

**Perspective of Modern
Employment Issue**

当代 就业

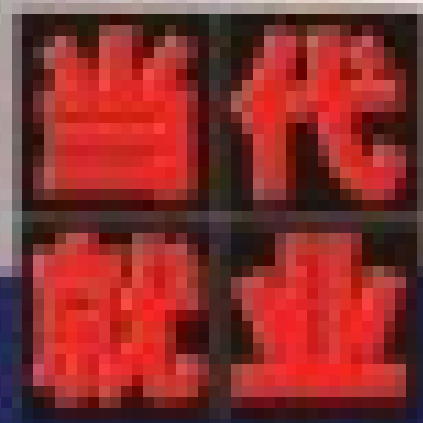
◎ 罗润东 著

问题透视



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中国就业问题研究



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Preface

As we know, at the turn of the new century, employment institutions in many countries have met a lot of problems and needed reforms. The process began in early 1980s when employment policy met “welfare crisis” especially in Europe. By contrast, the US moved from relatively high to relatively low unemployment country during 1990s. Some researchers have found that labor market institution is the most important factor explaining the decrease of US unemployment. These findings suggest that US relative unemployment has fallen because its more flexible labor market institutions allow shocks to affect real and relative wages to a greater degree than is true in other countries. Now, researchers and policy-makers in developing countries, especially in China, are considering such serious questions: How can we reform our employment and security system so that they can increase the economic growth? How can we have a employment system of reconciling economic efficiency and social welfare in the ever-enlarging international economic competition? In a word, in the era of globalization and technological change all countries are trying to find a new model of employment institution to balance the multiple goals in their development. Under such circumstances, China should learn more from US employment institution rather than from European countries because of Chinese reform goal of reinforcing economic competitiveness, so it is necessary to conduct a

comparative study on employment institution between the US and China, which is not only beneficial to China but also to all other developing countries.

In recent years, Chinese economists have got more interests in US model because it is regarded as a more suitable or survivable one in the new century, which offers successful experience for China in dealing with the unemployment problems. The study of US employment policy in China began about many years ago, and there have so far been some books and papers on it. But it is still not enough because of the follow reason: First, the comparative perspective is insufficient, especially the impacts of institutional factors on economic growth has not been analyzed, which is very important for us to understand the US employment institution; Second, there are more descriptions, which just outline the general situations, and less in-depth analysis to explain the differences and similarities between the two countries, either theoretically or empirically; Third, most of the studies in this field have so far been in US flexible labor market, and the studies in other sub-fields, such as social security act, unemployment insurance, trade union etc. has less developed in China; Finally, most importantly, the latest development of US employment policies since the mid-1990s has not been sufficiently reflected in Chinese publications. For the above-mentioned reason, I hope to do an in-depth research on US employment institution and conduct a comparative research between the two countries.

The general goal of this visit research project is to examine US employment institution comparatively and theoretically. The research will cover a wide range of policy fields in US labor market, as well as the institutional arrangement of employment. The main development stages of the Social Security Act after 1935, especially the reform and development after the mid-1990s will be examined. The emphasis will be on the

institutional level. The most important result will be the theoretical explanations about the US employment institution and its lessons for China.

Since there are different definitions of “employment institution”, it is necessary to define it for this project. In this project, the concept of employment institution is defined as any institution, either formal or informal, which affects labor employment behavior and economic growth, such as labor market flexibility, social security laws, unemployment insurance (UI), trade union, discrimination etc are all included. According to the definition, the research on employment institution can be arranged into two levels: First, on the theoretical-level, pure economic theories which affect labor market flexibility will be discussed, such as Classical and Neo-classical employment theory, Keynesian employment theory, New-economic growth theory etc. It is not the most important part, but it is necessary for a comparative analysis; Second, on the policy level, the employment institution in US and China will be thoroughly dealt with, which mainly cover the following sub-fields: (1) Labor Market (LM): including flexibility and rigidity of LM, government regulation of LM. (2) Social Security (SS): including employment laws, unemployment compensation, unemployment insurance, etc. (3) Trade Union (TU): including the involvement of unions in wage-setting, collective bargaining and their impacts on employment rate. (4) Discrimination: including all factors that cause discrimination in labor market such as the employment opportunity for farmers especially in China (5) Mobility: labor mobility in national and international wide. Pursuing the general goal of studying US employment institution in the above-mentioned fields, different approaches will be pursued in this project. For one thing, comparative approach – US experiences will be discussed in comparing with China’s experiences to find the distinctive characteristics of the US employment institution, and to

discuss what are the lessons to China and other developing countries. For another, descriptive approach – To describe and summarize the US employment institution, especially its changes and development for the time being. Finally, policy implication approach – policy implication will be proposed for the policy-makers in China's labor market reform.

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目 录

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 第一章 导论..... | 1 |
| 第二章 劳动力就业理论与市场机制..... | 8 |
| 第一节 劳动力就业理论回顾..... | 8 |
| 第二节 劳动力市场运行机制 | 23 |
| 第三章 就业制度的内容与结构 | 41 |
| 第一节 美国的就业制度 | 41 |
| 第二节 中国的就业制度 | 56 |
| 第四章 信息社会与就业增长研究 | 69 |
| 第一节 信息社会中劳动力就业的特征 | 69 |
| 第二节 信息化对就业影响的实证分析 | 77 |
| 第三节 中国的实践 | 92 |
| 第五章 户籍制度演变与劳动力流动..... | 102 |
| 第一节 我国户籍制度的形成..... | 102 |
| 第二节 户籍制度对农业生产与劳动力 流动的影响..... | 115 |
| 第三节 城乡劳动力间的竞争性与互补性..... | 122 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| 第六章 劳动力失业类型及群体特征 | 134 |
| 第一节 经济高速增长与失业形势严峻并存..... | 134 |
| 第二节 传统的失业类型与失业新形态..... | 146 |
| 第三节 劳动力失业的群体特征..... | 158 |
| 第七章 经济增长、发展与劳动力就业 | 176 |
| 第一节 关于中国经济增长与发展的研究..... | 176 |
| 第二节 经济增长、结构升级对就业的影响..... | 190 |
| 第八章 治理我国失业问题的一些思路 | 213 |
| 第一节 对失业效应的分解..... | 213 |
| 第二节 制度创新的空间..... | 222 |
| 第三节 差别化就业政策..... | 229 |
| 第四节 技术进步的潜力..... | 235 |
| 参考文献..... | 243 |
| 后记..... | 252 |

CONTENTS

| | | |
|------------------|--|-----|
| Chapter 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| Chapter 2 | Labor Market and Employment Theories | 8 |
| I . | Employment Theories Review | 8 |
| II . | Labor Market Equilibrium | 23 |
| Chapter 3 | Employment Institution and Its Structure | 41 |
| I . | US Employment Institution | 41 |
| II . | China' s Employment Institution | 56 |
| Chapter 4 | Employment Changes in Information Age | 69 |
| I . | Characteristics of Employment in Information Society | 69 |
| II . | Impacts of Information Technology on Employment | 77 |
| III . | Case Study of China | 92 |
| Chapter 5 | Residence Registerer and Labor Mobility | 102 |
| I . | Residence Registerer Formation in China | 102 |
| II . | Impacts of Residence Registerer on Agriculture and Labor Mobility | 115 |

| | |
|--|------------|
| III. Competition and Supplement between Rural and Urban Labor | 122 |
| Chapter 6 Characteristics of China's Unemployment | 134 |
| I. Economic Growth and Unemployment Situation | 134 |
| II. Traditional and New Unemployment | 146 |
| III. Group Characteristics of Unemployment Labor | 158 |
| Chapter 7 China's Economic Development and Employment | 176 |
| I. Research on China's Economic Growth and Development | 176 |
| II. Impacts of Economy Upgrading on Employment | 190 |
| Chapter 8 Policy Implication on China's Unemployment | 213 |
| I. Defect of Unemployment Rate in describing Unemployment Effect | 213 |
| II. Reform of Employment Institution | 222 |
| III. Distinctive Employment Policies | 229 |
| IV. Job Creation from Technology Change | 235 |
| 参考文献..... | 243 |
| 后记..... | 252 |

第一章 导 论

一、失业现象的历史性

失业是就业的对称。广义地讲，就业是劳动者处于受雇状态或从事某项获取报酬的职业。因此，就业者相应地包括一切为挣工资或获取利润以及自我雇佣而工作的人。而失业者则是指这样一个劳动者群体：他们有能力并且在努力寻找工作，但却由于种种原因而得不到适当的就业机会。根据国际劳工组织（ILO）的定义，失业人员是指在某个年龄段以上，在考察期内没有工作，而又有能力工作，并且正在寻找工作的人。只有以上三个条件同时成立，才能认定一个人失业者。其中寻找工作指一个人必须采取明确的行动搜寻工作职位。这样的行动包括在就业介绍所登记，向雇主申请，在工作场所（农场、工厂、市场等）登记以及在报纸上登广告或应征广告等。衡量经济中失业现象严重程度的指标是失业率，它是失业人数占劳动力人数的比率。而劳动力人数则包括那些有工作的人和正在寻找工作的人，即就业人数与失业人数之和。虽然没有工作却又不寻找工作的人不被视为劳动力。种种现象表明，失业是劳动力供给超过需求时表现出的总量和结构失衡，这种现象并非自古就有，而是社会生产力发展到一定阶段的产物。从人类生产活动的历史看，失业是在社会分工和商品经济出现之后，尤其是在进入社会化大生产阶段以来，才逐渐出现并影响人类社会的经济活动，即失业是一个历史现象。但在前资本主义社会形态里，是不存

在大规模失业现象的。从生产关系角度看，其原因或是在于生产资料同劳动者没有分离，或是在于劳动者没有人身自由，从而使资本雇佣劳动没有成为生产要素的主要结合形式。从生产力角度考察则发现，根本的原因在于社会生产尚停留在一个较低层次，从而使劳动要素相对于土地等资源来说具有相对稀缺性。当人类社会经历资本原始积累过程进入资本主义制度后，资本雇佣劳动关系成为生产方式的主体。在技术进步的条件下，劳动要素相对于资本总量迟早要突破一个临界点，即出现相对过剩，这时失业也就会以各种显性或隐性方式表现出来。从此以后，失业也就成为与社会生产活动相伴生的重要经济现象。失业作为一个社会经济现象，不独是经济学特有的研究领域，其他社会科学也均从不同侧面对其进行过探讨。例如在失业现象爆发初期，空想社会主义者曾将它作为私有制的罪恶而猛烈抨击。但是，随着对失业问题研究的不断深入，失业现象的经济本质越发明显。马克思主义经典作家把失业归因于资本主义制度，并指出资本主义生产剩余价值这一绝对规律导致了人口生产相对过剩，从而使得失业现象不可避免，要消除失业只有从根本上消灭资本主义制度。凯恩斯主义者则认为，失业是总需求不足的产物。只要政府采取适当的干预政策，就能消除经济中的非自愿失业现象，实现充分就业的宏观目标。而货币主义的代表人物弗里德曼则提出“自然失业率”这一概念。它表明在一个经济系统中由于存在摩擦及结构等因素，如果从动态和均衡的角度看，经济中的失业率将收敛为一个正值，即自然失业率。自然失业率的存在一方面说明失业在经济系统中具有内生性质，另一方面也同时说明，任何企图彻底消灭失业的宏观经济政策都将是徒劳的。至于经济学中其他流派对失业问题的看法则更是见仁见智，不一而足。失业在不同的经济学流派中被赋予不同的含义，其原因就在于各种理论体系分别从不同的角度来阐述失业现象的本质。关于这一点，本书拟从就业的社会制度层面来研究失业，并结合中国当代失业问题的新表现探讨其相应的对策。

二、就业制度的系统性

所谓就业制度，本书的观点是，它是人们在社会生产过程中关于充分利用劳动要素（提高效率）同时尽可能保护劳动要素（抗击失业）的一切正规制度与非正规制度的总和。其中具体包括：劳动力市场运行机制、劳动法律制度、社会保障制度等。这些制度并非单独发挥作用，而是彼此密切相连，在一定社会生产方式下形成一个有机的系统。目前世界上不同国家之间在治理失业问题方面，分别有不同的措施和办法，政策的差异主要来自于不同的就业制度类型。例如欧盟各国由于历史上存在较高的社会福利，这些国家一般劳动力成本较高，有强大的工会组织，从而客观上造成这些国家存在较高的失业率。美国则与此显著不同，美国的社会保障制度主要包括社会保险、社会救助和社会福利三大部分。失业保险制度是美国职业保障体系中最早、覆盖面最广的一项社会保障措施，是美国劳动就业制度、劳动市场体系的重要组成部分，1935年的《社会保障法案》首次以联邦法律的形式将这个制度固定了下来。《社会保障法案》规定了联邦政府对失业保险的行政拨款、联邦监督、管理的职责和权限，以及各州在这个体制中的职责。美国的失业保险具有强制性，凡是符合条件的企业和个人必须参加。它虽然也有健全而发达的社会保障制度，但对就业问题没有像欧盟各国那样（尤其是北欧）实施过度的保护，从而保持了劳动力市场较强的竞争性。再例如我国，就业制度已基本从计划经济为主导的“统包统配”模式转变为市场经济为主导的劳动力市场就业模式。众所周知，在计划经济体制下，劳动力产权客体的私有性质被传统公有制的法权体系几乎“关闭”，作为劳动者自身蕴涵的劳动力资源与企业里的物质资本一并被公有化。当时从形式上个人不再拥有任何生产资料，甚至于劳动者的天赋、技能等一切具有生产性的精神存量。在企业之外，劳动者成为“纯粹的”消费者，没有使用