

POPULATION MOVEMENT AND THE CHANGE OF REGIONAL ECONOMY PATTERN

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ABSTRACT: Population movement is an important phenomenon in China in recent years. Its mechanism is: (1) thrust of more people and less land in the eastern region of China; (2) attraction of dual economy in the western region of China; (3) national policy on preferential wages and grains for the western region. Population movement has an important effect on the change of regional division pattern in China: by the medium of the moving people, there forms another regional division pattern, i.e. rural industry system based on rural town industry; (2) there forms another profit mechanism compensated from the western region to the eastern region. It not only wins more profit in the eastern region, but also changes dual economy in the western region. Therefore, We should make choice of a comprehensible and encouraging attitude on population movement; a special government organization for general survey of the moving people should be set up at once.

KEY WORDS: population movement, shortage of industrial structure, regional division pattern, rural industry

The division and coordination of regional economy relationship is an important subject in the research of economy geography. According to different development conditions and economic levels of the eastern region and the western region in China, especially the regional development difficulties confronted with in the western region, scholars have had many-sided researches, and have put forward countermeasures including industrial division and production arrangement, the division and coordination of interregional economy, and population migration westward, and so on. The westward movement of population in the eastern region which has been happening in recent years, has an important effect on the change of regional economy pattern. It has afforded a new studying view for dealing with regional economy system and production arrangement in China.

I. THE ORIENTATION AND MECHANISM OF POPULATION MOVEMENT

Population migration differs from population movement. The former mean that "people's migration oversteps the boundary of a piece of land for the purpose of settlement",^[1] the latter mean that people's movement oversteps the boundary of a piece of land, but doesn't change their settlement places and residences, it can be divided into two kinds of movement: economic one and noneconomic one, namely, movement behaviours for the purposes of making a living, profiting and making a tour, visiting one's relatives, etc. respectively. The former, instead of the latter is discussed in this paper.

In recent years, there have appeared two types of population movement in China, one is that people move from the countryside to towns and cities nearby, the other is that people move from the eastern region to the western region. According to incomplete statistics, there were 2,180,000 moving in people nine provinces or autonomous regions of the western region in 1986, among which 1,058,000 came from the western region, 804,000 and 338,000 respectively came from the eastern region and Central Belt.^[2] Then, what is the mechanism of so many people moving westward?

1. The Thrust of the eastern region and the Attraction of the western region

In 1985, the population density in the eastern region was 337.93 people per square kilometer, the cultivated land per head was only 1.4 mu (1 mu = 1/15 ha), while they were respectively 47.41 people per square kilometer, 1.45 mu per head in the western region. So, it is obvious that the population pressure in the eastern region is much heavier than that in the western region. If the extreme unbalance of the population density in the eastern region is considered, it is easier to understand that the heavier the population pressure is, the more the amount of moving people will be. Let's take Wenzhou district in Zhejiang Province for an example, about 100,000 persons from Wenzhou are spread all over China, the cultivated land per head is only 0.8 mu per head on the average. In the southern region of Jiangsu, about 500,000 people have moved into other regions, among which about 150,000 people have entered the western region the cultivated land per head is 1.1 mu on the average. Therefore, it is certain that the regional unbalance of the population pressure is an important reason for the people in the eastern region to move westward. Nevertheless, it is far from enough that the phenomenon of people moving westward being explained by the population pressure.

The economic reason for population movement from the eastern region to relatively backward Westward Belt is that higher economic earnings can be gained than in the western region. In 1986, there were 800 yuan for every person and 1500 yuan per labourer in the southern region of Jiangsu. Thus, population movement take place only when the earning per labourer is more than 1,500 yuan. There exists this condition in the actuality. According

to the typical survey of more than 30,000 moving people in Zhangjiagang City in Jiangsu Province, their income was about 2,000–3,000 yuan per person (this figure was possibly lower than the actual income). The income of some labourer, such as contractors and craftsmen of prosperous business was much higher, above 10,000 yuan.

The higher economic income means that the westward population movement is influenced by not only the thrust of the eastern region, but also the attraction of the western region, which is exactly the shortage of industrial structure in the western region.

Many present studies have fully indicated that the feature of dual economy in the western region, compared with the eastern region, is more obvious, i.e. the feature of economic structure in the western region, is a combination of lower level agriculture production and higher level modern industry, in which there lacks a series of the middle industries joining the two.^[3] Moreover, owing to relatively lower labourer quality and traditional thoughts of despising trade and handicraft, it is difficult for these middle industries to fill up. Against this background, the filling of such industries of exterior regions, suits obviously the needs of economic development in the western region. Thus, it is understandable that these people earns relatively higher income.

2. Inverse Policies on Wages and Grain Subsidy

The thrust of more people and less land in the eastern region and the attraction of shortage of industrial structure only indicate the necessity of people moving westward. Under the conditions of only 455 yuan per person and serious grains shortage in the western region, a huge fund payment capacity and the grains guarantee are the full conditions for people moving westward.

The wages of workers in different regions of China don't depend on economic benefits, but are decided by noneconomic factors such as political, national, cultural ones. For instance, Shanghai City is 8th-class wage area, Jiangsu Province is 5th-class wage area, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region is 11th-class wage area. The inverse wage policy combines the higher wages' level with lower production level and economic development status, resulting in the incisive contradiction between consumer and production structures, in consequence, there is much money but less consumer goods, and there appears a unusual phenomenon that great surplus funds are deposited in banks or overflowed towards the eastern region. In the end of 1983, there were 13,300 million yuan of surplus deposit in the banks of Qinghai and Gansu provinces, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in the western region. In 1984, Guizhou Province outflowed 700 million yuan funds, which was equal to 80 percent of local finance income of that year.^[3] Hence, there has enough funds in the western region to pay the expenses of people moving into it from exterior regions, their achievements can satisfy the needs of the western region. In other words, though financial income of the western region isn't much and the income per person is low, there has a strong economic backing of national finance

subsidy, the mechanism of people moving westward is in motion. Besides, the national policy of grain subsidy is another important guarantee condition of people's moving westward.

The supporting powers of ecosystem must be first considered when people discuss the restricted factors of people migrating towards the western region, one of which is the grain guarantee degree. It is sure that the shortage of grain in the western region is more obvious, compared with the eastern region. It can be measured by the amount of grains owned by each person. In 1986, there was 357.94kg of grain per head and 321.87 kg of grain per head in the eastern region and the western region respectively, in Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces where more people moved out, the amount of grains owned by each person was also higher, respectively 532.63 kg per head and 394.37 kg per head. But Guizhou Province, Qinghai Province and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the western region had only 223.50, 238.83, 223.64 kg per head respectively. Only the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which had relatively more people migrating into, the amount of grains owned by per head was higher than that in the eastern region, reached 395.74 kg per head.

In the western region grains pressure was heavier than in the eastern region, and several hundred thousand people moved in from the eastern region to stay for 3.6 months every year, the solution of grains is surely a problem worth to be discussed. This problem, I think, is also solved mainly by national policy of grains' subsidy. At the same time, owing to the great rising of living standards of cities and town's inhabitants, and the great increasing of non-staple food in food structure in recent years, the grains stock of inhabitants increases considerably, which is able to support these people from exterior regions.

In a word, the reasons why so great westward population movement took place in recent years in China, are the shortage of industrial structure in the western region, the specific national policy of wages and grains, the population pressure of the eastern region, and the higher economic income gained by people moving westward in these regions than in interior regions. Certainly, if the explanation of this mechanism is limited only to population movement, the studying vision is too narrow. What we are interested in is profound influence of westward population movements on the change of regional economy pattern.

II. THE INFLUENCE OF POPULATION MOVEMENT ON THE CHANGE OF REGIONAL ECONOMY PATTERN

Population movement from the eastern region to the western region, certainly has a significant influence on the industrial pattern and regional division in these two types of Belt. The mechanism in motion for several years shows such a result.

1. The Rationalization of Inner Regional Industrial Structure

As discussed above the dual feature of industrial structure is obvious, the middle industry is too weak, and there are traditional thought of despising trade and handicraft in

the western region, thus it become more difficult for the western region to fill up and fill a vacancy of the middle industry. Under this back ground, westward population movement can coincide with the relatively separated relationship between cities and countryside, and gradually disintegrate the relatively obvious dual economic structure, thereby complete the change from natural economy to commodity economy and from lower industrial structure to higher industrial structure.

On the other hand, the eastern region is economic and cultural centers of China. Due to the higher economic development degree and cultural levels, there were relatively developed agricultural, industry and business bases before modern industry was plunged, especially cultural qualities of population can more powerfully support and digest modern industry. Through forty-years development since liberation, some cities have entered spreading development stages, thus the middle industry have been rapidly developed, which is one of the main economy features. When the middle industry developed to certain stage, many inner-regional skillful craftsmen are possible to collide at the same level of industries, thus westward population movement become a strong lever for the rationality of industry structure in the eastern region.

In other words, Eastern or the western region form respectively different strictures, of traditional industries, middle industry and modern industry, which is relatively "the ends are small, the middle is big" or "the ends are big, the middle is small". Population movement can help to change this phenomenon, the eastern region and the western region can complement each other on the basis of mutual needs, thus inner-regional industry division is more many-sided and rational. Moreover, the value of westward population movement is far more than that. In recent years, the phenomenon of labourer's shortage has appeared in many areas in the eastern region. For instance, the southern Jiangsu Province, according to rough estimate, is short of about 85,000 laborers. Some heavy manual work, such as construction of a river, excavation of a pond, brick-tile industries and other works of simple skill and lower income, have begun to recruit laborers from extra-regions such as the northern Jiangsu Province. At the same time, the southern Jiangsu Province is still one of the areas where there exists the most amount of population movement. Therefore, this region, in fact, exchange extra-regional people moving into it for inner-regional people of relatively higher quality out of it. Thus inner-regional industrial structure and labourer structure are more rational and higher.

2. The Swapping of Brief Productive Forces Elements and the Formation of New Regional Division Pattern

Due to the fact that the eastern region and the western region are in different developing stages, they are greatly different in the need level and speciality of qualified personnel. At present, skillful craftsmen are needed most in the western region, thus there happened the exchange of primary qualified personnel consisting briefly of peasants in the

eastern region with high level qualified personnel consisting of graduates in the western region. In 1982-1986, there were about 30,000 scientific and technical qualified personnel of graduates outflowing eastward. This type of population movement is combined with development trends of present rural economy to form a new regional division pattern, excluding traditional division of agriculture and animal husbandry and modern industry division.

At present, the rural development in the western region is much slower than that in the eastern region, but the industrialization process consisting of family-run factories and combined family-run ones have begun to advance rapidly. In 1978-1986, its industrial output value had increased from about zero to 11,225 million yuan. Because the western region is in the original development stage, it is in urgent need of technology radiation to the western region from the eastern region with many radiation sources. The rural industries in the eastern region just meet this need. This process is in progress by the medium of westward population movement. One way is that they directly join and guide, for example, Zhangjiagang City, Jiangsu Province, by the end of 1986, had set up 12 branch factories, the other way is that westward population movement provides information and technologies, etc., causing rapid exchange of economy and technology between the eastern region and the western region, such as Wenzhou district, Zhejiang Province. Thereby, after the village industry in the western region was brought into the inner-regional urban-village industrial system, it began to be brought into another rural industrial system taking village industry in the eastern region and the western region as the key, forming another national eastern-western regional division pattern. This division creates markets and needs for the eastern region, and rapid growth process of commodity markets for the western region, rapidly advancing the process of rural industrialization.

Furthermore, this new regional division pattern will gradually evolve towards higher stage along with regular population movement. The reason is that people's quality and thought will improve relevantly in the commodity economy in the western region, and the skills of people moving westward is necessarily digested and accepted, thus the present phenomenon of middle industry shortage will be put right fundamentally. This seems to cut off the means of livelihood of these people moving westward, but it is just those moving westward not migrating or settling down people who bring the benefit for the western region. That is to say, after these traditional industries are replaced, there will appear new higher level shortage of industry structure, thus new professional needs will produce for the eastern region, the latter people moving westward may have features of higher technology level, as a result, the exchange of economic relationship and regional division pattern caused by the means of population movement in the eastern region and the western region, advances towards higher economic level, and enters new economic growth stage.

Actually, the above analyses have explained the reasons why migrating westward and settling down are difficult to get the desired result. Migration has the feature of relative fixed technology level and occupations. If persons with high level technology migrate, be-

cause they differ in technology needs of the western regional, they are difficult to give their effects; if persons with middle and low technology migrate, they will gradually lower their effects along with economic development or the lapse of time, thus they will be in a dilemma. It is possibly a more essential reason why migration policy is difficult to carry out except for traditional mentality which isn't willing to migrate.

3. Another Compensated Profit Mechanism

Dissecting from profit transmission, it will be more helpful to understand all-sidedly the significance of population movement for regional division pattern's rationalization. We ought to say that several hundred thousands people in the eastern region move to the western region every year, it not only relaxes the inner-regional population pressure, but also gets great economic benefit. In other words, owing to that there is economic deference between the eastern region and the western region, there exists originally spontaneous Matthew effect, which is intensified by population movement. However, it isn't such simple,

When discussing economic relationship between the eastern region and the western region, it incisively declared that a compensated profit mechanism is concealed in it.^[3] That is to say, the profit, which is transferred by nation from the eastern region to the western region each year, is compensated sufficiently by the means of the profit earned by the latter buying goods from the former, thus there emerges a tragic phenomenon of Matthew effect, the more the nation finance extracts from the eastern region, the more the western region gets, the stronger the purchasing power of the western region, the more the profit of the eastern region, and the more the nation can extract profit from the eastern region.

Great income of the eastern region, which is earned through people moving westward, we ought to say, is another kind of compensated profit mechanism. That is to say, the more the nation finance extract from the eastern region, the more the western region gets, the greater the appeal of westward population movement for the eastern region, the more the eastern region earns compensated profit, thus the mechanism of Matthew effect begin to start. Therefore, westward population movement undoubtedly favors the eastern region only from the consideration of economic income. This result causes the economic relationship to be more lopsided, which is originally unequal in the eastern region and the western region, and the exposed Matthew effect is much stronger, and difference of inter province is enlarged, thus inter-regional economy relationship shows much more hierarchies and obvious stage difference.

Though the influence of westward population movement on economic relationship of the eastern region and the western region produce the same compensated profit mechanism,^[3] the results are fully different. On the one hand the western region weakens the independence of its own industry structure and depends greatly on the eastern region, damaging their economic benefit. On the other hand not only the eastern region gains bene-

fit, but also the western region gets the remodeling and filling of its own industrial structure and economic mechanism. In other words, finance, which is transferred from the eastern region to the western region, produce the former irrational compensated profit mechanism at the price of industry structure becoming weak, by the medium of westward population movement, also produce another rational compensated profit mechanism taking industry structure strengthening as a result. Thereby, with the lapse of time, because the renewal of thought and raising of knowledge in the western region, the former mechanism will gradually become weak, the latter one will gradually strengthened, thus it lead to weaken the function of blood transfusion and strengthen the function of blood making. We ought to say, the value of westward population movement is great for the western region.

III. CREATING GOOD CONDITION FOR POPULATION MOVEMENT

As westward population movement favors the change of regional economy pattern, especially for the economic development in backward the western region, it is obviously important to create a good condition for population movement.

1. Setting Up a Good Condition for Population Movement

Good condition of population movement includes many contents, the first is nation's policies and laws allowing and understanding degree of population movement, the second is the changing of mentality consciousness and thought of persons. For small retailers, builders, five types of craftsmen, purchasing agents, salesmen, we should see their negative effects of strengthening traffic pressure, but also see their great and positive effects for economic development, division and coordination of the eastern region and western Belt.

Besides, the policies of encouraging population movement should be formulated respectively in the eastern region or the western region. For the eastern region, population movement should be taken as an effective measure for adding regional economic income, raising and rationalizing the transfer capacity of industry structure. Therefore, on the one hand, the eastern region should provide convenient and favorable treatments on tax revenue, traffic and public opinion, etc., on the other hand, through guidance, the people moving westward in spontaneous state are centralized relatively, so as to decrease unnecessary internal conflict, and increase inner-regional division and coordination, transferring the population movement towards higher organization forms.

For the western region, its focal point of work is to provide convenient and favorable treatments of lodgement, traffic, formalities, tax revenue, etc., for moving people, meanwhile, to conduct necessary propaganda and organization to let local inhabitants understand fully the effect and function of these westward moving people, and make some of them learn and be engaged in these professions, which can fill up rapidly the present shortage of industry structure, and complete the transformation from natural economy to com-

modity economy, so as to raise the levels of westward moving people gradually, resulting in a good circle of the change of regional economy pattern in the eastern region and the western region by the medium of westward moving people.

2. Giving the Quantitative Value of Population Movement of Different Regions and of Different Moving Orientation through General Survey

The feature of population movement of different regions and moving orientation is blank in usual statistic data in China, this paper only give rough and incomplete statistic figures and typical investigation data. Because exhaustive and dynamic analyses must be built upon the basis of quantitative figures, the depth of the paper and some important views to be drawn are limited greatly.

As is known to all, the nature division and agriculture division are a success, there are many reasons, but the most important one is the overall general survey of resources and factors, thus we know the real situation of our country, then all dynamic views are built on the basis of full and accurate data. Thereby, since population movement has a great and good influence on regional economic pattern, we suggest that a special government organization for general survey of total volume and moving orientation of population movement be set up, so that this research will have enough scientific bases, and research views of regional development will be more many-sided.

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