

Population migration in the Russian Far East in the 1860s

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Abstract

Demographic studies can be categorized on the basis of demographic variables into studies of fertility, mortality, population migration, population structure, population distribution, population quality, and marriage and family in demography, while migration, along with births and deaths, determines the size of the population and its growth rate in the region, as well as determining the demographic characteristics of the region. The most important demographic problem of the Russian Far East is migration, which consists in the movement of people from the countryside to the towns, from one region of the country to another, from one's own country to another. The past era could well be called the 'age of migration'. Migration is often the result of economic and social development, which can contribute to the improvement of economic and social conditions or, on the contrary, lead to economic stagnation and social imbalances.

Keywords:

Russia, Russian Far East, migration, reform of serfdom, demography

As the largest country in the world in terms of territory, the study of demographic problems in Russia is of great strategic importance. In the economic development of the country, population is an important driver of economic development. The quantity and quality of the labor force directly affects the country's productivity and economic growth. Population growth can bring more labor resources. In the social aspect: population structure (e.g. age, gender, race, etc.) affects the stability and development of society. Countries with a high proportion of young population may face pressure on education and employment, while aging countries may face pension and healthcare challenges. Culturally: Population diversity can enrich a country's culture and foster innovation and creativity. However, cultural diversity can also pose challenges in terms of social cohesion and identity. Politically: Population size and structure can influence a country's political power and international standing. Demographic research provides basic data and analytical support for the development of effective public policies, helping governments

Миграция населения на Дальнем Востоке России в 1860-е годы

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Аннотация

Демографические исследования можно разделить на основе демографических переменных на исследования рождаемости, смертности, миграции населения, структуры населения, распределения населения, качества населения, брака и семьи в демографии, в то время как миграция, наряду с рождаемостью и смертностью, определяет численность населения и темпы его прироста в регионе, а также демографические характеристики региона. Важнейшей демографической проблемой российского Дальнего Востока является миграция, заключающаяся в перемещении людей из деревни в город, из одного региона страны в другой, из своей страны в другую. Прошедшую эпоху вполне можно назвать «веком миграции». Миграция часто является результатом экономического и социального развития, которое может способствовать улучшению экономических и социальных условий или, напротив, приводить к экономической стагнации и социальным диспропорциям.

Ключевые слова:

Россия, русский Дальний Восток, миграция, реформа крепостного права, демография

to make informed decisions in areas such as education, health, housing and transport. After the serfdom reform of 1861, a new chapter of migration began in the Far East, which entered a period of rapid development. Therefore, this paper is a study of the reasons why a new phase of migration from the Far East began in this period and the Russian aspects of this phase. [1, p.18]

In the mid-to-late nineteenth century, the Russian Empire undertook a series of population transfers across its vast territory, a phenomenon that had a profound impact on the course of history in the Far East. The Far East, as the eastern frontier of the Russian Empire, gradually became an emerging destination for inland migration, which not only changed the social structure and economic patterns of the region, but also had a significant impact on regional politics.

Firstly, the administrative division of the Russian Far East refers to the Far Eastern Federal District, one of the eight federal districts of Russia, which differed from the adminis-

trative bodies of the Russian Far East during the Tsarist and Soviet periods and from those of the present-day Russian Far East. Geographically, the Russian Far East refers to the area east of Siberia to the Pacific coast. The Russian Far East in the mid-to-late 19th century, during the period of Tsarist Russia, consisted of the following key areas: Trans-Manchuria, Vladivostok, Sakhalin Island, Kamchatka Peninsula, and Chukotka Peninsula. [1, p.21]

Secondly, it is necessary to explore the context of the migration of people from the Russian Far East in the mid-to-late nineteenth century, a period of social, economic, and political upheaval in Russia. The geopolitical and economic value of the Far East was of increasing interest to the imperial authorities as the Russian Empire's focus on the development of the Far East grew. After the defeat in the Crimean War, Russia became more aware of the strategic importance of the Far East and increased its control and development of the region.

In 1856 Russia forced the Qing government to sign the Treaty of Aigun, acquiring the land north of the Heilongjiang River and south of the Outer Xingan Mountains. This area included today's Amur Oblast and part of the Khabarovsk Krai. This was followed in 1860 by the Treaty of Beijing with the Qing government, which further acquired the area east of the Ussuri River where Vladivostok (Vladivostok) was located. This area included today's Primorsky Krai and part of the Khabarovsk Krai. [2, p.1]

After the defeat in the Crimean War, Russia recognized its weakening power, and with the land it had received from the Qing Dynasty and the large amount of resources to be exploited in Siberia and the Far East, Russia began to look to the east, and from then on the strategy of 'looking east' and the policy of moving the population to the Far East was gradually introduced. From the signing of the two treaties until the first Russian census in 1897, this was the initial stage of the Far East migration.

In 1861, Tsarist Russia issued the Decree on Emigration from Amur and Primorsky Oblasts. The decree stipulated that people in the Amur and Primorsky Oblasts, whether Russians or foreigners, who voluntarily settled here could be allocated 100 acres of land or more per household, and that if they wanted to buy state-owned land for their own use, they could turn their land into private property by contributing 3 rubles per acre. Foreign settlers were allowed to use their allotted land for 20 years without compensation, and foreign settlers who financed their own migration were exempted from military service for 10 times and from paying poll tax for life. At the same time, Russians and expatriates with a certain amount of property were encouraged to settle in the cities of the Amur and Primorsky oblasts. [2, p.1]

One of the main reasons why this policy was not introduced until 1861 was the restrictions imposed by the Russian serfdom system. Before the serfdom reform, the serfs had a strong personal relationship with the landowners and were not free to travel to other regions. It was not until after the abolition of serfdom in 1861 that Russia enacted a policy to encourage emigration to the Far East, but at the initial stage

of its enactment, Russia prohibited its own emigrants from migrating to the Far East, and in order to protect the interests of the landowning classes, the freedom of the peasants was still subjected to certain limitations for a period of time after the abolition of serfdom; moreover, the large-scale and long-distance movement of population before the industrialization of Russia was also limited by the level of the economy. In addition, large-scale, long-distance migration was also limited by the economic level before Russian industrialization. As a result, during this period 'Russian emigration was loose and mainly confined to the Euro-Russian area, and large-scale emigration had not yet developed to the east of the Urals'. Emigration from the Far East in this period was more foreign. [3, p.2]

Due to the poor domestic migration policy of the Russian authorities before the 1880s and the fact that the migration policy was also a strong temptation for foreigners, the number of Chinese migrants to the Far East in this period was quite objective. At the same time, due to the unpromising situation on the Korean Peninsula, a considerable number of Koreans also travelled to the Far East during this period. Seasonal laborers were the main component of Chinese immigrants, and most of them were engaged in construction, coal mining, gold panning, shipping, and so on. [3, p.4]

The arrival of these foreign immigrants contributed significantly to the economic and social development of the Far East, and most of them worked as laborers, building the region in various fields and contributing significantly to the construction and development of the Far East. The migration of people had a significant impact on the economic and social structure of the Far East. The new migrants brought with them labor and introduced new agricultural technologies and production methods. They played a key role in developing land, building infrastructure and opening factories, which in the long run contributed to the modernization of agriculture and industrialization of the region. At the same time, migration brought about multicultural exchanges, making the Far East a multi-ethnic coexisting community, and this diversity contributed to cultural integration and innovation. [8, p.2]

After the implementation of the eastern migration policy by the Russian government, the population of the Far East grew, and the increase in agricultural migration contributed to the development of agriculture in the Far East. However, it should be recognized that the migration to the East during the Tsarist period was somewhat spontaneous, and the government's control and policy constraints on migration were weak, and there were many problems in the process of formulating, implementing and monitoring migration policies. In terms of the number of immigrants, the population change in the Far East during the Tsarist period was dominated by the mechanical growth of the population, which was basically in the state of net inflow of population, but the development of the process and scale of immigration in the Far East was lower than that in other regions of Russia. [4, p.1]

In terms of the nature of migration, migration from the Far East during the Tsarist period included agricultural, industrial and military migrants, as well as prisoners. Initially, the Far East, like Siberia, was used by the Russian government as a punishment ground for exiling criminals and opposition forces. In the early period of emigration, agricultural emigration was the main focus, and the economic system of Tsarist Russia was still based on an agricultural economy, and the development of the Far East led by the Russian government was based on agricultural development, so the expansion of the population of the Far East was mainly due to the supply of labor in agriculture, and the development of the region's economy was mainly in the primary sector, with a relative lag in the development of industrialization.[5, p87.]

During the period 1861-1881, most of the immigrants to the Far East mainly migrated by land. Most of the immigrants who went to the Far East during this period arrived in the Far East by water from Transbaikalia along the Amur River, so most of them chose to settle in the Amur Region, and Blagoveshchensk gradually developed into the largest city in the Far East at that time. [7, p.2]

There is also the very important issue that the mass migration of people to the Far East not only caused huge changes in the local economy, society and culture, but also played a huge role for Russia on a political level.

Firstly, the mass migration of people from the Far East can be traced back to the strategic need of the Russian Empire to expand into the region. In the mid-nineteenth century, Russia was at the height of its imperial expansion, and it sought new territories for more resources and geopolitical advantages. At this time, the Far East was considered a strategic location, not only because of its rich natural resources, but also because it was an important gateway for Russia to the Pacific Ocean. However, the Russian Far East, which is two-thirds the size of China and home to only a few hundred thousand people, also needed to be relocated in large numbers for reasons of territorial security and to protect its borders. Through migration and settlement activities, Russia has achieved de facto control of the region. Specifically, migrants established villages and cities in the region, creating new social and economic centers, which consolidated Russia's control over the Far East and strengthened its administrative jurisdiction over the region. It further strengthened Russian rule over this frontier region. This consolidation showed its significance in later Sino-Russian relations and in diplomatic games with oth-

er neighbors. However, population migration also made the Far East a focus of great power rivalry, the Russo-Japanese War being a notable example of this. [6, p.1]

Russia needed to assert its great power status in the international arena during this period, and control of the Far East was seen as an important part of achieving this goal. In the face of the growing power of Great Britain, Japan, and other powers, Russia ensured its territorial integrity and national security by increasing its control over the population and actual governance of the Far East.

To sum up, in general, population transfer in the Russian Far East in the mid-to late nineteenth century played an important role in national politics and territorial expansion. It not only strengthened Russia's control and development of its frontier regions, but also promoted economic growth and social progress in the region.

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