

# The Transportation Industry of Salt in Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region in 1941

Taking the Qingyang Region as an Example\*

Rongzhi Cui

Longdong University  
Qingyang, China

Xuan Wang

Longdong University  
Qingyang, China

**Abstract**—After 1941, the relations between the Communist Party of China and the Chinese Nationalist Party are strained, an economic blockade was imposed on the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region by the Chinese Nationalist Party, to result in extremely serious financial difficulties in Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region led by the Communist Party. Faced with this situation, under the leadership of the CPC, the people vigorously developed one of the natural resources — salt. With the increase in output, the salt in the border region is not only enough for the people there to their daily use, but also a large amount of surplus can be used for export to the National reunification area to ease the economic crisis in the border region. This thesis takes the various measures taken in the salt industry transportation in the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region in 1941 as the object of investigation, and focuses on the salt industry transportation practice in the Qingyang area today. It illustrated that the salt transportation policy of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region in 1941 and its implementation have enabled the Border Region to overcome various difficulties such as poor road capacity and lack of human and animal power. It has transported a large amount of salt to the area that ruled by Chinese Nationalist Party and supported the economic construction of the Border Region.

**Keywords**—Shaan-Gan-Ning border region; Salt's transportation; case study

## I. INTRODUCTION

During the anti-Japanese war period, salt is one of the three specialties of Shaan-Gan-Ning border areas. Before the war, salt production was low in the Sanbian area, besides serving the people in this region, it is mainly sold to Sanyuan of Shaanxi and Xifeng area of Gansu province [1], but little outside sales. After the Anti-Japanese War broke out in an all-round way, Japanese invaders gradually occupied the areas such as Lu salt, Reed salt and other places and imposed strict economic blockade policies. The area of Xi'an, Baoji and Shanxi and Henan provinces, which used to rely on Lu salt and Reed salt, then instead of had no salt to eat, relied on three sides 's table salt. Under the leadership of the government of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region, the salt

production of the border area gradually increased, which not only realized self-sufficiency, but also a large amount of surplus for export. However, the salt producing areas and the export ports are far away, so the key to the smooth export is whether the salt can be transported from the Sanbian area of salt production to the Longdong district, Guanzhong district and the the other export area.

Before the first half of 1940, salt transportation in the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region was free. There are two main types of salt transportation in this period, one is long foot, one is the people in the border area, and the main economic income is to profit from salt transportation, that is, the transportation of salt in the border area; the other is the people outside the border area. They are trafficking the goods outside the border area into the border area and trafficking in the salt export when returning profit. There is also a kind of short foot, which also carries salt for its important sideline in the time of the leisure time, and also carries one or two back salt for his own home.

After the salt shortage in 1940, the CCP and governments under its leadership in the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region began to pay attention to the work of salt transportation, and carried out the "official governor and the civil transport" policy in the salt transportation, and strengthened the supervision and guidance of the folk on its salt transportation.

## II. "TRANSPORTATION AND SALE OF SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND PACK SALT THROUGHOUT THE YEAR" [2]

In May 26, 1941, the government of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region was released to mobilize the people of the border area to transport and sell six hundred thousand pack of salt, and mobilize the masses to transport salt in the whole border area. "The decision" raises the status of the sale and sale of salt to the direct Anti-Japanese War and the responsibilities of the people, and puts forward the annual transportation and sale of six hundred thousand piggyback salt for the food of the four provinces of Shaanxi, Gansu, Shanxi and Henan provinces, and the benefit of the salt transportation is very much to the people who return the salt to the government, and 1/10 of them are allocated to the Longdong zoning and the Guanzhong zoning. The quantity of salt is two hundred and twenty thousand and fifteen thousand. The decision also put forward specific and feasible

\*This article is one of the achievements of the Western project of the national social science fund "salt industry and people's livelihood in Shaan-Gan-Ning border area during the war of resistance"(project number 17xzs037).

measures, such as the political call, the organization to promote, the establishment of salt stacks, the preferential treatment of the foot men, the cooperative form, the improvement of the road and so on, and instructed the establishment of the salt supervision and Transportation Commission at all levels to promote the active development of salt transportation.[3] Since then, the border government has made many very detailed regulations on the transportation of salt, such as mobilizing all men and women, young men and women with labor to achieve both salt transport and summer weeding; selecting strong animals to participate in salt transportation; it is best to organize salt transport units in the administrative village and send experienced people to escort them, and to register and ensure that salt is required to be cut. Participate in salt transportation; the merchants set up salt stores in the towns and towns, and the suppliers and marketing agencies buy salt for sale and sale during the period of salt transportation, and instruct the governments at all levels to implement the salt supervision and sale, plan the departure time and route ahead of time, and urge the important cadres to supervise and inspect them along the way. The experiences and lessons in the process of salt transportation are collected and reported according to the level. [4] In June 20th, the border government announced the measures for the promotion and sale of salt in the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region, which provided specific incentives and penalties for the masses carrying salt carrying livestock, the masses and various organs, troops and cooperatives. The border areas give awards to individuals and organizations that have made achievements in salt transportation work. There are mainly two awards: one is the honorary award and the other is the material award. The people who refuse to participate in the transportation of salt in accordance with the government are punished with a fine of less than twenty yuan or more, and the criminal offender shall be punished for preventing others from engaging in the sale and sale of salt. [5] It can be seen that the border area is mainly encouraged by salt transportation work, supplemented by severe penalties for the masses and staff that are passively treating salt transportation work. In July 25th, the government of the eighteenth army headquarters and the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region government issued a notice on the lack of the support of the salt transport, the joint regulations of the army and the government were "obstructing the government and violating the discipline" [6], if these things happen, they will not be tolerated once they are identified and punished. On August 14th and 19th, the government orders of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region - correcting the bad tendency in the movement of salt transportation, the government of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region and the notifications of the border area finance department - on the problems of transporting common salt, which were designed to solve the problems in the movement of salt transportation and maintain the salt masses in the border area. The benefit is encouraged and the masses are encouraged to carry salt. In addition to the distribution of relevant political orders and measures for the work of salt transportation, the government of the border region also inquired about the work of salt transportation in various counties of various departments, asked the organs at all levels to report it in time, and issued

instructions and letters on the related issues of salt transportation, and was aimed at the whole border area, such as the government of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region on the transportation of salt. Questions to each country's directive letters (July 3rd), a letter of instructions from the government of Shaan-Gan-Ning border region for reporting salt transport (July 4th); more is to guide a place in a certain situation, of which Longdong district and three side zoning are mainly: In June 30th, the border government explained in a letter to the Longdong special office that the amount of salt transportation in the region was roughly estimated. It was somewhat discrepant with the actual situation. The Longdong special administration can implement it flexibly according to the specific circumstances. At the same time, it emphasizes the need to mobilize the mobilized animals to carry the salt at once and not have to wait for the exact number of the countries. When the eyes are determined mobilize [7]. In July 18th, with regard to the work of salt transportation in Qu Zi Country, the government of the border region believed that the report in the present report was planned to add more than one hundred and three hundred and thirty places in each district. It was not very realistic. It should first be concentrated in the main necessary locations to be more practical, and instructed more cadres and people in the work of the salt transportation. Explain, especially help the masses solve the difficulties in salt transportation [8]. In August 20th, in a letter to the Commissioner of the Longdong special office, the government of the border district pointed out that the transportation of public salt seemed not to be caught in the counties of East Gansu. If it was not enough to mobilize, the officers were immediately divided into the countries, and then an in-depth mobilization was made [9]; in November 23rd, the border area government instructed Longdong and other counties to prepare ice rafts and continue to transport salt next year when they freeze [10], and so on.

In a word, the CCP and Shaan-Gan-Ning border region government issued a variety of notifications and instructions related to the transportation related to salt industry, and the large density is rare in the history of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region.

### III. PUTTING FORWARD THE "COMPLETE THE SALT TRANSPORT TASK IN TWO PHASES" [11]

Since May 26, 1941, since the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China decided to mobilize the masses to carry salt, after more than two months of propaganda and mobilization, the work of salt transportation in all parts of the local government was given to the central government. In July 30th, the "Liberation Daily" published "the government of the Shaan-Gan-Ning border region, the salt and Transportation Committee of the border area" on the completion of the two phases. The general order of the salt transportation task is divided into six hundred thousand tasks for the whole year. The first phase is completed from July 1941 to the end of December, and the whole border area is sold and sold for 322,000 piggyback (including 60,000 piggyback salt), and the redistribution of the Longdong area

and the Guanzhong Area is 145,000 piggyback and 9,000

piggyback. There is no change in the number of pack. [12]

TABLE I. COMPARISON OF SALT TRANSPORT TASKS BETWEEN GUAN AND LONG TWO DISTRICTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE ADJUSTMENT IN JULY 30, 1941 (UNIT: PACK)

Differences		Time*	long	Total transportation of salt	Adjustment coefficient	Transport of public salt	Proportion of common salt
Longdong District	before	1941.7-1942.2	7months	220,000	1	20,000	9.09%
	after	1941.7-1941.12	6months	145,000	0.659	20,000	13.79%
Guanzhong District	before	1941.7-1942.3 [13]	9months	15,000	1	500	3.33%
	after	1941.7-1941.12	6months	9,000	0.6	500	5.56%

<sup>a</sup>. \*It is generally believed that the starting date for the adjustment of the 1941 salt transport task stipulated by the government in the front of the region is 1941 of the lunar calendar June. The deadline is second years before the lunar New Year, that is, before the calendar February 14, 1942, the closing time of the middle section of the table is listed according to the subregional reporting plans.

It can be seen from the "Table I" that, whether it is for the Longdong region or the three sides zoning, the salt mobilization task started in May 1941 is somewhat out of reality: first, the time of mobilizing the salt is the time for the harvest of local winter wheat, and it is difficult for the masses to take account of the summer harvest and transportation due to the limitation of human and livestock salt transport. For example, when at the beginning of transmitting in Heshui County, it is the rural summer harvest harvest time. Not only the masses were all in the ground to harvest wheat, but also the village cadres were busy with the wheat harvest, and the meeting was held only at noon and evening, so the masses were tired, even someone dozed off during the meeting, and the policy of salt transportation was difficult to convey. Although the time can be used to transport salt is from June to December (in lunar calendar), the time seems very long, but in this period, the local people need to do the summer harvest, winter ploughing and other farm work. Secondly, the salt transport task of the 220,000 piggyback in the Longdong region is just like the task of the 15,000 piggyback in the Guanzhong area, which is too large to be completed on time and it is almost impossible to ensure the completion of the amount. The salt transport summary report in Huachi Country said: "the number of salt transport words is quite large. At the beginning of salt (at the end of July), the cadres did not have confidence and thought this work could not be completed. So, in more than ten days after the arrangement, the work of salt transportation was still pause." [14] Thirdly, the Qingyang region, which is composed of the Longdong region and the three border area, is located in the loess plateau gully area. The soil is poor and easy to be eroded, and the annual precipitation is less and the frost free period is short. Before the Anti-Japanese War, it can only maintain a very low level of supply and demand balance. Since the region was designated as the Eight Route Army in 1936, because of the short term increase of non-productive personnel and the need to support the front line of the war of resistance, all kinds of mobilization are increasing, and the burden of the masses has increased dramatically. In this area, the region has been attacked by various natural disasters in the years. In the case of poor agricultural harvest and the lack of production and living materials, the masses have to carry out normal production while facing various other mobilization, and the burden is too heavy. In the case of water and drought disaster in 1940, the harvests were not good. In the spring of 1941, it was also frozen and droughts,

and the grain was too heavy and the mobilization work was too much. Only over 150 cattle were mobilized every day by the three troops of the local garrison. As a result, the masses are not in a high mood for transportation of salt, and some undesirable tendencies have been found. For example, some people want to sell cattle by selling animals in order to avoid carrying salt. [15] In this case, the border area government has decisively adjusted the salt transport task this year. After adjustment, the salt transport task in the border area has been lightened. The total amount of salt transportation in the same time has been greatly reduced. The total amount of salt transportation in the Longdong and Guanzhong areas has been reduced by 75,000 and 6,000, and the adjustment coefficient is 0.6-0.7, which is equivalent to about 30% of the monthly salt transportation reduction task. However, the task of the transportation of public salt has not been alleviated accordingly. Therefore, the ratio of the total task to the total task of the public salt loading task in the District of Longdong has risen from 9.09% to 13.79%, and the ratio of public salt transportation in Guanzhong areas has risen from 3.33% to 5.56% within the people's circumference in all.

There were some problems in the salt transportation work in 1941. Many party and government cadres lack of patience and meticulous interpretation and persuasion when mobilizing salt, such as saying only to the masses that transportation of salt is the order of the superior; forced orders in the way of work, and even the practice of binding people, fines and forfeiture of animals. These shortcomings and errors not only seriously affect the smooth progress of the work of salt transportation, but also cause a few backward people in some areas dissatisfied with the party and the government, and even in some areas there have also been a few people to escape to the outer area. For this reason, in August 10th, the Northwest Bureau of the CCP Central Committee instructed that the mobilization of salt should be coordinated with the mobilization of political organizations and the nature of voluntary business [16], we must resolutely put an end to coercive orders for the masses to patiently explain and persuade them to cooperate with Party members and cadres. The smooth development of salt transportation in the border area is also disturbed by the outside world. That is, the KMT ruled areas around the border area often send members to the border area, and make use of the difficulties in the work of salt transportation in the border areas, disseminate the related rumors, and destroy the unity of the party, the army and the army and the people. In this regard,



the Northwest Bureau reminded the party committees all over the country to raise their vigilance, to expose the KMT's attempts to trap the people in the border areas and to carry out a wide range of struggles with the saboteurs.

As the government of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government carried out a great effort to carry the salt in 1941, 299,068 packs of salt were transported. Although the target of 322,000 packs of salt was not completed in the whole border area, it had increased by nearly 70 thousand piggyback compared with the 230 thousand piggyback in 1940. This is a great progress and is not easy under the backward traffic conditions at that time. From the existing data, the salt transport at that time was the most important work of the governments at all levels in the border areas, the frequent occurrence of various notices and orders, and the detailed measures made, and the rapid development of it was astonishing. The smooth implementation of the arduous task of salt transportation and marketing is inseparable from the positive guidance and vigorous supervision of the border region government.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

On May 26th, 1941, the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border region announced the decision of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border region government to mobilize the people of the border region to transport 600,000 piggybacks' salt, and began to implement the policy of "supervising the transportation of table salt". From the border area to each district, the country has set up the salt supervision and transportation committee, each district, the township, the village organizes the transportation team, mostly by the country, the district effective cadre leadership carries the salt to the three sides division. Agencies and troops also sent salt teams to answer the call. In 1941, there were some shortcomings in salt transportation in the border area. For example, the work of selling 600,000 piggybacks' salt a year is too high and later less than 300,000 piggybacks in the whole border region, which proves that such an objective is impossible to achieve. But the Communist Party is keen to fix goals while working. In the implementation of the policy of supervision and transportation, through the investigation of the manpower, animal power and economic situation of the whole border region, it was found that the 600,000 load target was too high, and it was immediately changed to 322,000, which had to be said to be the concrete embodiment of the party's practical and realistic style. In addition, in the course of implementing the policy of supervising the movement of salt, there have been some undesirable tendencies, such as the lack of proper propaganda and explanation of the grassroots cadres, and even their own negative attitude towards salt transportation. Some cadres have also pushed hard the camp, which has led to a great deal of resistance among the masses. There are a variety of folk rumors spread, sometimes selling cattle, fled to the Friends of the incident. In this regard, the Border region attaches great importance to this, and has held meetings at various levels many times to demand cadres to correct the unhealthy style of work and strictly prohibit the style of commandism in the work of salt transportation.

In the work of salt transportation in 1941, Qingyang countries in Shaan-Gan-Ning Border region made arduous efforts under the leadership of the sub-district. In order to ensure the smooth progress of salt transportation, the county set up the salt transportation committee, with the main county leaders as the responsible person, planning, mobilization, supervision of the county salt transport work. In all districts, township grass-roots workers went deep into the field to investigate the conditions related to local salt transportation, and did not tire of explaining and propagating to the masses, organizing salt transport teams below the county level, and sending competent cadres at all levels to lead the salt transportation teams in person. Longdong district, trilateral division also led the masses to build roads, improve traffic conditions, improve salt transport efficiency. Communist-led local governments carried out salt transportation in 1941 with great success.

By the end of 1941, the whole border region carried 299068 piggyback salts, 1.3 times as much salt as in 1940. The basic reason why the border area can achieve such a result lies in the leadership and organization of all levels of government. It can be said that without the strong leadership of the Communist Party of China and the governments at all levels, the transportation of salt in the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border region in 1941 could never have achieved such impressive results.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Liudixiang: "Overview of Salt Work in the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression", *Journal of Yiyang Teachers College*, No. 4, 1996, P. 41
- [2] "Decision of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region government to mobilize the people of the border area to transport 600,000 packs of salt" (May 26, 1941), "Compilation of Historical Materials of the Yanchi Archives during the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region", P. 785.
- [3] "Decision of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region government to mobilize the people of the border area to transport 600,000 loins of salt"(May 26, 1941), "Compilation of Historical Materials of the Yanchi Archives during the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region", Pp. 782-789.
- [4] "Supplementary Measures for the Distribution of Salt by the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government" (June 10, 1941), edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government", No. 303.
- [5] "Measures for Promoting Salt Awards and Penalties in the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region" (June 20, 1941), edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government", Series 3, Pp. 316-319.
- [6] "The 18th Army Command and the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government's Notice on no dragging Salt Animal Support"(July 25, 1941), edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government" Fourth Series, Archives Publishing House, 1991 Edition, P. 59.
- [7] "Letter from the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government to the Longdong Agency on Salt Transportation" (June 30, 1941), edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government", Series 3, P. 331.
- [8] "The Border Region Government's Reply to the Song County Government on the Question of Salt Transportation" (July 18, 1941),

compiled by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government", Series 4, P. 48.

- [9] "Letter from the Border Region Government to the Commissioner of the Longdong Agency on Salt Transportation"(August 20, 1941), co-edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government" Fourth Series, P. 118.
- [10] "Express Post Representative-The counties immediately organized the transportation of public salt" (November 23, 1941), edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government", Series 4, Archives Publishing House, 1991 Edition, P. 278.
- [11] "General Order of the Shaanxi-Gansu-Ningxia Border Region Government and the Border Region Experimental Supervision Committee on the Completion of Salt Transportation in Two Periods"(July 30, 1941), compiled by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government, Series 4, P. 60.
- [12] "General Order of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government and the Border Region Experimental Supervision Committee on the Completion of Salt Transportation in Two Periods"(July 30, 1941), compiled by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning Border Region Government, Series 4, Pp. 60-61.
- [13] "The submission of the Guanzhong Agency(Excerpt)"(June 29, 1941), edited by the Shaanxi Provincial Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: The fourth series of "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government", 53-54 pages.
- [14] "Huachi Country Salt Operation Work Report"(September 30, 1941), edited by Shaanxi Provincial Archives and Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government", Series 4, P. 390.
- [15] "Heshui Country Salt Transport Report"(July 28, 1941), edited by Shaanxi Provincial Archives and Shaanxi Provincial Academy of Social Sciences: "Selected Documents of the Shaan-Gan-Ning District Government", No. 4, Pp. 102-106.
- [16] "Emergency Directive of the Northwest Bureau on Salt Transportation Work"(August 10, 1941), compiled by the Central Archives and the Shaanxi Provincial Archives: "Document Collection of the Northwest Bureau of the CPC Central Committee", 1941, Internal Information, 1994 Edition, P. 148.