Discussions about Magic Weapon of CPC’s Work Based on Study of Mao Zedong’s Rural Surveys

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Abstract Former chairman Mao Zedong conducted extensive rural surveys during the exploration of the Chinese revolutionary road. In 1941, in order to change the state of the party’s theory separating from reality, Mao Zedong organized and published the book Rural Surveys, which provided the direction for survey and research of the party members. The survey and research are excellent tradition and style of work of the party, and also a major weapon for outstanding achievements in China’s revolution and construction. Socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new era. Studying the Rural Surveys has important practical value for beating off the new challenges in the issues concerning agriculture, farmers, and rural areas.

Key words Survey, Mao Zedong, Rural Surveys, Magic weapon

1 Introduction

Survey and research are work method valued and adhered to by the Communist Party of China (CPC) and are the precondition and foundation for doing a good job. In the process of exploring and leading Chinese revolution and subsequent construction, Mao Zedong attached great importance to surveys and studies. He believed that "survey is a solution to the problem"⁴ and took the survey and study as the foundation for getting to know the society, formulating policies, and guiding Chinese revolution. He said that "no survey, no right to speak"⁴, and "Chinese revolution depends on understanding China’s situation"⁴. Rural Surveys is an important study material in the period of Yan’an Rectification Movement and provides theoretical and methodological guidance for the whole party to carry out survey and study work. Through analyzing the historical background of publication of Rural Surveys in-depth, we explored the wisdom of Mao Zedong in the survey work. This is of far-reaching practical significance for accurately grasping national conditions, formulating guidelines and policies in line with China’s actual conditions, and creating new situation for the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics.

2 Historical background of the publication of Rural Surveys

During the Agrarian Revolutionary War (1927 – 1937), the interim central government of the Soviet Republic of China played an important role in leading the revolutionary struggle of the CPC. However, in the later period there were many "leftist" mistakes, represented by Wang Ming’s dogmatism. Wang Ming received a systematic study of Marxist theory in the Soviet Union and had a certain theoretical level, and the experience of working in the Communist International also added "aura" to him. However, Marxism is not a doctrine but a guide to action. Without relying on the reality of the Chinese revolution, copying Marxism will make the theories become rigid. The "Left" ideology represented by Wang Ming has affected a large number of communists, lead to the CPC regarding Marx as a celestial being or sage, and taking the order of superior leader as the sacred decree, which was not pragmatic. These wrong understandings and working methods have led the CPC breaking away from the actual situation when formulating the policy line, which has seriously hindered the pace of the Chinese revolution.

As early as the New Culture Movement, Mao Zedong had walked among rural areas, took workers and farmers as teachers, and understood the actual conditions of Chinese society. He deeply understood the importance of seeking truth from facts and linking theory with practice. The rightist mistakes at the late stage of the Great Revolution and many leftist mistakes in the Soviet period brought huge losses to the revolutionary cause. In order to rectify these mistakes, Mao Zedong carried out extensive surveys in the process of opening up a new revolutionary path, including Xunanao Survey, Xingguo Survey, and Dongtang Survey, forming corresponding survey reports.

In 1941, when the Southern Anhui Incident broke out, the CPC suffered a heavy blow. During the incident, the problems of not paying attention to actual situations and complying with creed of the Communist International made Mao Zedong realize that it was extremely urgent to rectify wrong thoughts, change subjectivism, and dogmatism. In order to arouse the attention of the whole party, Mao Zedong called for understanding the issue of opposing dogmatism and raising the level of party spirit[⁵]. In 1941, Mao Zedong collected the rural surveys he conducted from 1930 to 1933 and published the book Rural Surveys, which was intended to promote the implementation of the survey plan in the whole party, and...
acquently rectify the issue of party’s work style. Survey and research are the fundamental methods to overcome subjectivism. Therefore, the publication of the Rural Surveys has taken the first step toward changing the party’s work style.

3 Wisdom of Mao Zedong’s survey and research from the Rural Surveys

The book Rural Surveys is a summary of Mao Zedong’s experience of rural survey. The book included 11 survey materials such as the Xingguo Survey, Survey in Dongtong and Other Areas, Survey of Mukou Village, and Mao Zedong wrote the preface and postscript for this book, raising the summary of practice to the theoretical level. The publication of the Rural Surveys provided an example for the communists at that time to carry out surveys and researches. It found a reliable and realistic basis for the formulation of various guidelines and policies in the Chinese revolution and subsequent construction, and directly promoted the survey and research conducted in the entire party in 1941. The wisdom of Mao Zedong reflected in this book is the combination of Chinese national conditions with Marxism, and it is worth of our in-depth study and exploration.

3.1 Survey is to solve problems In Fighting against Book Worship issued by Mao Zedong in 1930, "you should solve the problem that is difficult to solve, and you should survey the current situation and history of the problem" [3]. In the opinion of Mao Zedong, all decisions, judgment, conclusions were based on survey and research, and the solution to any problem should be based on survey and research and should be carried out as in actual work. In the period of Agrarian Revolution, land distribution was an important task. The standard for land distribution exerted a great effect on the proper resolution of farmers’ land problem. From 1928 to 1929, the CPC successively promulgated the Land Law in Jinggangshan and Xingguo, and both stipulated that "taking labor force as the standard, those having higher ability of working will be allocated with land twice as much as those without working ability. Mao Zedong thought that this was improper, because the most of the party members agreed, this provision was still included into the Land Law, but he still held the opinion of "confiscating all land equally allocated". Later, after survey in Xunwu, Xingguo and southwestern Jiangxi, Mao Zedong found that if land is allocated as per the labor force, benefits of poor farmers with old, weak and sick family members could not be safeguarded, while the standard of allocating land as per population was supported by poor farmers. Practice has proved that, under the historical conditions at that time, the equal allocation of land as per population is the most effective method to eliminate landlords’ exploitation and overthrow the feudal system, and completely change the land ownership. Therefore, in the Land Law of the Soviet Republic of China promulgated in 1931, the provision of "equal allocation of land" provided the policy guarantee for the victory of the agrarian revolution. In Mao Zedong’s survey and research theory, survey and research are to solve problems and so as to make scientific and correct decisions. It was just because Mao Zedong carried out extensive survey that he could understand China’s national conditions, feel the pulse of China’s rural areas, grasp the rules of revolution, and find a revolutionary road conforming to China’s national conditions.

3.2 Attitude of survey and research, looking down In the preface of Rural Surveys, Mao Zedong said that; unless a person is interested in turning his eyes downward and is determined to do so, he will never in his life really understand things in China[1]. Specifically speaking, it is required to place our eyes on grassroots when doing survey and research, put our body and mind into the masses, and take the modest and diligent attitude to make friends with workers and farmers. Then the masses may have the courage to tell the truth. Otherwise, it will fall into the situation of little knowledge. This is Mao Zedong’s consistent survey and research attitude and is also his basic requirement for the majority of party members and cadres. When Mao Zedong was carrying out rural survey, he never put on airs. He even worshipped the farmers as teachers and himself as a primary school pupil. This was because Mao Zedong knew that he was ignorant of rural issues and the farmers knew rural areas well. There were many articles written on the basis of the survey, such as Example of Life of Tenant Farmers in China based on interview with tenant farmer Zhang Lianchu, Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan based on interview with old farmers in rural areas of Hunan Province, and Report of Xingguo Survey based on survey of eight rural families. In the Report of Xingguo Survey, Mao Zedong pointed out that policy formulated on the basis of impractical situation is dangerous, and it is required to look down to crave for true knowledge and make continuous exploration. In the key period of advancing the great cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics, leading cadres should put eyes down and be willing to be students, which is still a basic requirement.

3.3 Methods of survey and research

3.3.1 Basic methods. Using Marxist historical materialism related to the class struggle, combined with the long-term survey and research practice, Mao Zedong found the basic method for finding the basic situation; method of class analysis. In the Chinese society at that time, class existence was an objective existence. To transform a class society, it is required to carry out survey and research, make comparison of political and economic conditions, class relations, and class strengths of various classes in rural areas, understand the needs of the masses at different levels, analyze and grasp various social conflicts, so as to formulate pertinent guidelines and policies for transforming the society. Using this method, Mao Zedong obtained correct evaluation and understanding of social classes in rural areas. In Analysis of Classes in Chinese Society, he divided classes in Chinese society into five parts: the landlord class and the comprador class, the middle bourgeoisie, the petty bourgeoisie, the semi-proletarian, and the proletarian. Through the analysis of the social status, economic status, and political attitudes of various classes, he made clear the "enemies"
and "friends" of the Chinese revolution, preliminarily elaborated the objects, motivation, leadership, nature, and future of Chinese new-democratic revolution, correctly solved the problem of allies in the revolution. This book is the model of class analysis theory in the context of the historical environment at that time and lays a theoretical foundation for Mao Zedong’s class analysis theory. For another example, in Xingguo Survey, He carried out a survey of eight families, analyzed performance of social classes in the struggle for land, summarized that landlords and rich peasants occupied 80% land with 6% population, while middle peasants and poor peasants owned 20% land with 80% population, which further proved the importance and necessity of agrarian revolution, thus Mao Zedong believed that agrarian revolution would certainly win the support of more than 80% people[1]. Just in this way, Mao Zedong grasped overall situation in rural areas at that time and found the right way to lead the victory of Chinese revolution.

3.3.2 Specific methods. (i) "Holding survey meetings is the easiest and most reliable method"[1]. Mao Zedong mentioned the method of holding survey meetings many times, and elaborated the techniques of holding survey meetings from participants, number of participants, survey items, and attitude and ways of holding survey meetings. The survey objects should be those who have rich experience and knowledge, and are representative. Participants may be not too many, 3 – 8 people are proper, depending on ability of organizer. Before the survey meeting, survey plan should be made, to encourage respondents to tell the truth. Otherwise, it is impossible to obtain practical data. Mao Zedong had rich experience and unique ideas about holding survey meetings, and the facts also proved that holding survey meeting is a basic method for survey and research, if well used, it can make the survey data become more practical and reliable. Even at the present day of convenient access to information and data, holding survey meeting is still an essential and effective method for party cadres and members to get close contact with the masses and improve their level of scientific decision making.

(ii) "Dissecting a sparrow" is a most practical method. It is a method of selecting representative units from survey objects as the typical ones, to understand the essence and development rules of similar phenomena through the survey of typical objects. Mao Zedong realized from his own practical experience that "starting from the typical one is the most practical method, i.e. studying from a typical to another typical[1]." Finding the "typical" is an important task of this method. Mao Zedong pointed out that typical ones can be divided into advanced, general, and backward ones. "If we can use this classification and survey two or three items for each type, then we can obtain the general situation"[1]. Examples of Life of Chinese Tenant Peasants was completed using the typical survey method. Taking tenant peasant Zhang Lianchu as the typical survey object, Mao Zedong surveyed his income and expenses and reached the conclusion that Chinese tenant peasants were harder than those in other countries. Survey of Changgang Township and Survey of Caixi Township were also written on the basis of the typical survey method. Mao Zedong likened this method to "dissecting a sparrow". Through dissecting a sparrow, it is easy to know other sparrows or even other similar birds. Under the background of domestic trouble and foreign invasion, Mao Zedong did not have sufficient time and conditions to conduct surveys, convenient and flexible typical survey methods could make his survey and research more efficient and effective, and the high requirement of typical survey method also reflected rich survey and research experience and wisdom of Mao Zedong.

4 Recommendations for the construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics based on Rural Surveys

Rural Surveys is important literature in the period of Yan’an Rectification Movement. The wisdom of Mao Zedong reflected in Rural Surveys is still worth our study. Looking back at the history of the CPC, when survey and research were valued, the cause of the party would be smoothly implemented; when survey and research were neglected, it would lead to theories breaking away from realities, giving a heavy blow to the cause of the party. Therefore, the victory of Chinese revolution is inseparable from extensive surveys and research of the CPC represented by Mao Zedong, and survey and research are a magic weapon for China to make outstanding achievements. The construction of socialism with Chinese characteristics has entered a new time, welcome the bright prospect of realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Thus, we must make good use of this magic weapon to ensure the smooth progress of the socialist cause with Chinese characteristics.

(i) Under the new historical conditions, there are changes in the conditions, content, and means of survey and research, but there is no change in the status and function of the survey and research in the party’s decision-making work and all leadership works. Instead, it becomes more important. Especially, since the 19th National Congress of the CPC, there have been great changes in both domestic and foreign conditions, China’s development remains the important strategic opportunity, the prospect is very bright, but the challenge is serious. Under the requirement of placing high demands on the party, it is of great significance to bring into play fine tradition of survey and research, to raise the leadership ability and governance level of the party and enhance the science and pertinence of decisions. Only through survey and research, may leaders and cadres make clear the nature of things, raise the ability of exercise control over the overall situation, know demands of the masses, and work out policies conforming to interests of the people. (ii) Now, tremendous changes are taking place in rural areas of China. The 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China stressed that resolving issues relating to agriculture, rural areas and farmers is the top priority in the Party’s work. The proposal of the rural revitalization strategy indicates that the rural development has a new depth and breadth. Without setting foot on the practical situation and without support of practical policies, without close contact with the masses, it is impossible to realize great development and prosperity of the rural
economy, ecology, civilization and other aspects. In this situation, survey and research become particularly important.

In the new historical starting point, as long as we always make good use of this magic weapon for understanding and transforming the world, we can keep pace with the time, follow the rules, and keep creative, and the socialism with Chinese characteristic can radiate vigor and vitality.

References

4.3 Implementing staggered shifts to alleviate the traffic pressure

As soon as the Golden Week and the official holidays, there is a grand occasion for people’s traveling. This is extremely unhealthy tourism ecology. The administrative costs of the scenic spots not only rise sharply, but also the public’s comfort level will be greatly reduced. Staggering the peak of tourism, diverting outbound tourists and relieving pressure on the scenic spots will not only reduce the need for excessive tourism during Golden Week and official holidays, but also be conducive to the protection of the ecological environment. It is recommended to avoid the peak tourist season, and travel in dull season at a lower price, then scenic areas can provide better services.

5 Conclusions

In recent years, Yichang has relied on folk culture, made full use of high-quality cultural and natural resources, promoted the great development of leisure agriculture, and achieved remarkable results in promoting the integration of agriculture with travel. Yichang has become a new highlight in the transformation and upgrading of agriculture and the construction of new countryside in Yichang. According to the data, as of December 2016, Yichang City has 3,600 recreational agricultural operation sites, including 310 country farm houses, 240 leisure farms, 170 agricultural sightseeing and picking parks and 90 agricultural science and technology demonstration parks, bringing in more than 50,000 jobs. The average annual increase of more than 20,000 yuan practitioners, leisure tourism has become a "sunrise industry" for increase of farmers’ income. In terms of the overall development of leisure tourism in Yichang city, it can integrate and develop leisure tourism resources, but this still stays at a primary stage. In addition, the leisure tourism in Yichang is faced with the problems of homogeneity of tourism products, poor infrastructure construction and environmental sanitation. Therefore, we propose of improving the leisure tourism projects, making it local, strengthening infrastructure construction and environmental protection, encouraging tourists not to travel in peak season, alleviating the traffic pressure, and further promoting the development of leisure tourism industry in Yichang.

References