who violated the law, all of which won the deep trust of the masses. The people affectionately called him “our old Liu” and actively supported the Red Army during the revolution.

2.2 Relying on the masses

Liu Zhidan knew that the success of the revolution could not be separated from the support of the people. He once said, “The Chinese people are living in dire straits, just like dry wood all over the place, and when there is a fire, it will burn down the sky! We have to be the kindling and rely on the people's masses, and the revolution will surely flourish”. Summarizing the reasons for the failure of the mutiny, he pointed out that “the most fundamental reason is that the military movement did not combine with the peasant movement and did not establish a revolutionary base”. During the revolutionary activities in Shaanxi and Gansu, Liu Zhidan insisted on “coming from the masses, going to the masses, and relying on the masses for everything”, and this view of the masses allowed him to lead the revolutionary forces to break through many difficulties, and finally establish a revolutionary base and become the general rear of the Anti-Japanese War.

2.3 Reaching out to the masses

Understanding the masses is the key to ensuring the success of the revolution. Liu Zhidan always emphasized investigation and research, and went deep into the masses to accurately understand the poor and miserable conditions of the people and grasp all the real information. He was familiar with the geography and human conditions of Shaanxi, Gansu and Ningxia, and understood the situation of every village and every household. He often reminded his comrades of the need to do good research. Comrade Xi Zhongxun recalled: “According to Zhidan's instructions, we did research village by village and did mass work family by family”.

2.4 Developing the masses

The success of the revolution needs not only to rely on the masses, but also to stimulate their creativity and initiative. Liu Zhidan insisted on expanding the forces of unity, focusing on the united front, and trying his best to win all favorable forces to the side of the Party. He often warned his comrades: “The revolution needs to establish a united front; the fewer the enemies, the better; the more friends, the better”. In addition, he also emphasized mass education, believing that “without knowledge, one will make bigger mistakes, and peasant uprisings have always failed in history”, and that through education, the revolutionary literacy of the masses could be enhanced, and their motivation stimulated to push forward the process of the revolution. Liu Zhidan also adhered to the idea of enriching the people, developing the economy, improving people's life, enabling the broadest masses to enjoy the power to participate in the regime, enhancing the revolutionary spirit and confidence of the masses, and stimulating their enthusiasm to support the party and promote the victory of the revolution.

3. Liu Zhidan's Mass Viewpoint in the Revolutionary Bases of Shanxi-Gansu Border Region

3.1 Deployment of United Front Work in Revolutionary Bases

Convinced that the victory of the revolution depended on uniting all the forces that could be united, Liu Zhidan always put mass work at the center of his strategy. With regard to the militia groups, bandits and the Brotherhood and other groups, Liu Zhidan flexibly applied the strategy of disintegration and transformation, and sought to transform them into revolutionary forces. He emphasized that hostile forces should be firmly combated, while groups with neutral or friendly attitudes should be fought for through proper tactics, so as to concentrate on destroying the most stubborn reactionary forces at a later stage. In addition, Liu Zhidan attached great importance to the role of revolutionary mass organizations. Organizations such as the Poor Peasants' Association, the Women's Association and the Red Guards played a vital role in the construction of the base areas and strengthened the social foundation of the revolution. The education and reform of prisoners was also the focus of his attention. Through ideological education, he gradually freed them from the bondage of reactionary ideology and transformed them into a force in support of the revolution.

3.2 Strengthening the Construction of Revolutionary Bases

In terms of regime building, Liu Zhidan emphasized the establishment of people's power through democratic elections to ensure that the masses had actual suffrage. He believed that the people should elect capable leaders through elections and thus consolidate the achievements of the revolution. The soviet governments in the Shanxi-Gansu border areas were gradually established under his impetus, and the elected democratic regimes provided the masses with a wide range of opportunities for political participation, which greatly enhanced their sense of democracy. Liu Zhidan also emphasized economic construction, especially in the land revolution and the restoration of production, and

took a series of practical and effective measures. Through the implementation of the land policy, the peasants' enthusiasm for production was stimulated, and through the policy of rest and recuperation, the burden of the peasants was lightened and the socio-economic recovery was promoted. The restoration of the bazaar and financial system further stabilized the economic foundation of the base area and provided material support for the revolution.

At the same time, Liu Zhidan was well aware of the long-term significance of education for the revolution, and he promoted the establishment of schools for workers and peasants' cadres and red schools, which, through the combination of military education and cultural education, upgraded the cadres' political and military literacy, popularized the basic knowledge of the masses, and strengthened the ideological cohesion and combat effectiveness of the revolutionary forces.

4. Conclusion

Liu Zhidan's view of the masses stemmed from his upbringing and matured gradually through revolutionary practice under the guidance of Marxism. The unique insights he developed in revolutionary practice played a key role in the creation of the revolutionary base areas in the Shanxi-Gansu Border Region, and are still of far-reaching significance today. The establishment and growth of the Shanxi-Gansu base area, which became the starting point of the Red Army's Long March and the strong foothold of the War of Resistance Against Japan, could not be separated from Liu Zhidan's view of the masses as “for the masses, relying on the masses, penetrating into the masses, and developing the masses”. He relied on the people to promote the revolution, gained wide support, and ensured the victory of the revolution.

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