

The Conception and the Factors of Great Man and Hero

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Received 14 October 2015; accepted 16 December 2015

Published online 26 January 2016

Abstract

Great men are not born, but not everyone can become a great man. In the process of their growth, always have some special factors, including intelligence, non-intelligence, social conditions, and masses' psychology, etc.. Although cannot create history, great men and heroes' role in the history is far greater than ordinary people. Therefore, the understanding to great men and heroes can neither be mysterious or exaggerated, nor be mediocre, but should be scientific.

Key words: Great man; Hero; Elite; Conditions

Liu, D. C. (2016). The Conception and the Factors of Great Man and Hero. *Canadian Social Science*, 12(1), 49-54. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/css/article/view/8115> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/8115>

INTRODUCTION

Many words associated with the great historical figures, among those few nouns are Great, hero, elite, etc.. To figure out the heroes and great man's arising conditions and their historical function, we should first analysis a few words about the meaning of excellence.

1. ANALYSIS ABOUT THE CONCEPT OF HERO, GREAT MAN, AND THE ELITE

According to the interpretation of the "modern Chinese dictionary", when used "hero" as a noun,

it means brave people, such as "true man". Another interpretation is selflessness, fearless, admirable people who care for and struggle hard for the people's interests, used as the Peoples Heroes, Labor Heroes, Combat Heroes.

Chinese word "英雄", there into, "英" refers to extremely talented or intelligent people, while "雄" means people with strong power. Therefore, Li Qingzhao, the female Chinese poet of Song Dynasty, said in her poem, "live as a hero, and die as a fighter too."

The interpretation of the "great man" in modern Chinese dictionary is one of the noble, excellent, respected, outstanding people who had made great merit for the nation and the people.

In Modern Chinese Dictionary, "精英" (elite) is defined as person with outstanding ability (in Chinese: "出类拔萃", which originated from Mengzi. Gongsunchou and refers to a person who excels at something. We can see the use of the word "精英" (elite) in *Records of Great Figures* (《人物志》) written by Liu Shao (刘劭) who lived during the period of the Three Kingdoms (三国) in Chinese history. And Ge Hong who lived in Jin dynasty, wrote in 《抱朴子·嘉遁》, "to extract the pure fluid of the sunset and eat the essence of the eight mineral materials used by alchemists". Du Mu (杜牧), poet of Tang dynasty, wrote in the Metrical Prose in Praise of *E Pang Palace* (《阿房宫赋》), "treasures collected by Kingdom Yan, Zhao, Han, Wei, Qi and Chu during the past decades were all plundered from those people, now pile in the Palace like hills." Su Shi of Song Dynasty wrote in *May Your Majesty Consider Adjusting to Lu Zhi's Comments* (《乞校正奏议札子》), his letter to the Emperor, Lu Zhi's comments, inclusive of the essential philosophies of different times and easily understood, actually serve as a mirror that reflects contemporary social problems.

According to the context of usually usage of elite, hero, and great man, the author understand that, that there are two main types of "heroes" usage: The first kind is a

subjective evaluation concept, refers to the persons who have super ability above ordinary people, and can lead the crowd to do a significant meaningful things for the people, or do important issues by himself or herself. The second is a literary concept which refers to a superman in the literature.

To be understood directly, “great men” is the accomplished, respected person. Under certain historical condition, through their own and the team’s struggle, they made great achievement that the ordinary people can’t. The merits have a positive impact at that time or to the future

The using of “elite” in politics first appeared in French in the 17th century, which means “the selected few” or “excellent people”. According to Blackwell encyclopedia of political system, elites are the persons with the strongest ability in different areas of human activity. Elite theory deem that the rulers of the society is the minority of the society, but in many aspects, such as intelligence, character, ability, property, they are more superior than most of the governed, they have extremely important influence and effect on the development of the society. So, they are the elite of the society. Thereinto, political elite represent certain interest groups, hold the important decision-making power, their political attitudes and behavior have an important impact on direction and prospects of political development, determines the nature of politics.

The concepts of elite, hero and the great man are different. The concept of the elite is more objective and neutral. They are persons whose intelligence, ability, character, or power is more superior than the average person. They are a handful of the best ones in the society. There are not only the political elite, but also the economic elite, and other elite from all walks of life. Yet the hero has more emotional and literary flavor, naturally carry with a kind of admiration and respect. We can validate it by an obvious use for this: To either side of hostilities, for example, the combat hero from one side may not be a hero to the other party. The Great is also a political evaluation, It itself is a noble sense of positive.

So, on the meaning of political science, objectively speaking, there is no so-called hero, because this concept has a strong subjective orientation of value evaluation and emotion, do not belongs to political science research. But the political elite objectively exist as well as historical figures. Because, no matter how emotional tendency is, the role of the elite in the history is objective, and can be examined and analyzed, even be quantitatively analyzed. So, in order to further clarify the concept of hero and great man, we could make a brief analysis to the arising conditions, characteristics and significance of the heroes in the history.

2. THE GENERATION OF HEROES AND GREAT MEN

2.1 Social Conditions

Above all, the heroes is not created out of thin air, in the ancient western religious country, some people believed god had gave the sanctity to the hero, such as Joan of arc, and a few of the ancient Greek half man and half god heroes, such as Achilles.

But, according to the materialism, hero always emerges in the specific historical conditions, due to the needs of a particular social environment. Or, the hero is rather exist at any time than coming out at a certain era, there always be a lot of capable people in the society, in the face of all sorts of complicated natural or social environment, carrying with great perseverance, overcome difficulties, however, the vast majority of them obscured. Only due to some eras’ “specificity”, some of the figures have certain kinds of talent emerge, known as hero. The particularity of the Times, including volatility, struggle, and freedom of selectivity to solve the conflict, that is to say, people can solve the problem without according to legal procedures, but by other free confrontational approach, including by force and the killings. In history, Genghis Khan, no matter one love him or hate him, always unavoidably admit that he is a hero. However, the method Genghis khan used to solve the problem, if evaluated in a legal civilized society, it is very difficult to be estimated. Therefore, the era of heroes has its particularity.

There are combat heroes, who came into being amongst a fierce battle ground. That also manifests the particularity of environment. Therefore, the condition to produce hero tends to be of unrest, as the China saying goes, “Heroes emerge in troubled times”, the fierce confrontation shows truly brave. No contradiction, no hero.

But, some heroes still emerge in a peaceful social environment, rather than in battle. Sometimes, some people sacrifice their own happiness to the state and society, even dedicate life, people call such people hero. The fundamental character they have in common is the spirit to overcome difficulties and crises.

That is to say, the contradiction is the necessary conditions to the hero.

2.2 Individual Conditions

Good individual conditions are necessary for smelting of hero: First of all, he must have courage, man will not be a true man without guts. Courage is the indomitable determination in the face of difficulties and danger. Psychologically speaking, courage is a kind of mental quality to stand one’s ground, to progress and breakthrough in the face of difficulties. As a kind of character, courage performs as in spite of their own

profits, and even their lives in time of crisis, to stand up for the public interests. Or overcome difficulties, obstacles to achieve their goals (Cheng, 2014).

From the view of individual research, having courage needs a certain type of body and nerve.

But, in addition to have the personal attributes, courage also has social attribute, certain social evaluation conversely constraint or stimulate personal attributes, for example, for a man of born cowardice, whenever in danger he will always be nervous, his heart beats too fast, sure, the tension is not his fault, but restricted by the social assessment, he will reflect on his own behavior, try to overcome the tension of physiological reaction, arouse his courage to overcome the difficulties and fight dangerous bravely. This is the retroaction of social environment onto the personal courage. Evaluation of the social attribute of courage is moral courage, which is a kind of moral spirit, facing to face with the difficulties and obstacles, have the loftiness character to bear (Sun, 2015). Up to politics, it is the political courage, which is refers to the quality of the politicians appeared in political activities, especially in critical national affairs and significant international affairs. As a political virtue, political courage is based on justice and braveness, and regard “good governance” and national interests as its purpose. To achieve political courage, the politicians cannot lack of strong political power, excellent political wisdom and good political ideals (Zuo, 2014).

No matter what kind of hero, he will invariably be the hero of society, a hero evaluated by all kinds of morality. Yet, courage is the first factor that a hero will never be short of.

But, it must be illuminated, heroes and great men are different, man can be a hero one time for one incident, but can't be great man, the process to be The Great must be long and difficult. So, some quality is that a great man must have.

So, the second condition for the Greats is big goals and lofty aspirations, this is an ideal leading to success. In China's traditional culture, there are many old sayings that encourage people to have goals for life, which find their equivalences in English proverbs such as, “where there is a will there is a way” (有志者, 事竟成), “a person could be ambitious at a very early age and a person without ambition live meaninglessly even though he lives to be 100 years old (有志不在年高, 无志空活百岁)”, “Ambitious men aim far”, “live as a hero, and die as a fighter too”, etc.. In western culture, there are also a lot of inspirational well-known sayings.

So to speak, ambition is the psychological basis to become a great man, it is a starting point, as a famous saying goes, “a person without great goal will never be a great man, even with surprising behavior”. Ambitious man, of course, not necessarily can succeed, but it is impossible to be great for a person without ambition

Some people often take Liu Yu (刘裕) as an examples, who lived in the Northern and Southern Dynasties (420-589AD), and was the founding emperor of (Liu) Song dynasty (363-422 AD). Some people claim he had no ambition but succeeds.

Liu Yu, known as Emperor Wu of (Liu) Song dynasty, was born in a poor family, had always been humble, but later became emperor. However, that doesn't mean one can be GREAT without ambition, for, when in childhood, Yu Liu may be unambitious in the poor conditions, but with the change of environment, with the increasing of experience and knowledge especially after became a general, his ambition would must had be changed, that is to say, having set up a new aim.

Han Feizi, the famous philosopher of the Warring States Period said” Time and place changes a person”. That is to say along with the change of social position, the aspirations of people will gradually change, rather than holding on a childhood aim. In fact, at all times and in all over the world, great ambition of every hero is not immutable, ideal of the childhood must be different with that of independent adulthood, when was a child, because of the intelligence haven't developed, and the environment of a kid is very limited, a small wish such as a piece of candy, a toy, is likely to be a child's ideal, the dogma of clinging to set ambitious goal since childhood is harmful and rigid.

Real determination should be based on a solid foundation, it is a fuzzy goal formed after gradually understanding of the reality of the society in which they are living, this goal can't be too specific, too very specific goal is difficult to achieve, and the target could not be unalterable, it should be undertook adjustment along with the development of the reality. But an invariable clues runs through the whole process, that's the determination and perseverance of a person who want to become outstanding and to do extraordinary things.

It is this kind of abstract, vague determination that is the nature of ambition itself.

2.3 Perseverance and Willpower

There are many stories about perseverance in China. The most famous is the Foolish Old Man, who removed the mountains, which means the determination to triumph and the courage to surmount every difficulty. And another story of the bird Jingwei trying to fill up the sea with pebbles, a symbol of never yielding in spite of reverses. Of course, there are still lots of children's stories such as the tortoise and the hare etc.. These are the manifestation of a tenacious perseverance, a resolution of never giving up .

“The leap of a swift horse is no more than 10 steps, while an inferior horse can make a long distance if it keeps walking for 10 days.” (Xun Zi•Inspire Learning); in the West there are also many motto about perseverance. For example, “real talent is resolute

ambition” by Napoleon. “Victory belongs to the most patient man” etc., quotes about perseverance and willpower are numerous.

To success requires persistence and perseverance, this is no problem, but, in many cases, people misunderstand it, they seemly think that persistence and perseverance is always linked with adversity, setbacks and difficulties, think “great talent comes from tribulation, rich dandies rarely become achiever of career”, even some people makes difficulties, just to hone his own will.

In fact, in one’s life, it is not always in face of difficulty, more environment is common, having both the adverse conditions, and the favorable conditions, we need to analysis seriously, solve the adverse conditions, using the advantage, make disadvantage into advantage.

More importantly, a path strewn with roses tends to destroy the will of man more easily, it makes people lazy, coveting enjoyment, even go with the flow, doing nothing. It makes outstanding statesman and strategist loss vigilance and ignore the danger. In favorable circumstance, therefore, people need more willpower and perseverance to success.

2.4 The Intelligence

Edison said: “Genius is made by ninety-nine percent of perspiration and one percent of inspiration”, ordinary people understand this sentence only by stressing more sweat, sure, sweat is important, but that one percent of inspiration is fairly important as well. If no inspiration, or not mind good at summary and discovery, without an ability of insight, an industrious man might only be a depressed person. Speak of wisdom, that means one’s intelligence.

Psychologically, intelligence is the activity of the brain. The conduction velocity of brain neurons of man is not exactly the same. Researchers believe that intelligence has the nature and nurture, Heredity is natural or biological premise of the occurrence and development of intelligence; the development of the brain is the physiological condition of intelligence; the social material life is the decisive condition of the development of intelligence, nature only provides the possibility of intellectual development, and the environment and education turns this possibility into reality, by the cognitive activities and learning activities of the subject, it directly restricts intellectual structure, content, and developing speed; the practice is the direct basis and source of intellectual development.

In addition, intelligence is multicomponent, it consists of linguistic intelligence, mathematical logic intelligence, spatial intelligence, music intelligence, body movement intelligence, interpersonal intelligence and self-awareness intelligence (controlling) and so on factors. A true great man’s intelligence is often superior. This is the premise foundation in dealing with major Events (Lin, 2002).

2.5 The Factors of Non-Intelligence

In psychological circles, there is discussion about emotional factors and non-intelligence factors. Emotional intelligence commonly is known as the EQ. Emotional intelligence includes ability of understanding their own emotion, proper management emotion, self-motivation, and the ability to know others’ emotions (Lu, 2005), which is the basis of interpersonal communication, and also ability of managing other people’s emotion, as well as the ability to resist the pressure and so on.

Non-intelligence factors are those psychological factors not directly involved in the cognitive process, mainly include motivation, interest, emotion, will and personality factors, such as specific performance for independence, self-control, self-esteem and sense of responsibility, etc..

American psychologist perform a decades of tracking study to several children of exceptional intelligence, whose average IQ are 151. Some of them achievement is excellent, the other’s is mediocre, analysis of the psychological characteristics show that the main difference between the two parts is in the stamina, confidence, initiative, caution, competitiveness, etc., In this respect, the accomplished ones clearly beyond the plainer ones (Fu, 2002). If according to the psychological concept, controlling emotions belong to a kind of intelligence, you can call the interpersonal process is an intellectual action, but by the ordinary understanding of so-called personal charisma, it belongs to a kind of non-intelligence factors.

The author has no intention of conceptual differentiating. Only for the sake of practice, the interpersonal relationship has closely something to do with the individual achievement. For a cold and aloof man, it is difficult to accomplish something great. In China, the word “clever” can be used to describe two kinds of people, one is have a quick and clever mind to accept knowledge; another kind is someone good at dealing with interpersonal relations, be able to get the welcome of people, and able to handle difficult relationship problems, While the latter is often the natural quality of the Great men.

2.6 Chance

Materialism philosophy calls good occasionality as opportunity, or advantageous chance. There are a lot of occasionalities in the world, known as probability in statistics. When a business is unpredictable, besides people’s endeavor, the last results have to be left to one’s luck. Chinese ancients said: “Men proposes, God disposes”, which expresses exactly a kind of helplessness. So, there are often a lot of occasionalities behind a hero. Just thinks, able to survive the bullets, good luck cannot be ruled out. Or, in fact, that we called Great man, is only a kind of result, both the result of their own effort, and also the result of good fortune.

But some people try to find the cause of necessity for the good luck, then the mysticism Generate.

2.7 Psychological Conditions of the Masses

Gustave Le Bon argued ordinary people's blindly following and irrational characters in *Psychologie des foules* and the psychology of the revolution. Mr. Serge Moscovici also demonstrated it in the age of folks. Whether the crowd is rational or not, a hero need to win the support of them, as the traditional Chinese saying goes who win the people win the world, only with the support of the masses, can a statesman have the power to fight.

This not only depends on the personality of great man's intelligence and non-intelligence, but also depends on whether putting forward good policies, goals, slogans and practical strategies to win the support of the most broad of masses.

3. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREAT MAN

Contrasted to the above analysis, you will find, first of all, the intelligence of a great man is definitely not mediocre, they tend to have superior cognitive abilities, analytical skills, and judgement. This kind of intellectual foundation brought their vision. This vision is not from the brain, not just sources from books, but also from their own experience and observation, the objective of experience comes into their unusual brain, combined with their existing knowledge, constitute forward-looking analysis and judgment.

Secondly, in non-intelligence factors, the great man has a lofty ideal, namely, motivation is strong, they have a strong perseverance, when in the face of crisis and frustration always keep confidence, courage and optimism, this is a powerful psychological foundation of them to go out of the woods.

Thirdly, they can effectively control the interpersonal relationship, and can solidly cooperate with the team. He not only knows himself, but also understands others, can properly handle all kinds of contradictions and problems. He can attract more people to unite around them and form a strong support power, which makes them plays an important role in the political and social affairs, cannot be ignored.

As mentioned earlier, the attraction is both of personality and of ideal, he is able to win the trust of everyone, people believes that the way his guide is right, following his instructions they can achieve a promising end.

Great personality differs in thousands of ways, of course, both bright humorous and sedate reserved, both good speaking and taciturn straight man, it's hard to say what personality is the absolute fit or unfit for a great man.

But as political figures, the key is to be able to attract the masses, to win the support and the trust of the people.

In addition, the great man is generally need to have a good body, so a lot of great men pay attention to exercise body at early age, otherwise it's hard to say when the days come to an end. Under special circumstances, of course, there are some great men overcome the defects of the body and have great achievement, it reflects the importance of the will.

4. THE ROLE OF THE GREAT MEN

According to the historical materialism, great man arise in specific historical circumstance, only conforms to the historical trend can be a great man accomplish something great.

This case was indeed, but, what is the law of the history, what is the will of the people? We can't come into the predestination of dogmatism and mysticism. We should see the great man's special function in judging and leading historical trend. The Great's ability, volition and target, can often discourage or accelerate the course of history, even, in a certain stage, in a certain extent, may change the direction of history. Just as we cannot rule out a variety of causal factors subtly affect the history.

If Genghis khan died in an accident in the early years of exile, the appearance of history may be not same as later; if Mongke Khan, an early emperor of the Mongol Empire, didn't die of accidental fire fight, map of the world might be another looking. If Huo Qubing hadn't died of the plague, the history of the western Han dynasty may not be same as later; if Duo'ergun, a famous general of early Qing dynasty, not sudden died due to a horse-riding accident, Man-Han ethnic relationship may be more difficult, and so on. Blaise Pascal said: "If Cleopatra's nose was a little shorter, the whole looking of the world would have changed." This maybe exaggerated the role of accidental factors in history. But on the other hand, the great man's idea, method, will and scope of knowledge often impact on history. In other words, the history is both inevitable and accidental, there is inevitability in contingency. Inevitability goes through contingency.

5. THE MISUNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT

About heroes and great men, we need to pay attention to distinguish some misleading

First of all, the hero is the only person who does certain things under certain conditions. The hero of this environment will perhaps be an ordinary person in other circumstances. Sometimes heroes need to shape, when society requires a hero, he or she need to be mold and promoted, when society requires a certain type of hero or elite, other type of hero or elite maybe unknown to

public forever, only when history needs that kind of ones, he will probably be found. In this regard, some great men probably are lucky, because of their strong political resources, which give them constant influence, in both before and after death.

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