革命老区振兴发展的挑战、机遇与路径
——基于“5D”分析框架的视角

丁建军*

吉首大学商学院

摘　要：革命老区振兴发展对促进区域协调发展和实现共同富裕具有重要意义。在现有研究基础上，本文提出包含“密度、距离、分割、异质和数字化”的“5D”分析框架，并以此为视角分析革命老区振兴发展的挑战、机遇与路径，指出革命老区振兴发展面临的挑战是“远距离、高分割、低密度”导致的空间不经济，机遇是数字经济的快速发展与“数字化”普惠性、“红色绿色古色”等比较优势和后发优势彰显及其高“异质”潜力、多重利好优惠政策叠加及支持全面化体系化。最后，本文提出革命老区着眼“5D”发力的振兴发展路径，即提升密度，促进人口集中、产业集聚、土地集约；缩短距离，加速各种要素及人员的交流交往交融；消除分割，提升城乡区域市场一体化程度；突出差异，增强特色产业产品的不可替代性；加快数字化，发挥数字技术在降低“远距离、高分割、低密度”负面效应和放大“异质性”正面效应中的积极作用，实现虚实融合发展。

关键词：革命老区　振兴发展　5D分析框架　空间不经济

JEL 分类号：O18, P25

一、引言

革命老区是中国革命老根据地的简称，特指土地革命战争时期和抗日战争时期中国共产党领导创建的革命根据地。这一特殊类型区域，曾为中国革命的胜利作出了重要贡献，是中国共产党和中国人民解放军的根，但由于多位于省际交界区域，地形地貌复杂、山川沟壑纵横、坡度起伏较大、交通闭塞偏远，革命老区在改革开放和社会主义市场经济发展过程中逐渐落后并陷入边缘锁定，成为当前巩固脱贫攻坚成果、全面实施乡村振兴战略的难点区域和主要战场之一，如全国160个乡村振兴重点帮扶县中革命老区县数量达到69个。为了促进革命老区发展和加快全面振兴与现代化进程，党的十八大以来，我国强化了革命老区振兴发展的国家顶层设计，先后印发了《关于加大脱贫攻坚力度支持革命老区开发建设的指导意见》《国务院关于新时代支持革

* 联系人：丁建军，邮箱：latt514@163.com。

基金项目：国家自科基金课题“演化-关系视角下相对贫困连片区发展韧性及其返贫遏制机制研究”（批准号：42161033）；国家文化英才培养工程专项项目“连片欠发达地区专精特新企业成长特征、影响因素与培育对策”。

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

命老区振兴发展的意见》和《“十四五”特殊类型地区振兴发展规划》等政策文件，形成了相对系统、完整和具有针对性的“1258”政策体系和“1+N+X”政策体系，纳入国家老区发展顶层设计的重点革命老区也从5个增至12个，标志着革命老区振兴发展迈入全面建设社会主义现代化的新征程。

与此同时，革命老区振兴发展也成为学界关注的热点，学者们围绕革命老区振兴发展实践与基本公共服务短板（史婵等，2023）、乡村产业振兴的资源情境与行动逻辑（李晓园等，2022）、“红三角”内源式发展模式（黄建红，2023）、红色旅游发展与革命老区城乡收入差距（张科等，2023）、振兴政策效应与绿色发展路径（龚斌磊等，2022；杨冕等，2022），以及振兴政策促进农业增长与现代化转型（龚斌磊等，2022）、推动省界毗邻地区县域乡村振兴（姚林香、卢光熙，2023）、缩小县域城乡收入差距（刘奥、张双龙，2023）、促进经济增长与提升民生福祉水平（龚斌磊等，2022）等方面的作用进行了系列研究，为革命老区振兴发展提供了有益参考。不过，现有研究更多的是基于经济学、管理学视角评估革命老区振兴发展政策效应、红色旅游发展模式及乡村振兴路径等，对革命老区这一特殊类型区域的地理本性及其带来的振兴发展挑战、机遇及可行路径关注不够。事实上，一个区域的地理本性从根本上决定了其经济特性，进而决定了其发展路径（王铮等，2023）。革命老区集省际交界、少数民族聚居、经济欠发达、区位偏远、地形地貌复杂等特征于一体，在地理本性上与一般区域存在显著差异。因而，应用经济地理学思维深入探讨革命老区的地理本性及其对振兴发展的影响，有助于准确识别制约革命老区振兴发展的深层次根源，对巩固革命老区脱贫攻坚成效和全面推进乡村振兴有着重要的现实意义。

不同于现有研究，本文以革命老区的三重地理本性为切入点，借鉴经济地理学中的经典分析框架，结合数字经济时代的新特点，创造性地提出一个新的分析框架并据此阐释革命老区振兴发展的挑战、机遇和路径，以期为革命老区振兴发展政策规划制定和实施提供新的借鉴和参考。具体地，本文首先在《2009年世界发展报告：重塑世界经济地理》提出的“3D”（Density\Distance\Division）框架（世界银行，2009）和杨开忠（2018）提出的“4D”（Density\Distance\Division\Differentiation）框架基础上，结合数字经济发展及其极大减缓经济发展“时空约束”的时代背景，提出“5D”（Density\Distance\Division\Differentiation\Digitalization）分析框架，综合考虑密度（Density）、距离（Distance）、分割（Division）、异质（Differentiation）以及数字化（Digitalization）对经济地理空间格局经济性的影响；其次，基于“5D”维度阐释革命老区“远距离、高分割、低密度”下空间不经济性的挑战以及“数字化”普惠性、高“异质”潜力和优惠政策叠加带来的机遇；最后，提出革命老区“提升密度、缩短距离、消除分割、突出差异和加快数字化”的“5D”着力振兴发展路径。

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

二、5D:数字时代的经济地理重塑动力

新经济地理学较早关注了地理本性对区域经济发展和区域管理的重要性,指出存在引导区域演化和发展的两个地理本性,即作为第一地理本性的自然禀赋和作为第二地理本性的集聚和区位(Krugman,1993)。后来,学者们进一步将现代新经济环境下信息设施条件和人力资本等因素刻画为第三地理本性,提出了三重地理本性论(夏海斌,2013)。其中,第一地理本性考虑地球赋予人类的先天环境条件,即自然禀赋,包括自然资源丰度和自然环境性质,海拔、高程、地貌和生态条件等,是区域经济发展的基础和载体;第二地理本性是人类自身在历史发展过程中利用并构造的地理本性,是人文社会内生的,包括区位、交通等;第三地理本性是人类社会创造的,主要包括人力资本水平、信息化发展水平等。并且,随着人类文明形态由农业文明、工业文明向后工业文明的演进,三重地理本性中第二、第三本性的重要性逐步上升,第一本性的影响相对下降。

与此同时,世界银行借鉴新经济地理学思想提出了重塑世界经济地理的三种动力,即密度(Density)、距离(Distance)和分割(Division),形成了"3D"分析框架,为世界经济发展不平衡以及"中心—外围"空间格局提供了有力解释。《2009年世界发展报告:重塑世界经济地理》也因此成为众多报告中的经典,产生了深远的世界影响。杨开忠(2016,2018)在吸收"3D"分析框架精髓的基础上,结合中国经济增长奇迹和经济地理重塑过程,考虑了另一重要动力——"异质"(Differentiation),认为差异化对重塑经济地理同样具有不可忽视的作用,是地方品质或区域吸引力的重要构成要件,提出了"4D"分析框架,并据此对中国经济增长奇迹进行了经济地理学视角的解释。虽然"3D"和"4D"分析框架都关注地理本性对区域经济发展的重要性,但"3D"框架从"同质区域"假设出发,阐释了"密度"(规模经济)、"距离"(运输成本)和"分割"(垄断竞争)产生的向心力(本地市场效应、价格指数效应)与离心力(市场竞争效应)如何形塑了经济地理格局,而"4D"框架放弃了"同质区域"假设,认为区域异质性客观存在,并且"地方品质"对区域经济发展和形塑经济地理格局十分重要,进而加入"异质"以拓展"3D"框架,使其更贴近经济现实。

然而,随着数字时代的到来,数字经济迅速发展,数字产业化、产业数字化的程度不断提升,数字经济在国民经济中的占比节节升高。"数字化"(Digitalization)成为重塑经济地理的新动力,并主要通过直接和间接两条路径重塑经济地理格局。

(一)直接作用路径

数字技术以自身的网络分布和去中心化特征改变传统的要素空间组织模式,以流动空间及其跳跃性扩散扩大区域发展场域和促进区域经济一体化融合发展,改变生产、流通、消费活动形式,重塑经济地理格局。如数字平台的兴起将消费者集聚到更大的消费市场,消费者的个性化、多

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

样化偏好驱使其面向全国乃至世界市场进行搜索和交易。生产者通过接入数字化平台，利用大数据实现供需精准匹配，最大程度地满足消费者的多样化需求，以更加便捷和高效的方式嵌入全国和全球供应链网络。并且，随着数字经济与传统产业的深度融合，催生出智慧旅游、线上教育、直播带货、数字普惠金融等大量新产业、新业态、新模式，给广大中小企业和边缘区域、边缘群体带来了更大的生存空间和更多的发展机遇，加快了边缘地区的发展。

（二）间接作用路径

“数字化”通过改变区域经济活动的“密度”“距离”和“分割”状态，放大“异质”吸引力，重塑经济地理格局。一是数字技术的通达性和普惠性弱化了地理距离的制约作用，降低了交易成本（含运输成本）和信息不对称性，使各地区的经济联系变得更加紧密，从而通过缩短“距离”间接影响经济地理格局；二是“数字化”要素流动空间及其跳跃性扩散节点构成的动态关系网络突破了自然地理、行政区划等各种人文和非人文因素造成的“分割”，特别是制度性“分割”，促进区域一体化，通过降低“分割”间接影响经济地理格局；三是数字经济的规模经济、范围经济效应以及数据要素的乘数效应、边际成本低、无限共享性等特征，使得数字经济规模不同于实体经济规模受区位等生产空间的制约，扩大了区域经济发展场域，进而通过提高“密度”间接影响经济地理格局；四是“数字化”时代自媒体平台的低门槛性和信息传播的即时性、无边界、零成本特征，加上民众广泛的“猎奇”心理和多样化偏好，使得地方“异质”能被迅速关注、传播和放大，从而通过放大“异质”性间接影响经济地理格局。

可见，在数字经济时代，构建“5D”分析框架（如图1）有助于更全面地理解经济地理的重塑动力和机制。

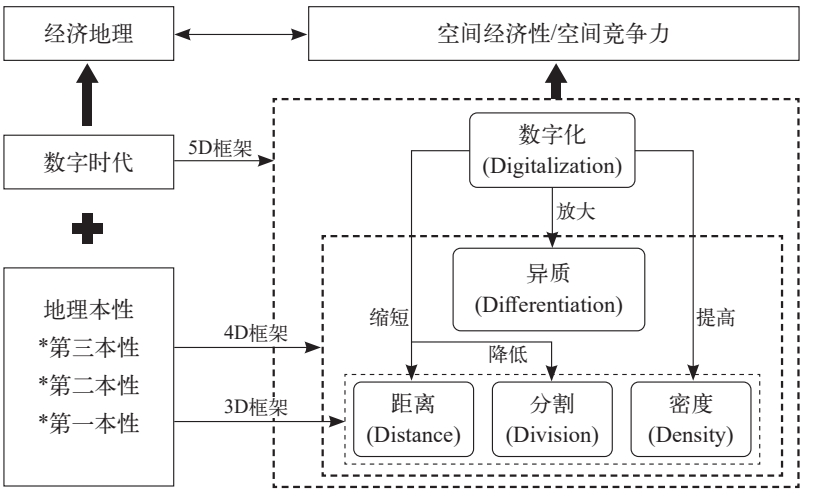

图1：数字时代经济地理重塑的5D分析框架

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

三、空间不经济：革命老区振兴发展的挑战

2021年11月，国家发展改革委公布了国务院批复的《“十四五”特殊类型地区振兴发展规划》，明确了赣闽粤、陕甘宁、大别山、川陕、左右江、湘赣边、湘鄂渝黔、海陆丰、琼崖、浙西南、沂蒙、太行等12个革命老区的规划范围。进而，革命老区的地域界定更为明确。不难发现，上述12个革命老区多位于多省交界地区，很多仍属于欠发达地区。这些区域由于特殊的自然地理条件和社会历史因素成为革命时期党和人民军队生存发展的“天选之地”，为革命胜利作出了重要贡献。然而，在工业化进程和社会主义市场经济条件下，这些地理本性导致的“远距离、高分割、低密度”等空间不经济制约了区域的经济发展。虽然长期以来得到相应政策扶持特别是脱贫攻坚阶段在基础设施、交通条件等方面取得了巨大成效，但空间不经济并没有发生根本性改变，仍然是革命老区振兴发展面临的主要挑战。

（一）“远距离”的空间不经济

革命老区大多位于偏远山区，距离省会城市和区域性中心城市空间距离和时间距离远，是“中心—外围”空间结构中的外围地区、边缘地区。无论是经典的区位理论还是新经济地理学均表明，距离是影响经济活动空间布局的重要因素。一般地，距离包括空间距离和时间距离。根据地理学第一定律，经济活动空间联系存在距离衰减规律，相隔较远的地区间经济联系较弱，而较近的地区间经济联系较强。以湘鄂渝黔革命老区为例，作为四省交界区域，同属武陵山脉，区域内各县市区离省会城市（中心城区）长沙、武汉、重庆主城区、贵阳的交通距离均在300公里左右，即便在有高铁站点的县市区，时间距离也在2小时以上。虽然相较于高铁、高速公路开通之前，时间距离已经极大缩短，但与中心城市等经济中心的联系成本仍然相对较高，经济联系较弱。与此同时，由于千沟万壑、山谷河川纵横的山区地形地貌特征，区域内部各居民点、城镇之间的距离也不近，“看得见走半天”“五里不同音”是常态，区域内部之间的人员交往、经济联系成本也不低。可见，“远距离”仍然是革命老区空间不经济的重要原因之一。

（二）“高分割”的空间不经济

革命老区也多为省际交界区域，地理障碍和行政分割及其引起的制度分割、市场分割等“高分割”是该类区域的又一典型特征。作为行政建制历史悠久的国家，行政区划更为突出地遵循“山川形便”原则（周振鹤，2013），地区之间往往以山脉和河流等作为划界的重要依据，这种天然的地理障碍导致地理条件不佳，进而难以与外界以及相互之间形成有效的商品贸易，不利于经济发展，特别是现代工业和服务业的发展。与此同时，行政分割进一步放大了地理障碍带来的不利影

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

响。一方面，地方行政区之间存在激烈的竞争关系，特别是在GDP锦标赛制的驱动下，地方政府之间围绕经济增长展开竞争（周黎安，2007）。为了经济增长在周边不同行政区之中有相对更好的排位，地方政府有很强的发展本地区基础设施、开发产业的意愿，但又不希望这些基础设施和产业给本行政区之外的其他地区经济发展带去溢出效应，出于对这一正外部性的防范，省际交界地区各省市都倾向于在基础设施建设、生产要素开发、物流体系构建方面实施“背靠背”发展模式，减少在边界地区的资源投放，使边界地区成为投资和经济活动的“洼地”（唐为，2021）。另一方面，行政区之间的竞争也导致严重的地方保护主义倾向，在边界处形成一堵堵“无形的高墙”，进一步引发制度分割、市场分割，增加地区间贸易的交易成本，产生了显著的边界效应（陆铭、陈钊，2009；唐为，2021），使原本有限的市场规模更加“破碎”和“分散”。因而，“高分割”加剧了革命老区的空间不经济。

（三）“低密度”的空间不经济

经济密度既是区域经济发展的“因”，又是区域经济发展的“果”，并且是空间经济性的重要表征。一般而言，经济密度高的地区，空间经济性也更强。革命老区无论是自然地理条件等第一地理本性，还是区位、交通、人力资本、信息化等第二、第三地理本性，都制约着经济密度的提升，从而导致空间不经济。首先，山区地形地貌使得居住更为分散，人口密度低，市场规模小，市场主体数量少、规模小，经济活动无法跨越自我良性发展的“临界点”，陷入“低水平均衡”陷阱。如作为湘鄂西、湘鄂川黔两大根据地核心组成部分的恩施州，2022年被确立为全国20个重点革命老区城市之一，该州常住人口340万人，人口密度为142人/平方公里，单位国土面积实现GDP为584.3万元/平方公里，人均GDP为41248元，位于20个革命老区重点城市经济发展排名的中下游。[①]人口和经济的“低密度”严重制约了规模经济效应和集聚经济效应的发挥，使得区域经济缺乏竞争力和自我发展能力。其次，革命老区的“远距离”“高分割”进一步加剧了“低密度”。一方面，“远距离”使得区域内人口净流出，而且主要是具有更高人力资本的劳动力净流出，使得区域内人口密度降低、劳动力减少，而留守的“老弱病残”群体多为弱质劳动力，生产效率更低，土地等生产要素因无人开发利用而闲置，经济密度进一步降低；另一方面，“高分割”导致市场破碎、分散，市场规模受限，无法吸引外部要素和投资进入，大量有开发价值的特色资源（如红色旅游资源、绿色生态资源、古色文化资源等）得不到有效开发，难以借助外部资源提升经济密度。最后，“低密度”会形成马太效应，使革命老区锁定在“低密度陷阱”和空间不经济状态。

① 恩施州统计局.恩施州与全国20个革命老区重点城市经济发展对比分析及启示[O/L].(2023-07-25)[2024-01-20].http://www.xianfeng.gov.cn/xxgk/dfbmptlj/xiangz/qjz/fdzdgknr/tjxx/202310/t20231022_1491969.shtml.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

四、天时地利人和：革命老区振兴发展的机遇

天生我材必有用。这不仅适用于个人的发展，同样适用于区域的发展。比较优势理论和区域发展历史表明，一些地理本性相对较差的区域可以成功逆袭，并且，在三重地理本性中，第一、第二、第三地理本性对区域经济发展的决定性影响程度伴随农业文明、工业文明和生态文明的演进而发生变化，第二、第三地理本性的重要性越来越高。特别是数字经济的发展，极大地缓解了第一地理本性的不利影响。随着我国进入高质量和共同富裕发展阶段，生态文明建设、全面推进乡村振兴、数字中国建设、革命老区振兴发展等为革命老区这一特殊类型区域振兴发展创造了重要的机会窗口，可谓“天时地利人和”，振兴发展正当时。

（一）天时：数字经济快速发展及“数字化”的普惠性

数字技术的广泛应用和人工智能的快速发展标志着数智时代的到来，数字经济已成为国民经济的重要构成和新的增长动力，数字产业化、产业数字化相互促进，正在加速改变传统的经济模式（陈晓红等，2022）。借助在数据处理、信息传输、资源配置上的天然优势，数字经济从便利消费（易行健、周利，2018）、促进创新创业（谢绚丽等，2018）、提高生产率（黄群慧等，2019）、促进包容性增长（张勋等，2019）和缩小数字鸿沟（张勋等，2021）等方面深刻影响着整个社会经济发展。对于作为边缘地区的革命老区而言，除了上述一般性影响以外，还在克服地理障碍、行政分割和市场分散等导致的“远距离、高分割和低密度”方面产生了颠覆性影响。首先，数字经济中的数字化技术具有极强的地理穿透性，能够克服偏远、山区等区位和地理条件劣势的制约，降低贸易成本，使得中心地区的企业能在可接受的成本下覆盖之前在地理空间上难以到达或不愿到达的市场区域，同时使得边缘地区的市场主体（企业、农户、新型农村经营主体）能够借助互联网技术服务中心地区的市场和客户扩大市场潜能，进而使得革命老区获得比传统经济模式下相对更多的发展资源，加快经济发展。其次，数字经济的网络化特征也决定了其具有显著的跨行政区划、跨地域等跨边界性，为地处省际边界区域的革命老区带来新的发展机遇。随着数字化技术渗透到各行各业，一些商品交易和服务的半径突破了行政区划和地域的限制，使本地保护主义和行政分割的难度显著增大，异地网购日趋普遍，促进了地区间的经济往来。并且，互联网广告和抖音、快手等大众平台带货直播也弱化了各地对线下广告的规制效果，降低了广告成本，使得原本“藏在深闺人未识”的特色产品、民俗文化等为人所知，创造出大量跨区域的新需求。此外，数字经济创造了大量包容性的就业岗位和远程工作机会，为边缘地区、弱势群体提供了多样化、平等参与的就业和创业机会。如快递员、外卖骑手、网红、直播带货、开网店、办民宿等低门槛的灵活非农经济活动，为革命老区普通民众参与非农经济、挖掘和利用本土资源、实现产业化开发、提升经济密度创造了条件。

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

（二）地利：比较和后发优势彰显及其高“异质”潜力

革命老区特殊的地理本性在革命年代具有保存和壮大革命队伍的比较优势，为革命胜利作出了重要贡献。虽然在工业化进程中，这一比较优势变成了劣势，阻碍了经济的发展，但进入后工业化时期和生态文明阶段后，这种地理本性又将演变为比较优势和后发优势，成为革命老区振兴发展的地利条件。其中，革命老区的比较优势表现在绿色优势、红色优势和古色优势三个方面。绿色优势方面，革命老区由于偏远和山区特征，是工业化进程中的外围地区，没有或较少受到工业化的污染，并且随着外出务工潮的涌现，大量本地居民“离土离乡”进入东部沿海、省会城市等发达地区务工，极大地减轻了土地等生态资源的承载压力，使革命老区的生态环境得到了极大的保护和修复，随处可见的“绿水青山”成为在钢筋混凝土中奔波的“城里人”眼中的“诗和远方”，具有非常大的吸引力。他们既期待能在这样的环境中回归自然、亲近自然、解渴乡愁，又对这种“绿水青山”中自然生长出来的无激素、无公害、纯天然的绿色食品更为偏好，愿意为这些产品支付更高的价格。并且，随着人们环保意识、绿色偏好的增强，革命老区的绿色优势就越发凸显。红色优势方面，革命老区当仁不让。每个革命老区，每块革命根据地，都有丰富的红色故事，保留了不少红色遗迹。随着近年来红色旅游的兴起，各革命老区更是进一步挖掘和整合了潜在的红色资源，强化和彰显了红色优势。古色优势方面，革命老区不仅多为山区、省际边界区，还是少数民族集聚区、多民族杂居区，少数民族传统文化保护和传承较好，多姿多彩的民族文化风情、多元的民族习俗和丰富的非物质文化遗产是生态文化旅游的资源宝库，为革命老区生态文化旅游、乡村旅游和红色旅游的融合发展提供了坚实的资源基础。此外，革命老区作为后发地区还具有明显的后发优势，既可借鉴先发地区经济发展中园区建设、增长极带动、城乡统筹发展的典型经验，又可汲取先污染后治理、高投入低产出、高能耗低效率粗放式发展模式的教训，还可以直接分享先发地区技术溢出、制度溢出的红利等，助力革命老区走“绿水青山就是金山银山”的绿色、可持续高质量发展道路。

（三）人和：多重利好优惠政策叠加及支持全面化体系化

革命老区作为为中国革命事业作出过重要贡献的特殊类型区域，在新中国成立70多年的历史进程中，始终是党和国家关注的重点区域。党的十八大以前，我国先后出台了《关于加强老根据地工作的指示》《关于免征革命老根据地社队企业工商所得税问题的通知》等专门政策和《支援经济不发达地区发展资金管理办法》等一般性支持政策，但总体而言相对零散，尚未形成一套独立的政策体系，缺乏专门针对革命老区振兴发展的顶层设计和系统性政策支持（韩广富、刘心蕊，2019）。党的十八大以后，革命老区振兴发展政策支持力度持续加大。2012年，《国务院关于支持赣南等原中央苏区振兴发展的若干意见》的颁布标志着革命老区振兴发展政策正式迈向了系统性、

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

独立性阶段。2012~2016 年,《陕甘宁革命老区振兴规划》《赣闽粤原中央苏区振兴发展规划》《大别山革命老区振兴发展规划》《左右江革命老区振兴规划》《川陕革命老区振兴发展规划》相继出台,国家支持革命老区振兴发展的“1258”政策体系全面形成。2021年初,《国务院关于新时代支持革命老区振兴发展的意见》颁布,在继续对上一阶段5个重点革命老区进一步部署的同时,也对海陆丰、湘鄂渝黔、太行、沂蒙、浙西南、琼崖、湘赣边等其他革命老区提出了明确的政策部署,纳入国家老区发展顶层设计的重点革命老区从5个增至12个,革命老区振兴发展迈入全面建设社会主义现代化的新征程。与此同时,形成了新的“1+N+X”政策体系。“1”即《国务院关于新时代支持革命老区振兴发展的意见》,提出了新时代支持革命老区振兴发展的总体要求和路线方针;“N”即支持革命老区振兴的“N”项实施方案,包括《“十四五”特殊类型地区振兴发展规划》和《“十四五”支持革命老区巩固拓展脱贫攻坚成果衔接推进乡村振兴实施方案》等在内的有关革命老区巩固拓展脱贫攻坚成果、基础设施建设、生态环境保护修复、红色旅游发展等多个领域的实施方案;“X”即支持革命老区振兴的“X”项专项政策,包括中央国家机关及有关单位对革命老区的对口支援方案、以各部委牵头实施的部委级老区支持政策、旨在针对部分发展较好的革命老区发挥示范效应的建设方案以及对老区的转移支付等。此外,各地还制定了适应本地老区发展的政策,颁布了新时代支持革命老区振兴发展的地区性实施意见或方案以及革命老区的“十四五”发展地方性规划。再加上乡村振兴战略、数字中国建设、红色旅游发展和生态文明建设等全国性政策的利好影响,革命老区迎来了振兴发展的多重利好优惠政策叠加和支持全面化体系化机遇。

五、着眼“5D”发力:革命老区振兴发展的路径

发挥比较和后发优势,抢抓区域机会窗口,突围空间不经济,融入区域、国家以及全球生产网络,实现比较优势、后发优势向竞争优势转化并持续动态升级是革命老区振兴发展的不二选择。因而,革命老区要着眼“5D”发力,善作善为,切实提升地方品质和空间竞争力,最终实现可持续的内生发展。

(一)提升“密度”(Density),促进集中集聚集约

“低密度”是革命老区经济社会发展的突出特征之一,也是其市场潜力和经济集聚力提升的重要掣肘。并且,在“低密度—低市场潜力—低集聚力—要素净流出—低密度”的市场逻辑下,革命老区难以走出“低密度陷阱”。因而,在现有的条件下,通过优化空间格局提升“密度”应成为革命老区振兴发展的战略选项。

一是促进人口集中。有人的地方就有市场,人口越密集的地方社会分工越深化、市场需求和

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

交易越稠密，二、三产业发展的空间越大，所创造的就业岗位越多，越能吸引更多的人口集聚。因而，革命老区要以全国20个重点革命老区城市为增长极，以县域新型城镇化为抓手，加快县城、中心镇和中心村的一体化建设，引导人口向这些不同层级的“中心点”上集中，提升人口密度。

二是促进产业集聚。革命老区二、三产业占比不高，“散乱差”现象仍比较突出，不仅缺乏竞争力，而且与“两山”理论和绿色发展的要求不相符。因而，革命老区要引导产业进园区，大力发展园区经济、飞地经济，培育专精特新中小企业，鼓励和通过机制创新促进相邻地区共建产业园区，减少园区数量，提升园区级别，增强产业园区集聚力，提升产业和企业密度。

三是促进土地集约。革命老区一方面人口分布分散、“地多人少”，另一方面土地多为“九山一分田”，再加上地形地貌复杂，土地资源的利用和产出效率不高，制约了经济发展。因而，革命老区要加快土地三权分置、集体土地入市等改革，促进土地流转，优化营商环境，引进和培育新型农业经营主体，促进特色农业适度规模经营。同时，要充分发挥绿色、红色和古色资源优势，创新三产融合发展模式，实现红色旅游、生态文化旅游和特色农业的集约融合发展，提升产出密度。

总之，革命老区要通过打好“人口集中、产业集聚和土地集约”的组合拳，切实提升人口、企业和产出密度以及市场潜力，增强集聚力，跨越可持续内生发展门槛。

（二）缩短“距离”（Distance），加速交流交往交融

在持续的政策支持下，特别是党的十八大和脱贫攻坚阶段以来，革命老区的基础设施建设取得了巨大成就，交通设施条件得到了极大改善。地理距离和时间距离显著缩短，但仍然在地区中心城市、省会城市的2~3小时圈之外，相对劣势仍然突出。革命老区要继续在缩短“距离”加速交流交往交融方面下功夫、出新招。

一是继续缩短地理距离。通过机场、高铁、高速以及高等级公路有机组合的交通设施网络建设和完善进一步缩短地理距离。外部通道建设上，要积极对接国家高铁主干线，衔接国家重要民航枢纽，以高铁和航空等快速交通方式拉近革命老区与中心城市、省会城市的地理距离。内部通道建设上，要发挥高速和高等级公路的联通作用，使革命老区内部重点城市、县城、中心镇和中心村之间实现快速通勤，缩短各中心节点、居民集聚点之间的地理距离。

二是进一步缩短时间距离。同一地理距离下不同的交通组合和衔接方式可产生不同的通勤时间。因而，要优化交通协同，提高换乘效率，缩减通勤时间。比如，在高铁站应提供多元、智能化换乘选择服务，滚动推送主要路线最佳换乘方案，为公共巴士、网约车、的士车等提供快速便捷的换乘通道。同时，还应结合革命老区红色旅游、生态文化旅游以及自驾深度游等旅游产业发展的需要，提供快速便捷的租车服务，实现线上办理手续和线下直接换乘无缝对接。

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

三是提升“时空压缩”成效。缩短时空距离不是目的，而是手段，目的是加强要素间的交流交往交融。而时空距离压缩不必然带来要素之间更紧密的联系、更高频次的互动，需要同时为促进要素流动创造条件、提供激励和配套支持，如引进全国性物流头部企业、完善冷链物流配套设施、规范透明的市场运行规则等。因而，为了更好地发挥和提升“时空距离压缩”成效，革命老区还要积极主动开放，加强宣传沟通，优化营商环境，做好配套支持，切实促进区域内外要素间的交流交往交融。

（三）消除“分割”（Division），提升一体化程度

革命老区内省际、城乡之间的设施型分割、制度型（要素和商品市场）分割较为突出，使原本受低密度、远距离影响而有限的市场潜力更是“雪上加霜”。与此同时，这种破碎化的市场分割也与全国统一大市场建设、国内国际双循环发展新格局要求不相符。因而，消除“分割”提升一体化程度是革命老区振兴发展的必然要求。

一是促进城乡融合发展，消除城乡之间的设施型和制度型分割。革命老区整体城镇化进程滞后，城镇自身发展程度不高，基本公共服务设施一般，对乡村的辐射和带动作用十分有限。同时，由于地形地貌复杂、山高路远，居民聚落分散，乡村基本公共服务设施建设难度大、成本高、数量少、质量不高，并且由于居住分散、离县城和中心镇有一定距离，乡村居民难以真正共享城镇的基础设施和公共服务，导致实质性设施型分割。此外，由于传统的城乡二元结构以及户籍制度、土地制度、就业制度等相关制度及其与之关联的公共服务、社会福利等仍存在城乡差别，城乡之间要素市场、商品市场的隐性分割不容忽视。因而，要以新型城镇化建设为抓手，促进人口集中和基础设施、公共服务均等化以消除城乡设施型分割，要深化改革和制度创新，以城乡制度趋同化、一体化消除城乡制度型分割。

二是加强跨行政区协同，消除行政区之间尤其是省际间的设施型、制度型分割。革命老区由于多为省际边界区，区域内不同行政区特别是省际间往往在基础设施规划、建设标准上缺乏协同，在政策制定和实施上也存在诸多差异。这些不协同和差异通常表现为省际边界处的“断头路”或不同的收费标准，形成了一道道有形或无形的阻隔之墙。为了消除这种跨行政区划的设施型和制度型分割，要加强跨行政区的合作与协同，构建联席会议机制，变行政区划的阻隔效应为中介效应，促进同一生活圈、统一大市场建设，扩大市场规模，提升本地市场效应。如湘鄂渝黔革命老区内龙山县和来凤县分别隶属于湖南和湖北两省，但两县毗邻，两个县城之间的直线距离在6公里左右，号称中国最邻近的两个县城。然而，长期以来两县不通公交车、两地商品和服务贸易存在地方保护等制约了两县的发展，县城的集聚力不强、规模不大。后来两县之间加强协作，依托“龙

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

凤融城”计划，建成了湘鄂情大桥、开通了跨县直达公交车、统一了商品服务贸易政策，这一系列举措消除了省际间的设施型和制度型分割，加速了“龙凤融城”，扩大和挖掘了两个县城的市场规模和市场潜力，经济集聚力显著增强。

（四）突出“差异”（Differentiation），增强不可替代性

古语云“酒香不怕巷子深”。也就是说，好品质、有特色、不可替代的商品或服务即便花费更高的成本，消费者也愿意承担，这种品质、特色和品牌溢价在高质量发展阶段更为可行。革命老区是红色资源集聚区、民族文化富集区、生态资源丰裕区、自然景观奇特区，有着红色、绿色和古色比较优势，因而，在振兴发展中，革命老区应突出“差异”，发展特色产业，增强不可替代性，以异质性红利支撑经济高质量发展。

一是突出红色优势，做好红色旅游产业大文章。红色是革命老区最鲜明的底色，爱国主义教育和党性教育是中国特色社会主义现代化建设、党的建设的重要内容，革命老区则是爱国主义教育和党性教育天然的基地，各革命老区要充分挖掘、梳理、修复和再现本地红色故事、遗迹等红色资源，开发红色旅游产品，打造红色旅游品牌，做好红色主题的教育培训、素质拓展、团建活动和夏令营等，建立完整的红色旅游产业链，将红色旅游产业打造成革命老区重要的先导产业和支柱产业。

二是突出绿色优势，做大做强生态产业。绿色发展和生态文明是高质量发展阶段两个重要的主题，革命老区丰富的生态资源、优质的生态环境，为有机特色农业及其深加工业的发展奠定了良好的基础，要践行“两山”理论，探索绿水青山就是金山银山的实现路径，以“一县一特、一县一品”为抓手，做大做强生态产业。如贵州遵义的茅台酒、湖南湘西的酒鬼酒、湘西黄金茶、湖北恩施富硒猕猴桃、江西赣南脐橙等都已发展成为革命老区重要的品牌，成为当地经济发展的重要引擎，但也还有如百合、中药材、莓茶、黄牛、铁骨猪、黑山羊等种养产业的发展受深加工不足的影响，或者规模不大、价格波动大，或者品牌不响、附加值不高，尚未形成竞争力，亟待做大做强。

三是突出古色优势，写好文旅融合发展新篇章。革命老区有着优秀的多民族文化和保存相对完好的民族习俗，不少都列入了非物质文化遗产，将这些独特的民族文化、奇特的自然风光和当地的生产生活有机融合起来，发展文旅产业也是革命老区可行的重要选项。如湘鄂渝黔革命老区的凤凰县竹山村立足当地保存完好的苗族建筑和风情民俗，坚持旅游传承非遗文化、文化振兴助推乡村振兴的思路，依托凤凰旅发集团有限公司，大力开发利用苗寨村落、山水和文化资源，打造了集旅游观光、民俗文化、休闲度假、特色民宿于一体的竹山旅游综合体，既实现了民族文化的传承，又带动了当地经济发展。

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

（五）加快“数字化”（Digitalization），实现虚实融合发展

数字空间具有零世界、零距离、零成本和无边界的“三零一无”特点，可以使人类活动在一定范围内摆脱现实地理空间的制约，对克服革命老区实体空间格局不经济、相对无效率具有重大的意义。因而，革命老区要加快“数字化”，促进经济虚实融合发展，依托数字经济、数字技术缩小与其他地区的差距。

一是抓住数字中国、网络强国的机遇，补齐数字基础设施短板，提升居民数字素养，缩小甚至消除数字鸿沟。相对而言，数字基础设施的包容性、外部性更强，在数字中国、网络强国以及数字乡村建设的推动下，数字基础设施的区域差距相对更小。随着智能手机的普及，移动互联网让民众具有更公平的触网、入网机会和更低的门槛。因而，革命老区要抓住这一机遇，积极争取数字基础设施建设支持，如立项电子商务示范县、淘宝村建设等。同时，要积极引导和培训民众使用互联网，参与数字经济，通过“干中学”提升数字素养。

二是大力发展网红经济，以直播带货等方式实现虚实融合，带动实体经济发展。有研究表明，“新农人”主播在西部有相对更好的表现，呈现更适应经济发展相对落后区域、在相对落后区域更容易发挥带动能力的特点（刘霄泉等，2023）。革命老区实体经济多以特色农业、特色加工业、文旅产业等资源型产业为主，产品多为绿色有机且品质好、有特色，但由于信息不对称且距离远、运输成本高，导致产品销售难成为限制产业规模化发展的主要障碍。因而，大力发展网红经济，宣传推介革命老区的红色、绿色、古色优势，让外部消费者了解革命老区产业、产品的品质和特色，降低信息不对称，通过网红吸粉培育消费者产品忠诚度，打造网红打卡点，以此引流带量，带动实体产业和当地经济持续发展。同时，在网红经济发展过程中，要注重培育、引导和规范，确保网红经济健康持续发展，做到“常红”和“长红”。如湘鄂渝黔革命老区的古丈县是一个仅14万人的湖南人口最少的县，但出现了4名收获千万粉丝的乡村“守艺人”，这一网红经济的“古丈现象”正在形成，并有望成为带动古丈经济发展的新引擎。

三是持续发挥数字化对降低“远距离、高分割、低密度”负面效应和突出“异质性”正面效应的作用，减少空间不经济的不利影响。虽然缩短距离、消除分割、提升密度和突出差异的一系列举措可以显著降低革命老区的空间不经济性，但相对于中心地区而言仍然存在相对无效率，因而，还需要借助数字化手段的间接影响以巩固和放大上述举措的空间不经济缓解效应，通过虚实融合发展，克服革命老区振兴发展中空间不经济的劣势和挑战。

六、结语

革命老区振兴发展是我国区域协调发展、高质量发展和实现共同富裕的重要构成，自新中

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

国成立70多年来，国家一直重视革命老区的发展，给予了持续的政策支持，但革命老区发展仍然滞后。党的十八大以来，革命老区的发展支持政策更加体系化，先后形成了“1258”政策体系和“1+N+X”政策体系，革命老区将进入新的发展阶段。然而，革命老区振兴发展究竟还存在哪些挑战、面临何种机遇又该如何应对挑战、抓住机遇？本文在已有研究基础上提出“5D”分析框架，并以其为视角，指出“远距离、高分割、低密度”导致的空间不经济是革命老区振兴发展面临的主要挑战，而数字经济快速发展、比较和后发优势以及多重利好优惠政策叠加为革命老区振兴发展提供了“天时地利人和”的机遇，因而，革命老区要着眼“5D”发力，提升密度、缩短距离、消除分割、突出差异和加快“数字化”，提升空间经济性和减缓空间相对无效率的不利影响。并且，本文抛砖引玉地对如何提升密度、缩短距离、消除分割、突出差异和加快“数字化”提出了一些初步的见解。不过，本文更多的是从宏观、理念层面思考革命老区的振兴发展问题，虽提及了实践层面的具体事例，但尚未对12个革命老区的振兴发展进展进行系统的比较和实证分析，更未对各革命老区因地制宜地提出具体的对策建议，而这正是下一步的研究计划和主要内容。

参考文献

陈晓红,李杨扬,宋丽洁,等.数字经济理论体系与研究展望[J].管理世界,2022,38(02):208-224+13-16.

龚斌磊,张启正,袁菱苒,等.革命老区振兴发展的政策创新与效果评估[J].管理世界,2022,38(08):26-43.

韩广富,刘心蕊.改革开放以来革命老区扶贫脱贫的历史进程及经验启示[J].当代中国史研究,2019,26(01):101-115+159.

黄建红.“红三角”内源式发展:革命老区乡村振兴的衡山案例研究[J].中国农村观察,2023,(03):125-141.

黄群慧,余泳泽,张松林.互联网发展与制造业生产率提升:内在机制与中国经验[J].中国工业经济,2019,(08):5-23.

李晓园,徐威威,朱天义.革命老区乡村产业振兴的资源情境与行动逻辑——以江西瑞金红色产业发展为例[J].经济管理,2022,44(12):64-82.

刘奥,张双龙.革命老区振兴规划实施的共同富裕效应——基于城乡收入差距视角[J].中国农村经济,2023,(03):45-65.

刘霄泉,莫燕,张纯,等.抖音“新农人”主播空间格局及乡村文旅转化潜力研究——基于蝉妈妈网站数据[J].地理科学进展,2023,42(08):1636-1650.

陆铭,陈钊.分割市场的经济增长——为什么经济开放可能加剧地方保护?[J].经济研究,2009,44(03):42-52.

史婵,奚哲伟,王小林.革命老区振兴发展实践与基本公共服务短板分析[J].中国农村经济,2023,(07):164-185.

世界银行.世界银行2009年世界发展报告:重塑世界经济地理[M].北京:清华大学出版社,2009.

唐为.要素市场一体化与城市群经济的发展——基于微观企业数据的分析[J].经济学(季刊),2021,21(01):1-22.

王铮,耿文均,夏海斌,等.区域发展的地理学基础评估及其指标体系构建[J].地理学报,2023,78(03):558-571.

夏海斌.基于自主体建模的中国区域结构进化分析[D].华东师范大学,2013.

谢绚丽,沈艳,张皓星,等.数字金融能促进创业吗?——来自中国的证据[J].经济学(季刊),2018,17(04):1557-1580.

杨开忠.经济地理重塑与空间治理结构的完善[J].区域经济评论,2018,(05):16-18.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

杨开忠.制定实施加快河北绿色崛起的国家战略[J].经济与管理,2016,30(05):5-7.

杨冕,谢泽宇,杨福霞.省界毗邻地区绿色发展路径探索:来自革命老区振兴的启示[J].世界经济,2022,45(08):157-179.

姚林香,卢光熙.革命老区振兴规划实施的乡村振兴效应——基于对省界毗邻地区县域样本的分析[J].中国农村经济,2023,(03):22-44.

易行健,周利.数字普惠金融发展是否显著影响了居民消费——来自中国家庭的微观证据[J].金融研究,2018,(11):47-67.

张科,熊子怡,黄细嘉,等.红色旅游发展与革命老区城乡收入差距——基于双重差分法的经验分析[J].中国农村经济,2023,(05):103-121.

张勋,万广华,吴海涛.缩小数字鸿沟:中国特色数字金融发展[J].中国社会科学,2021,(08):35-51+204-205.

张勋,万广华,张佳佳,等.数字经济、普惠金融与包容性增长[J].经济研究,2019,54(08):71-86.

周黎安.中国地方官员的晋升锦标赛模式研究[J].经济研究,2007,(07):36-50.

周振鹤.范式的转换——沿革地理-政区地理-政治地理的进程[J].华中师范大学学报(人文社会科学版),2013,52(01):111-121.

Krugman P. First Nature, Second Nature, and Metropolitan Location[J]. Journal of Regional Science,1993,33(2):129-144.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

Revitalization of Old Revolutionary Base Areas: Challenges, Opportunities and Pathways
— Based on a 5D analytical framework

Ding Jianjun*
Jishou University Business School, Jishou, China

Abstract: *The revitalization and development of old revolutionary base areas (ORBAs) are of great significance to coordinated regional development and common prosperity. Referencing existing research, this paper puts forth a "5D" analytical framework of "density, distance, division, differentiation, and digitalization" for analyzing the Challenges, opportunities and pathways for ORBAs' revitalization and development. It points out the spatial diseconomies stemming from "long distance, high division, and low density" as the challenge facing ORBAs, as well as the opportunities from the digital economy, the inclusive nature of digitalization, the comparative and late-mover advantages such as revolutionary heritage, beautiful scenery, and distinctive folk culture, as well as a combination of policy preferences. Lastly, a roadmap is delineated for the ORBAs' revitalization and development through the five "Ds", i.e. increasing the density of population, industry and land; shortening the distance to facilitate the exchange and integration between various factors of production; removing division to increase the integration level of urban and rural regional markets; highlighting differentiation to enhance the irreplaceability of feature industries and products; accelerating digitalization and leveraging the role of digital technologies in reducing the adverse effects of "long distance, high division, and low density", magnifying the positive effects of "differentiation", and integrating virtual and real economies.*

Keywords: Old revolutionary base areas, revitalization and development, 5D analytical framework, spatial diseconomies

JEL Classification Code: O18, P25
DOI: 10.19602/j.chinaeconomist.2024.03.03

1. Introduction

The term "old revolutionary base areas", or "ORBAs" for short, refers to revolutionary bases established by the Communist Party of China (CPC) during the Land Revolution War and the Resistance War Against Japanese Aggression. As historical strongholds for the CPC and the People's Liberation Army (PLA), these revolutionary bases played a crucial role in the Chinese revolution's victory. The

* CONTACT: Ding Jianjun, email: latt514@163.com.
Acknowledgment: This study is supported by the National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC) Project "Study on the Development Resiliency of Contiguous Regions in Relative Poverty from an Evolution-Relationship Perspective and Mechanisms for Preventing Their Return to Poverty" (Grant No.: 42161033); Special Project of the National Cultural Fellowship "Growth Characteristics, Determinants, and Cultivation Countermeasures for Specialized, High-end and Innovation-driven Enterprises in Contiguous Less-Developed Regions".

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

majority of these revolutionary bases, however, are situated at remote intersections of provinces with complex topography, crisscrossing ridges, and undulating slopes. Because of their difficult locations and lack of transportation access, such ORBAs have fallen behind and been marginalized during China's reform, opening up, and socialist market economic development. Consequently, these regions emerged as critical challenges and focal points in solidifying accomplishments in poverty reduction and executing the rural revitalization strategy. For example, 69 of the 160 counties designated to receive assistance for rural revitalization in China are ORBAs. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, the Chinese government has intensified the national top-down design for the revival of historic revolutionary base areas as part of its efforts to accelerate rural revitalization and modernization on all fronts. It has developed systematic and targeted "1258" and "1+N+X" policy frameworks, which include policy documents such as *Guiding Opinions on Expediting Poverty Reduction and Supporting the Development of ORBAs*, *Opinions of the State Council on Supporting the Revitalization and Development of ORBAs*, and the *Plan for the Revitalization and Development of Special Regions in the 14th Five-Year Plan Period*. The number of major ORBAs included in the national top-down design has expanded from five to twelve, ushering in a new era of revival of ORBAs toward socialist modernization on all fronts.

Meanwhile, academics have turned their attention to the revival of ORBAs. Scholars have carried out extensive research on the practices to revitalize ORBAs and the weaknesses of basic public services (Shi et al., 2023), the resource context and action logic of rural industrial revitalization (Li et al., 2022), the endogenous development mode for the "Revolutionary Triangle Region" (Huang, 2023), the development of revolutionary heritage tourism and urban-rural income disparity in ORBAs (Zhang et al., 2023), the policy effect of revitalization and green development path (Gong et al., 2022; Yang et al., 2022), the promotion of agricultural growth and modernization through the implementation of the revitalization policy (Zhang et al., 2022), countywide rural revitalization in adjacent areas at provincial borders (Yao et al., 2023), the reduction of countywide urban-rural income gap (Liu and Zhang, 2023), and the promotion of economic growth and public welfare (Gong et al., 2022). Existing research has focused on the policy implications of revitalizing ORBAs, the development mode of revolutionary heritage tourism, and paths for rural revival through the lens of economics and management. However, the geographical characteristics of special regions such as ORBAs, as well as the problems, opportunities, and viable pathways for their revitalization, have received little attention. In fact, a region's geographical factors have shaped its economic characteristics and development paths (Wang et al., 2023). ORBAs have significantly different geographical conditions than other regions due to their remote locations at provincial intersections, ethnic minority groups, a less developed economy, and complex topography. As a result, it is appropriate to use economic geography principles to discuss the geographical conditions of ORBAs and their impact on revitalization and development. The conclusions would be critical for identifying the deep-seated problems for the revitalization of ORBAs, consolidating poverty reduction achievements in ORBAs, and advancing rural revitalization more broadly.

Unlike previous research, this paper proposes a novel analytical framework to explain the Challenges, opportunities, and pathways for the revitalization of ORBAs in light of their geographical conditions and the new characteristics of the digital economy era, thereby providing new references for the formulation and implementation of policies and plans for the revitalization of ORBAs. On the basis of the 3D (density, distance, division) framework developed by the World Bank in its *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography* and the 4D (density, distance, division, differentiation) framework put forth by Yang (2018), this paper develops a 5D (density, distance, division, differentiation, and digitalization) analytical framework to consider the impact of density,

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

distance, division, differentiation, and digitalization on the economics of geographical space. Using this 5D analytical framework, we explain the spatial diseconomy dilemma in light of the "long distance, high division, and low density" characteristics of ORBAs, as well as opportunities from digitalization's inclusiveness, differentiation potentials, and policy dividends. Finally, we propose a 5D approach for revitalizing ORBAs that involves "increasing density, shortening distance, bridging division, highlighting differentiation, and accelerating digitalization".

2. 5D: Driving Forces for Reshaping Economic Geography in the Digital Era

New economic geography was early to recognize the importance of geographical conditions to regional economic development and regional administration, identifying two geographical conditions that can influence regional evolution and development: natural endowment as the first-nature geography and agglomeration and location as the second-nature geography (Krugman, 1993). Academics subsequently portrayed ICT infrastructure conditions and human capital in the modern new economic environment as the third-nature geography, introducing the notion of the threefold nature of geography (Xia, 2012). Specifically, first-nature geography refers to the original environmental conditions endowed by Nature to mankind, also known as natural endowment, and includes the abundance of natural resources as well as natural environmental characteristics such as altitude, elevation, landforms, and ecological conditions as prerequisites and drivers of development. The term "second-nature geography" refers to geographical qualities, such as location and transportation, that have been used and built by humans throughout history and are intrinsic to human society. As human civilization progressed from the agrarian and industrial to the postindustrial age, the importance of second and third-nature geographies eclipsed that of first-nature geography.

Meanwhile, the World Bank has identified three driving forces changing global economic geography: density, distance, and division, which form a "3D" analytical framework to provide a robust explanation of global economic imbalances and the "center-periphery" spatial pattern. With this contribution, the World Bank's *Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography* has become a classic report with global implications. Drawing on the spirit of the "3D" analytical framework, Yang (2016, 2018) recognized another major driving force of "differentiation" in light of China's economic growth miracle and transformation of economic geography. Difference, he believes, plays an important role in changing economic geography and is a vital component of local competitiveness or regional attraction. He devised a "4D" analytical framework to explain China's economic growth miracle through the lens of economic geography. Although both the 3D and 4D analytical frameworks acknowledge the significance of geographical factors in regional economic growth, the 3D framework explains how centripetal and centrifugal forces have transformed economic geography. Specifically, the centripetal force refers to the local market effect and price index effect caused by density (economies of scale), distance (transportation cost), and division (monopolistic competition), whereas the centrifugal force refers to the market competition effect. In contrast, the 4D framework rejects the "homogeneous region" theory, believing in the existence of regional heterogeneity and the role of "local quality" in regional economic development and the formation of economic geography. Thus, the term "differentiation" is used to widen the 3D framework and bring it closer to economic reality.

With the dawn of the digital era and the rapid development of the digital economy, China is seeing an increase in digital industrialization and industrial digitalization, with the digital economy accounting for a growing share of the national economy. Digitalization has become a new driving force, reshaping economic geography in both direct and indirect ways.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

2.1 Direct effect

Digital technologies, with their network-based distribution and decentralized characteristics, have revolutionized the spatial structure of production factors, increasing regional development fields through mobile space and jump dispersal and boosting regional economic integration. Transformative shifts in production, distribution, and consumption will reshape economic geography. The rise of digital platforms has opened up a broader consumer market, allowing people to look for items and services in international and even global markets that fit their unique and diverse preferences. By connecting to digital platforms, companies can use big data to match supply and demand, meet various customer needs, and integrate into national and global supply chain networks more easily and efficiently. As the digital economy and traditional industries become more integrated, new industries and business models emerge, such as smart tourism, online education, live streaming e-commerce, and digital inclusive finance, which open up new business opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as marginal regions and groups. These entrepreneurial opportunities have accelerated economic development in marginal communities.

2.2 Indirect effect

Digitalization has transformed economic geography by modifying the density, distance, and division of regional economic activity while amplifying the attractiveness of differentiation. First, the accessibility and inclusiveness of digital technologies have weakened the constraint of geographical distance, lowering transaction costs (including transportation cost) and information asymmetry, increasing economic interconnectedness across regions and indirectly influencing economic geography by shortening distances. Second, the dynamic network of relationships formed by digital factor flow spaces and jump dispersal nodes transcends various divisions caused by man-made and non-human factors such as natural geography and administrative jurisdictions, particularly institutional division, thereby contributing to regional integration and indirectly influencing economic geography. Third, the digital economy is defined by economies of scale and range, as well as the multiplier effect, low marginal cost, and infinite shareability. These characteristics allow the digital economy, unlike the real economy, to spread beyond the constraints of location and workspace, broadening the area of regional economic development and indirectly impacting economic geography through increased density. Fourth, we-media platforms have made it easier for everyone to create digital content that may be broadcast instantly to a large audience for free. In this way, local differentiation can be communicated to the public in order to capture their interest and fulfill their curiosity and need for diversity. Digitalization may have an indirect influence on economic geography by magnifying such differentiation.

As shown in the chart below, the development of a 5D analytical framework (Figure 1) aids in understanding the reconstructive dynamism and mechanism of economic geography in the digital economy era.

3. Spatial Diseconomies: Challenges Facing the Revival of ORBAs

In November 2021, the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC) released the *Plan for the Revitalization and Development of Special Regions in the 14th Five-Year Plan Period* approved by the State Council. This document identified 12 ORBAs, including Jiangxi-Fujian-Guangdong, Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia, Dabie Mountain, Sichuan-Shaanxi, Zuoyoujiang, Hunan-Jiangxi Border, Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou, Hailufeng, Qiongya, Southwest Zhejiang, Yimeng and Taihang ORBAs. This clarifies the geographical scope of the ORBAs. It is not difficult to see that the above 12 ORBAs

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

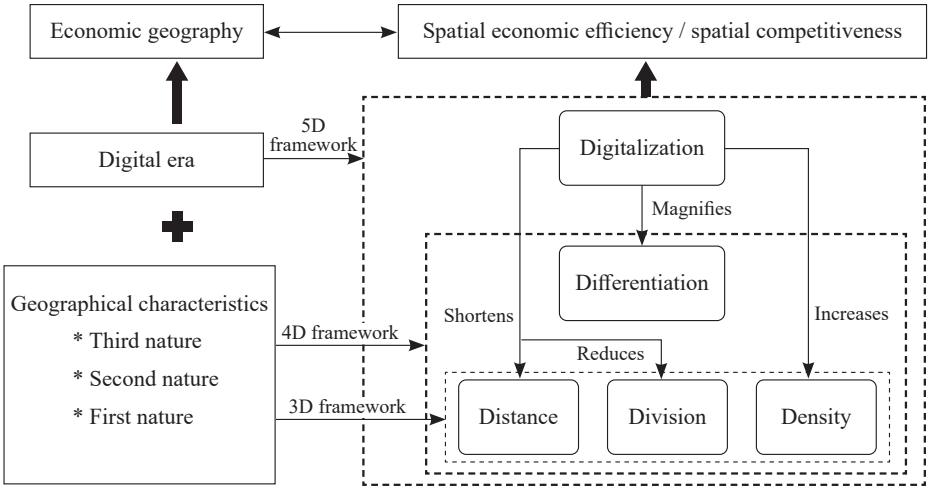

Figure 1: 5D Analytical Framework of Reshaping Economic Geography in the Digital Era

are primarily located along multi-provincial borders, and many of them are still underdeveloped. Due to unique natural geographical characteristics as well as social and historical factors, these localities were the "chosen places" for the survival and development of the Party and the people's army during the revolutionary period, and they contributed significantly to the revolution's victory. However, in the new chapter of China's industrialization and socialist market economy, the spatial diseconomies of "long distance, high division, and low density" attributable to these geographical characteristics became a barrier to economic development. Although appropriate policy support has resulted in significant improvements in infrastructure and transportation conditions over time, particularly during the poverty eradication campaign, spatial diseconomies remain a major challenge for the revitalization and development of ORBAs.

3.1 Spatial Diseconomies of "Long Distance"

The majority of ORBAs are isolated mountainous locations that are far distant from provincial capitals and regional centers in space and time, as well as peripheral and marginal areas in the "center-periphery" spatial model. Both the classical location theory and modern economic geography demonstrate that distance has a significant impact on the spatial distribution of economic activities. In general, distance involves both spatial and temporal distances. According to the first law of geography, the geographical connection of economic activity is subject to the law of distance attenuation, with the economic link less between regions that are further apart and greater between regions that are closer together. One example is the Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou revolutionary base area, which is located at the intersection of four provincial-level regions and a portion of the Wuling Mountains. Each county seat in this region is around 300 kilometers from the downtown provincial capitals of Changsha, Wuhan and Guiyang, and Chongqing Municipality. Even for those having high-speed railway stations, it takes over two hours to reach major cities. Although high-speed railways and expressways have significantly reduced travel time, the high cost of travel has weakened economic ties. The rugged geography of this area, with thousands of ravines, valleys, and rivers, separates communities and towns over great distances. In this mountainous area, it may take half a day to reach a location in plain sight, and dialects change every few miles. Communication costs are considerable even within the area. As can be observed, "long distance" remains one of the most prominent factors for spatial diseconomies in ORBAs.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

3.2 Spatial Diseconomies of "High Division"

ORBAs, located along interprovincial borders, are divided by geographic boundaries and are subject to administrative, institutional, and market segmentations. As a country with a long history of administrative demarcation, China has traditionally used mountains and rivers to define the boundaries of local jurisdictions (Zhou, 2013). Geographic barriers present challenges to internal and external trade, which is unfavorable to economic development, particularly in the modern industrial and service sectors. At the same time, administrative fragmentation compounds the negative effects of geographical barriers. On the one hand, there is fierce competition among local administrative regions, fueled by the GDP championship system, in which local governments strive for economic growth (Zhou, 2007). Local governments have strong incentives to develop their own infrastructures and industries in order to rank higher in terms of economic growth among neighboring regions, but few incentives to benefit from and bring spillover effects to other regions outside of their own. There is a dearth of cooperation between provinces and cities on both sides of the border when it comes to the development of infrastructure, factors of production, and logistics system. Lack of investment has hindered economic development in border regions. This renders the border regions a "low land" for investment and economic activity (Tang, 2021). On the other hand, competition between administrative regions has resulted in serious local protectionist tendencies, forming an "invisible wall" at the borders, further triggering institutional and market segmentations, increasing the transaction costs of inter-regional trade, and generating significant border effects (Lu and Chen, 2009; Tang, 2021), making the originally limited market size even more fragmented and scattered. As a result, "high division" worsens spatial diseconomies in ORBAs.

3.3 Spatial Diseconomies of "Low Density"

Economic density is a source and effect of regional economic development, as well as a key metric of the spatial economy. Generally speaking, regions with higher economic density outperform in spatial economy. Whether it is the first geographic nature of the ORBAs, such as natural geographic conditions, or the second and third geographic nature of location, transportation, human capital, information technology, and so on, all of these aspects limit economic density growth, resulting in spatial diseconomies. To begin with, economic activity in mountainous regions cannot reach the critical mass for benign development due to dispersed dwellings, low population density, small market size, and a limited number of market entities, trapping mountainous regions in a "low level equilibrium". For example, Enshi Prefecture, a key region of the West Hunan-Hubei and Hunan-Hubei-Sichuan-Guizhou revolutionary bases, has been designated as one of the 20 key cities of ORBAs in 2022, with a resident population of 3.4 million, a population density of 142 people per square kilometer, and a GDP of 5.84 million yuan per square kilometer, or 41,248 yuan per person. Enshi is ranked in the intermediate to lower levels of economic development among the 20 key cities in the ORBAs.[1] The "low density" of people and economic activity significantly restricts the realization of economies of scale and the agglomeration effect, resulting in a regional economy that lacks competitiveness and endogenous development capacity. Second, the "low density" disadvantage is aggravated by the "long distance" and "high division" traits. For one reason, "long distance" has resulted in a net outflow of population, particularly skilled labor, from the region, resulting in a decrease in population density and labor force, leaving behind the elderly, sick, and incapacitated, who are even less productive. As a result of the

[1] Enshi Prefecture Bureau of Statistics. Comparative Analysis and Enlightenment of Economic Development between Enshi Prefecture and 20 Key Cities of Old Revolutionary Base Areas in the Nation. [O/L]. (2023-07-25)[2024-01-20]. http://www.xianfeng.gov.cn/xxgk/dfbmptlj/xiangz/qjz/fdzdgknr/tjxx/202310/t20231022_1491969.shtml.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

labor shortage, farmland went idle, reducing economic density. For another, "high division" has resulted in market fragmentation. As a result, tiny and fragmented markets are unable to attract external factors and investment that would boost economic density. This has resulted in underdevelopment of tourism, particularly revolutionary, ecological, and cultural tourism that otherwise have great potentials. Finally, "low density" will trigger the Matthew effect, exposing ORBAs to the "low-density trap" and spatial diseconomies.

4. Technology, Location and Policy Support: Opportunities for Reviving ORBAs

Every person, and every place, has unique merits. Comparative advantage theory and the history of regional development indicate that geographically disadvantaged regions may also achieve success, and that the effects of first-nature, second-nature, and third-nature geography may evolve amid industrial, agricultural, and ecological progress. Indeed, second and third-nature geographies are becoming increasingly important. The digital economy, in particular, has significantly reduced the negative impact of first-nature geography. As China strives to achieve high-quality development and common prosperity, ORBAs are presented with opportunities as a result of national strategies to protect the environment, revitalize the countryside, including ORBAs, and advance digitalization.

4.1 Technology: Booming Digital Economy and Inclusiveness of Digitalization

Extensive digital technology applications and rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) signal the beginning of the digital intelligence age. The digital economy has emerged as a crucial sector and new driving force for the national economy. Synergy between digital industrialization and industrial digitalization is rapidly changing established economic paradigms (Chen et al., 2022). The digital economy, with its natural strengths in data processing, information transmission, and resource allocation, exerts a profound influence on all aspects of social and economic development, including consumption (Yi and Zhou, 2018), innovation and entrepreneurship (Xie et al., 2018), productivity (Huang et al., 2019), inclusive growth (Zhang et al., 2019), and the reduction of the digital division. In addition to the aforementioned general benefits, the digital economy has disruptive effects in overcoming the "long distance, high division, and low density" challenges caused by geographical obstacles, administrative segmentation, and market dispersion for ORBAs in marginal regions. First, digital technologies have extremely strong geographical penetration to overcome the constraints of remote locations, mountainous areas, and other unfavorable geographical conditions while lowering trade costs, allowing enterprises in a central region to cover market areas that were previously geographically inaccessible or unattractive. Meanwhile, market entities in marginal areas, such as firms, households, and new rural business entities, can employ Internet technology to service markets and customers in central regions, hence increasing market potential. In this way, the digital economy offers ORBAs greater access to resources for development. Second, because of ubiquitous Internet access, the digital economy transcends jurisdictions, regions, and frontiers, opening up new prospects for ORBAs along interprovincial borders. With the spread of digital technology in numerous sectors, the radius for providing certain goods and services has widened beyond the restrictions of administrative jurisdictions and geographical boundaries, greatly countering local protectionism and administrative segmentation. The rise of cross-regional online shopping has opened up new avenues for regional trade. Furthermore, Internet advertisements and livestreaming e-commerce on popular platforms such as Douyin (the Chinese version of TikTok) and Kuaishou have offset the effect of local regulations on offline advertisements and reduced advertising costs, making it easier for people to learn about unique products and folk cultures that were previously

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

"hidden in the dark" and creating a large amount of new demand across regions. Furthermore, the digital economy has provided marginal regions and disadvantaged groups with jobs and business opportunities. Flexible non-farming economic activities with low thresholds, such as couriers, takeaway riders, influencers, livestreaming e-commerce, opening online stores, and running B&Bs, have created conditions for ordinary people in ORBAs to participate in the non-farming economy, tap and utilize local resources, achieve commercial development, and increase economic density.

4.2 Location: Comparative and Late-Mover Advantages and Potentials from Differentiation

During the revolutionary era, distinctive geographical characteristics in ORBAs provided the Red Army with a sanctuary to sustain and increase their strength, leading to the revolution's success. During China's industrialization process, this geographical advantage became a barrier to economic development. Given China's transition to ecological civilization and the post-industrial era, these geographical conditions have become a comparative and belated advantage in the revitalization of ORBAs. Tourists may be drawn to ORBAs because of their attractive environment, revolutionary tradition, and folk culture. From an environmental standpoint, ORBAs are situated in serene mountainous regions that are isolated from industrial development and devoid of any industrial pollution. Furthermore, the migration of local populations to coastal regions and provincial capital cities in search of employment has significantly reduced environmental pressure. Consequently, there has been a great deal of environmental restoration and conservation in ORBAs. The gorgeous "lucid water and lush mountains" that can be seen anywhere in ORBAs have become what urbanites view as a "poetic life on the distant land". Not only does the countryside provide a respite from the hustle and bustle of cities, but urbanites prefer and are prepared to pay a premium price for natural and green food cultivated in this beautiful environment, free of pesticides and hormones. ORBAs will attract individuals who are environmentally conscious and prefer green food. In terms of revolutionary heritage, ORBAs serve as natural museums for China's revolutionary history. With the rise of "red tourism", or tours of historical sites with revolutionary legacy, ORBAs have identified and retrofitted sites of importance to China's revolutionary history to attract visitors. In terms of folk culture, the majority of ORBAs are located in mountainous areas and along interprovincial boundaries, where ethnic minority or multiethnic mixed communities exist and traditional ethnic cultures are well preserved. Distinctive ethnic cultures and customs, as well as intangible cultural assets, provide a wealth of resources for ORBAs to promote eco-tourism, countryside tourism, and "red tourism". Last but not least, ORBAs have a late-mover edge in economic development. They have ready-to-implement experiences from economically vibrant regions in terms of industrial park development, growth drivers, and integrated urban-rural development. Furthermore, ORBAs can learn from and avoid repeating past mistakes such as "pollution before treatment" and the wasteful energy and resource-intensive development. Furthermore, technology spillovers from prosperous regions, together with institutional dividends, provide ORBAs with opportunities for green, sustainable, and high-quality developmentt.

4.3 Policy Support: Policy Preferences for ORBAs

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Party and government have attached great importance to ORBAs due to their significant contributions to China's revolutionary struggle. Prior to the 18th CPC National Congress, the Chinese government issued special policy documents on strengthening work on ORBAs and exempting business income tax for commune and brigade enterprises in ORBAs, as well as generic policy documents on the management of development funds for underdeveloped regions. Overall, these policy preferences are fragmented, and no independent

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

policy system with top-down design and systematic policy support specifically for rebuilding ORBAs has emerged (Han and Liu, 2019). Since the 18th CPC National Congress, policy support for reviving ORBAs has steadily increased. In 2012, the State Council released the first systematic and specific policy paper on the revitalization of ORBAs, titled *Opinions on Supporting the Revitalization and Development of South Jiangxi and Other Former Central Soviet Areas*. During the period between 2012 and 2016, the "1258" policy framework was completed with the release of revitalization and development plans for the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia, Jiangxi–Fujian–Guangdong, Dabie Mountain, Zuoyoujiang, and Sichuan–Shaanxi ORBAs. In early 2021, the State Council issued Opinions on Supporting the Revitalization and Development of ORBAs in the New Era. While making additional arrangements for the five important ORBAs in the previous stage, this policy document also made explicit policy arrangements for some other ORBAs, including Hailufeng, Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou, Taihang, Yimeng, Southwest Zhejiang, Qiongya, and the Hunan-Jiangxi border regions. As a result, the number of major ORBAs included in top-down design has risen from five to twelve, ushering in a new era of their complete socialist modernization. Meanwhile, the government has implemented a "1+N+X" policy system. "1" stands for the State Council's Opinions on Supporting the Revitalization and Development of ORBAs in the New Era. "N" refers to a series of implementation programs for revitalizing ORBAs through poverty reduction, infrastructure development, environmental protection, and "red tourism", including the *Revitalization and Development of Special Regions in the 14th Five-Year Plan Period* and the *Implementation Scheme for Supporting the Consolidation of Poverty Reduction Achievements in ORBAs through Rural Revitalization in the 14th Five Year Plan*. "X" represents a number of special policy preferences for ORBAs, such as the paired support program of central state authorities and institutions, ministerial-level policy support, development programs, and transfer payments. Furthermore, local governments have adopted policies, regional implementation opinions, and local plans for the development of ORBAs during the 14th Five-Year Plan period. These local policy preferences, combined with national strategies like rural revitalization, digital China, "red tourism" development, and ecological civilization, have provided ORBAs with a systematic set of policy dividends for revitalization and development.

5. 5D Pathway for Revitalizing ORBAs

In order to achieve revitalization and development, ORBAs must utilize their comparative and late-mover advantages, seize the window of regional opportunities, overcome spatial diseconomies, integrate into regional, national and global production networks, turn their comparative and late-mover advantages into competitive strengths, and seek continuous and dynamic upgrades. ORBAs should, therefore, focus on the five "Ds" and effectively improve local quality and spatial competitiveness for sustainable endogenous development.

5.1 Increasing Density and Promoting Agglomeration and Efficiency

As a salient feature in the socioeconomic development of ORBAs, "low-density" presents a barrier for ORBAs to unleash market potentials and increase economic concentration. In a vicious cycle, low density limits market potentials, which in turn discourages agglomeration and leads to a factor outflow that further reduces density. To revitalize ORBAs, therefore, a strategic option is to increase density by optimizing the spatial layout. Specifically:

First, encouraging population concentration. Where there are people, there is a market. A higher density of population means deeper social division of labor, greater market demand, more frequent

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

transactions, broader potentials for the secondary and tertiary industries, more jobs on offer, and greater attractiveness to residents from elsewhere. Therefore, we suggest that the government focus on the 20 cities in ORBAs across the country as growth drivers, expedite the integrated development of county seats, central towns and central villages through countywide urbanization, and encourage residents to migrate to the central hubs to increase population density.

Second, promoting industrial agglomeration. In ORBAs, the secondary and tertiary industries account for a modest share of the economy, and there exists such problems as unhealthy industrial structure, scattered distribution of enterprises, market misconduct, and obsolete technology. Current industrial development in ORBAs not only lacks competitiveness, but is inconsistent with the requirements of the "green mountains are gold mountains" theory for environmental protection. It is thus suggested that ORBAs develop industries through industrial parks, foster the industrial park economy and enclave economy, incubate specialized and sophisticated SMEs that produce new and unique products, encourage adjacent regions to participate in the joint development of industrial parks through institutional innovation, reduce the number and increase the level of industrial parks, and enhance the agglomeration of industrial parks and the density of industries and enterprises.

Third, encouraging intensive land use. Despite the poor population dispersion across a broad stretch of land, revolutionary base locations are typically located in hilly regions with few farmable land plots. Complex landforms and inefficient utilization of land resources have stifled economic development. As a result, ORBAs should expedite reforms such as the separation of land ownership, operation, and use rights, as well as the transfer of collectively owned land plots, improve the business climate, introduce and cultivate new agricultural business entities, and increase agricultural economies of scale. Meanwhile, ORBAs should attract tourists with natural landscapes, historical sites, and folk culture, as well as integrate tourism and agriculture to boost output density.

In a nutshell, ORBAs should take initiatives to raise population density, industrial agglomeration, output density, and market potential in order to improve agglomeration and realize endogenous sustainable development.

5.2 Shortening the Distance and Accelerating Communication, Exchanges and Interactions

Thanks to continuous policy support, particularly since the 18th CPC National Congress and the poverty reduction campaign, ORBAs have made remarkable development in infrastructure, particularly transportation infrastructure. Despite major reductions in geographical and temporal distances, ORBAs remain beyond the 2-to-3-hour circle of regional central cities and provincial capitals, resulting in a significant relative disadvantage. It is suggested that ol revolutionary base regions devise novel strategies to reduce the "distance" and accelerate communication and exchanges.

First, ORBAs should continue to shorten geographical distances by improving the network of transportation infrastructure, including airports, high-speed railways, expressways and high-grade roads. In the construction of external corridors, it is suggested to link ORBAs with the trunk lines of national high-speed railways and civil aviation hubs, so as to shorten the geographic distance with central cities and provincial capitals. As for the construction of internal corridors, it is suggested to maximize the interconnection of expressways and high-grade roads, so as to facilitate commuting between key cities, county towns, central towns and central villages within ORBAs, and to shorten the geographic distances between the central nodes and residential communities.

Second, ORBAs should further reduce temporal distance. Within the same geographical distance, commuting time may vary due to different combinations of transportation modes. As a result, commuting

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

time can be reduced by optimizing traffic coordination and improving transfer efficiency. For example, high-speed railway stations may provide intelligent transfer service, with rolling display of the best transfer options for shuttle bus routes, ride-hailing service, taxi, and so on. At the same time, ORBAs should also provide convenient car rental services for the tourism industry, such as "red tourism", ecological and cultural tourism, and self-driving tours. Tourists should be able to complete transfer formalities at their fingertips and take the ride seamlessly.

Third, enhancing the effectiveness in the reduction of temporal and spatial distances. Instead of an end in itself, shortening temporal and spatial distances is the means to increase exchanges and integration between various factors of production. In addition, the government should create conditions, incentives and support to facilitate the flow of factors. For instance, it may attract national leading logistics enterprises, improve auxiliary facilities for cold-chain logistics, and establish standardized and transparent rules for market operations. As such, ORBAs should embrace openness, enhance communication, optimize business environment, provide effective support to businesses, and promote the internal and external exchanges and integration between factors of production.

5.3 Bridging Division and Increasing Integration

Within ORBAs, there exist significant interprovincial and urban-rural divisions in terms of infrastructure and institutional systems (for both factor and commodity markets). What is more, market fragmentation is also inconsistent with the requirements of developing a unified national market and promoting domestic and international dual circulations. In revitalizing old revolutionary base areas, it is essential to bridge division and increase integration. In this respect, our policy suggestions include:

First, integrating urban and rural development, and bridging infrastructure and institutional divisions between urban and rural areas. Given their modest levels of urbanization and public services, ORBAs generate limited spillovers on the countryside. Complex landforms and scattered communities across a broad range of mountainous terrain have increased the difficulty and cost for the construction of basic rural public service facilities, which are in short supply and of inadequate quality. Rural residents, who live at scattered communities with certain distances from county seats and central towns, cannot benefit from urban infrastructure and public services, resulting in an infrastructure division. In addition, we cannot overlook the implicit division between China's urban and rural factor market and commodity market, which stems from the traditional urban-rural duality, institutional systems for household registration, land and employment, as well as the associated public services and social welfare. Through new urbanization, therefore, the government should encourage population concentration and promote equal access to infrastructure and public services, deepen reforms and institutional innovations, and remove urban-rural institutional segmentation through the convergence and integration of urban-rural systems.

Second, enhancing coordination between administrative jurisdictions and removing infrastructure and institutional segmentations between jurisdictions, especially between provinces. Such segmentations can be evidenced in the lack of proper coordination for infrastructure planning and construction, as well as differentiation in policymaking and implementation, at interprovincial borders where most ORBAs are situated. For instance, there are dead-end roads and inconsistent toll fees at interprovincial borders, which constitute tangible and intangible barriers. In order to bridge infrastructure and institutional divisions across administrative jurisdictions, it is essential to step up cooperation and synergy between administrative regions, establish joint meetings, and turn the barriers of administrative jurisdictions into life circles and unified markets to expand market scale and enhance local market effect. For instance,

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

Longshan and Laifeng counties in the Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou old revolutionary base area fall into the jurisdiction of Hunan and Hubei provinces. The two counties are adjacent, and there is a straight-line distance of around 6 km between the two county seats, which are known as the nearest county seats in China. Over the years, however, such problems as the lack of bus service between the two counties and the existence of local protectionism for trade in goods and services had stifled the development of the two counties, restricting their agglomeration and scale. Subsequently, the two counties implemented an integration program for the construction of an interprovincial bridge, the opening of cross-county bus service, and the unification trade policies. These initiatives have removed interprovincial infrastructure and institutional divisions, turbocharged countywide integration, expanded the market size and potential, and significantly increased economic agglomeration.

5.4 Highlighting Differentiation and Increasing Irreplaceability

As the adage goes, "Fragrant wine needs no advertising". That is, customers are willing to pay a premium for high-quality, distinctive, and irreplaceable products and services. Quality, distinctiveness, and brand premium have grown increasingly important as China enters a new era of high-quality development. In ORBAs, there are numerous sites of China's revolutionary history, ethnic culture, ecological resources, and natural landscapes. Such differentiated comparative advantages present ORBAs with opportunities for revitalization and development. It is recommended that ORBAs emphasize their uniqueness and build feature industries in order to strengthen their irreplaceability, benefit from differentiation, and support high-quality economic development.

First, promoting "red tourism". ORBAs are especially notable for their revolutionary history, and are the best places to teach patriotism and Party character, which is a key aspect of China's socialist modernization and Party development. It is suggested that ORBAs identify, restore, and present local stories and sites of revolutionary history, develop "red tourism" products and brands, and provide education, training, capacity development, teambuilding, and summer camp services as part of the "red tourism" industry. The goal is to establish "red tourism" as an important industry in ORBAs.

Second, emphasizing environmental benefits and strengthening the ecological industry. Green development and ecological civilization are two key concerns in high-quality development. The abundance of ecological resources and enticing environment in ORBAs create perfect conditions for organic and feature farming, as well as intensive processing. It is advised that ORBAs investigate ways to transform green mountains into gold mountains, and that each county market a unique product. For example, several ORBAs have turned out well-known products, such as Moutai liquor from Zunyi, Guizhou, Jiugui Liquor and Golden Tea from Western Hunan Province, selenium-rich kiwifruit from Enshi, Hubei Province, and navel orange from South Jiangxi. Certain agricultural products, such as lilies, herbal medicines, berry tea, cattle, iron bone pigs, and black goats, lack adequate intensive processing capabilities. This has reduced the manufacturing, branding, and value-added of such products, as well as increased price volatility, underscoring the urgency of increasing competitiveness and efficiencies.

Third, promoting folk culture and tourism. ORBAs are rich in multiethnic cultures and well-preserved ethnic customs, many of which are considered intangible cultural heritage. An essential alternative for ORBAs is to expand the culture and tourism business by incorporating distinct ethnic cultures, scenic landscapes, and local ways of life and work. One such example is Zhushan Village in Fenghuang County, in the Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou old revolutionary base area, which has become a popular national tourism destination, known as the Fenghuang (Phoenix) Ancient Town. The local government, through the Fenghuang Tourism Development Group, has created a tourism complex

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

in Zhushan Village that includes well-preserved Miao ethnic architecture and traditional culture. Tourism has helped to promote ethnic culture as well as local economic growth.

5.5 Expediting Digitalization for Integrated Development of Virtual and Real Economies

With its "zero world, zero distance, zero cost, and zero boundary" characteristics, digital space has the potential to free human activity from the constraints of physical geographical space, which is critical for overcoming spatial diseconomies and relative inefficiencies in ORBAs. As a result, ORBAs should expedite digitization, merge the real and virtual economies, and close the digital economic and technological gaps with other regions.

First, exploiting possibilities from the "digital China" and "Internet power" strategies to compensate for digital infrastructure deficiencies, raise people's digital awareness, and reduce, if not eradicate, the digital division. The "digital China", "Internet power", and "Digital countryside" programs have reduced the regional division in digital infrastructure, making it more inclusive and generating greater externalities. With the growing popularity of smartphones, mobile Internet has enabled all individuals to access the Internet at their fingertips. Thus, ORBAs should take advantage of this opportunity and work to support digital infrastructure construction efforts. For example, they could request the designation of e-commerce demonstration counties and Taobao villages. Meanwhile, they should teach locals how to utilize the Internet, embrace the digital economy, and improve digital literacy through "learning by doing".

Second, vigorously developing the influencer economy, and promoting real-economy development through livestreaming e-commerce and other forms of virtual-real economic integration. According to research findings, farmer-turned livestreaming e-commerce anchors from China's western region were more effective in selling products, implying that livestreaming e-commerce is an appropriate form of marketing in underdeveloped regions (Liu et al., 2023). In ORBAs, agriculture, processing, culture and tourism, and other resource-based businesses account for the lion's share of the economy, with the majority of products being organic specialty. However, information asymmetry, high transportation costs, and long distances made it difficult for ORBAs to market their products. One approach is to create an influencer economy to promote the important history, gorgeous scenery, and folk culture of ORBAs, as well as publicize local enterprises and specialties to external consumers, in order to lessen information asymmetry. Influencers may boost customer loyalty by obtaining followers. Photogenic locations should be constructed to attract visitors to take pictures and share them in social media to promote local businesses and economies. The government should provide support, supervision, and standards for the influencer economy in order to assure its healthy and long-term development and retain public interest. Guzhang County, located in the Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou old revolutionary base area, is Hunan Province's smallest county, with a population of only 140,000. However, in this unassuming county, four rural craftsmen have amassed over 10 million fans on their social media account, resulting in a "Guzhang phenomenon" of the influencer economy.

Third, leveraging the role of digitalization in minimizing the adverse effects of "long distance, high division, and low density" and amplifying the positive effects of differentiation to mitigate the negative impact of spatial diseconomies. Indeed, ORBAs' spatial diseconomies can be considerably mitigated by shortening the distance, removing segmentation, increasing density, and emphasizing differentiation. However, relative inefficiencies remain as compared to major metropolitan areas. As a result, ORBAs should capitalize on the indirect effects of digitalization to further mitigate the spatial diseconomies, as well as overcome the disadvantage and dilemma of spatial diseconomies by integrating real and virtual economies.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

6. Concluding Remarks

The revitalization of ORBAs is a key component of China's efforts to balance regional development and promote high-quality development for common prosperity. Over the past seven decades since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chinese government has always attached great importance to the development of ORBAs and extended continuous policy support without eliminating their backwardness. Since the 18th CPC National Congress, a series of policy initiatives to support ORBAs have formed the "1258" and the "1+N+X" policy frameworks, unveiling a new development stage for ORBAs. The question, however, is: What are the challenges and opportunities for the revitalization of ORBAs, and how should ORBAs tackle the challenges and embrace the opportunities? On the basis of the existing research, this paper has developed a "5D" analytical framework, identifying the spatial diseconomies stemming from distance, division, and density as key challenges for the revitalization of ORBAs. Rapid development of the digital economy, comparative and late-mover advantages, and the superimposition of policy preferences present great opportunities for revitalizing ORBAs. In this fortuitous setting, ORBAs should focus on the five "Ds" to increase density, shorten distance, bridge division, highlight differentiation, and accelerate digitalization, with a view to increasing spatial economic efficiencies and mitigating relative spatial inefficiencies. Moreover, we have put forth some preliminary suggestions for ORBAs to achieve those goals. However, this paper is focused on the revitalization of ORBAs at the macro and conceptual levels. Absent from this paper is a systematic comparative and empirical update of the revitalization of the 12 ORBAs, despite the discussion of some case studies. Moreover, no specific policy suggestions have been put forth for each ORBA. Subsequent research is expected to make up for these gaps.

References:

Chen X. H., Li Y. Y., Song L. J., et al. Theoretical Framework and Research Prospect of Digital Economy[J]. Journal of Management World, 2022, 38 (02): 208-224+13-16.

Gong B. L., Zhang Q. Z., Yuan L. R., et al. The Policy Innovation and Effect Evaluation of the Revitalization and Development in Old Revolutionary Base Areas[J]. Journal of Management World, 2022, 38 (08): 26-43.

Hang G. F., Liu X. R. The Historical Process and Experience of Poverty Alleviation and Elimination in the Old Revolutionary Areas and Opening-up[J]. Contemporary China History Studies, 2019, 26 (01): 101-115+159.

Huang J. H. "Red Triangle" Endogenous Development: Hengshan Case Study of Rural Revitalization in Old Revolutionary Base Areas[J]. China Rural Survey, 2023, (03): 125-141.

Huang Q. H., Yu Y. Z., Zhang S. L. Internet Development and Productivity Growth in Manufacturing Industry: Internal Mechanism and China Experiences[J]. China Industrial Economics, 2019, (08): 5-23.

Krugman P. On the Number and Location of Cities[J]. European Economic Review, 1993, 37(2): 293-298.

Li X. Y., Xu W. W., Zhu T.Y. Resource Situation and Action Logic of Rural Industry Revitalization in Old Revolutionary Base Areas: A Case Study of Ruijin Red Industry Development in Jiangxi Province[J]. Business and Management Journal, 2022, 44 (12): 64-82.

Liu A., Zhang S. L. The Common Prosperity Effect of the Implementation of the National Revitalization Plan for Old Revolutionary Areas: From the Perspective of Urban-rural Income Gap[J]. Chinese Rural Economy, 2023, (03): 45-65.

Liu X. Q., Mo Y., Zhang C., et al. Spatial Pattern of TikTok "New Farmer" Anchors and the Transformation Potential of Rural Cultural Tourism: Based on the Data of the Chanmama Website[J]. Progress in Geography, 2023, 42 (08): 1636-1650.

Lu M., Chen Z. Fragmented Growth: Why Economic Opening May Worsen Domestic Market Segmentation? [J].

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net

Economic Research Journal, 2009, 44 (03): 42-52.

Shi C., Xi Z. W., Wang X. L. Practice of the Revitalization and Development of Old Revolutionary Base Areas and the Weaknesses in Public Services[J]. Chinese Rural Economy, 2021, (07): 164-185.

Tang W. Integration of Factor Markets and the Development of Urban Agglomerations: An Analysis Based on Microenterprise Data[J]. Economics (Quarterly), 2021, 21(01): 1-22.

Wang Z., Geng W. J., Xia H. B., et al. Geographical Basis Assessment of Regional Development and Its Construction of Index System[J]. Acta Geographica Sinica, 2023, 78 (03): 558-571.

World Bank. World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography [M]. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2009.

Xia H. B. An Agent-based Modeling for Evolution of Regional Structure in China[M]. East China Normal University, 2013.

Xie X. L., Shen Y., Zhang H. X., et al. Can Digital Finance Promote Entrepreneurship? —Evidence from China[J]. China Economic Quarterly, 2018, 17 (04): 1557-1580.

Yang K. Z. Formulating and Implementing a National Strategy to Accelerate the Green Rise of Hebei[J]. Economics and Management, 2016, 30(05): 5-7.

Yang K. Z. Reshaping Economic Geography and Improving the Structure of Spatial Governance[J]. Regional Economic Review, 2018, (05): 16-18.

Yang M., Xie Z. Y., Yang F. X. Green Development Path for Adjacent Regions of Provincial Boundaries: Insights from the Revitalization of Old Revolutionary Base Areas[J]. The Journal of World Economy, 2022, 45 (08): 157-179.

Yao L. X., Lu G. X. The Effect of Rural Revitalization in the Implementation of Revitalization Planning in Old Revolutionary Areas: Based on an Analysis of County Samples in Bordering Areas of Provinces[J]. China Rural Economy, 2023, (03): 22-44.

Yi X. J., Zhou L. Does Digital Financial Inclusion Significantly Influence Household Consumption? Evidence from Household Survey Data in China[J]. Journal of Financial Research, 2018, (11): 47-67.

Zhang K., Xiong Z.Y., Huang X. J., et al. Red Tourism and Urban-rural Income Gap in Old Revolutionary Base Areas: An Empirical Analysis Based on the Difference-in-Differences Method[J]. China Agricultural Economic Review, 2023, (05):103-121.

Zhang X., Wan G. H., Wu H. T. Narrowing the Digital Division: The Development of Digital Finance with Chinese Characteristics[J]. Social Sciences in China, 2021, (08): 35-51+204-205.

Zhang X., Wan G. H., Zhang J. J., et al. Digital Economy, Financial Inclusion, and Inclusive Growth[J]. Economic Research Journal, 2019, 54 (08): 71-86.

Zhou L. A. Governing China's Local Officials: An Analysis of Promotion Tournament Model[J]. Economic Research Journal, 2007, (07): 36-50.

Zhou Z. H. Conversion in the Paradigm: The Progress from Evolutionary Geography, Administrative Geography to Political Geography[J]. Journal of Central China Normal University (Humanities and Social Sciences), 2013, 52 (01): 111-121.

(C)1994-2024 China Academic Journal Electronic Publishing House. All rights reserved. http://www.cnki.net