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Gender Differences in Chinese Migration

C. Cindy Fan

Migration is one of the most studied topics in China. Yet research on gender differences in Chinese migration is meager, despite the fact that female migrants constituted 43.97 percent of all migrants during the period 1985-1990 and 52.29 percent during 1995-2000 (Population Census Office 2002) and the patterns and processes of female migration differ considerably from male migration.¹ This lack of attention is due to the widespread perception that migration is primarily led by men and that female migration is problematic. The widely held notions that men's migration propensity is higher than women's, that men travel longer distances, and that men move primarily for economic reasons and women for social reasons are mostly based on cursory observations and attributed to China's sociocultural tradition. In this chapter, I argue that as China undergoes an unprecedented transition from a centrally planned socialist economy to one in which both state plan and market operate simultaneously, gender differences can no longer be explained only as an outcome of traditional sociocultural factors. They must also be interpreted in relation to structural factors pertinent to this transition. Specifically, the unique spatial-economic changes and peculiar institutional controls characterizing China's transitional economy are critical factors of the migration process.

The empirical analysis in this chapter aims at systematically comparing the migration patterns and processes of Chinese men and women. It evaluates the three notions of gender differences outlined above, emphasizes the spatial patterns of male and female migration, and examines differentials in migrants' participation in the labor market. By doing so, I argue for greater attention to the role of gender in migration research and highlight the prominence of economic rationale and long-distance moves among female migrants in China.

Research on Gender Differences in Migration

Despite the proliferation of research on Chinese migration since the late 1980s, relatively little attention has been given to gender differences in migration. Perhaps the best evidence of this observation is Ji and Shao's (1995: 278–322) annotated bibliography, which reviews migration research published in China between 1991 and 1994. Among the ninety-four publications they included, only one article focuses specifically on gender differences, namely Li (1993). Since the mid-1990s, more researchers in and outside China have begun to examine the role of gender in migration (e.g., Cai 1997; Chiang 1999; Davin 1997, 1998, 1999; Fan 2000; Wang 2000; West and Zhao 2000; Yang and Guo 1999), but the majority of migration research lump men and women together or focus only on the migration of men. Spatial analyses of migration data, in particular, rarely differentiate between male and female migrants (e.g., Ding 1994; M. H. Li 1994; Zhu 1994), with the result that we know little about the spatial patterns of male and female migration in China. Comprehensive volumes on Chinese migration typically devote only a few pages to gender differences or to specific types of female or male migration (e.g., Shen and Tong 1992; Yang 1994). Very commonly, discussion of gender differences does not go beyond simple comparisons of the volume or rate of female and male migration (e.g., Wei 1995). Like much of the literature on migration, gender is not considered a central organizing theme but is frequently treated as one of many independent variables, such as age and education, for explaining differentials in migration volumes or rates (Pedraza 1991). These existing approaches suggest a greater emphasis on patterns rather than processes of migration and, above all, a lack of attention on the importance of gender for understanding migration and on the differential constraints and opportunities conducive to men's and women's mobility.

More frequently found are studies focused specifically on female migration without comparing it with male migration. These studies are mostly concerned with the reproduction behavior of female migrants and the difficulties of implementing birth control policies among migrants (e.g., Gu and Jian 1994: 62–79; Xu and Zhen 1992). Another popular theme is marriage. Researchers typically use an evaluative approach and discuss the pros and cons of female migration and the positive and negative impacts of female in-migrants (dubbed *wailainu* or “women from outside”) (e.g., Li et al. 1991; Liu 1990; Xu and Ye 1992; Yang 1991). Underlying these approaches is the assumption that female migration is problematic and deviates from the “regular” migration led by men. On the other hand, insights about the role of gender are at best obscure when research fails to systematically compare the migration patterns and processes of men and women.

There are several widely held notions about differences between male and female migrants in China. First, men have a higher migration propensity than women. Most scholars explain this difference as an outcome of discrepancies between men's and women's social statuses and traditional roles (Li 1993; Yu and Day 1994; Zhang

1995). Second, men travel longer distances than women (e.g., Kuashiji de zhongguo . . . 1994: 253). While social status and tradition are key factors, the literature also draws heavily upon Ravenstein's “laws” of migration to explain men's greater likelihood to take risks and overcome intervening obstacles associated with long-distance migration (e.g., Yang 1994: 201). However, existing studies have provided little information on the specific spatial patterns of male and female migration. Third, men are more likely to migrate for economic reasons, and women for social reasons and as tied movers. This reflects not only the impacts of social status and tradition but also the dominance of men in the Chinese economy (e.g., Gu and Jian 1994: 24; Li 1993; Wang and Hu 1996: 91–92). The above observations are often not based on systematic empirical analyses, nor is there any discussion of how they are related to the recent changes in the Chinese spatial and political economy. As a result, there is little attention on the impact of migration on men and women or their differential experiences in the labor market,² although these are indeed important perspectives for a fuller understanding of the role of gender in the migration process.

In the following, I discuss how sociocultural factors, spatial-economic changes, and the *hukou* institution contribute to gender differences in migration. This discussion then forms the basis for interpreting gender differentials in migration propensity, spatial patterns of migration, reasons for migration, and migrants' occupations, which will be examined with the support of empirical data.

Factors of Gender Differences in Migration

Gender differences in migration are a function of important structural forces, which are often based on gender, that determine the status of men and women and their integration into development (Lim 1993). Although gender differences in migration are often attributed to China's sociocultural tradition, which maintains a persistent gap between the status of men and the status of women, other structural forces shaping the Chinese spatial and political economy must also be addressed for a better understanding of gender and migration. During China's transition from a centrally planned economy to one increasingly employing market mechanisms, specific spatial-economic outcomes have brought about new and varied mobility opportunities for men and women. The *hukou* institution, or household registration system, is a product of the socialist state and has unique meanings for migrants as a whole and for the differential migration processes of men and women. The following subsections describe these structural factors in China and their implications for male and female migration.

Sociocultural Factors

The traditional Chinese view of gender is one rooted in Confucianism, which prescribes individuals' roles based on their positions relative to others. The Chinese woman is defined in relation to, and is subordinate to, other males in the family—the father, the husband, and the son(s). Under the patrilineal tradition, a daughter

moves out and joins her husband's family, adding to the latter's labor resources. Parents of a son, especially in rural areas, are eager to recruit the labor of a daughter-in-law, which partly accounts for the prevalence of early marriages (Croll 1987). On the other hand, the natal family has little incentive to invest in a daughter's education relative to her male siblings (L. Li 1994; Lu 1997). "Daughters married out are like water spilled out" best describes this pragmatic yet popular perception, which reinforces the persistent gender gap in education. According to the 2000 census, 13.47 percent of the female population aged fifteen or older was illiterate, compared with 4.85 percent of their male counterparts (Population Census Office 2002). Lower education translates into less access to knowledge, resources, and opportunities—all factors constraining women's mobility.

The notion of household strategy explains how collective and pragmatic decision-making contributes to gender differentials in mobility in China (Cai 1997). When migration of one or more family members is deemed favorable for bringing about increases and/or diversification of family income, men are more likely candidates because of their higher education and because of the prevailing gender discrimination in the labor market, which favors men (Knight and Song 1995). Women are more likely to remain in order to take care of household chores or work in the fields. This gendered division of labor further reinforces the practice of allocating more investment to sons than to daughters, sustaining if not widening the gender gap in education.

The Confucian view that women's place is in the family restricts their mobility. There is continued pressure for Chinese women to marry early; among the female population between the ages of 20 and 24 in 1990, more than half were married. As in many other societies, Chinese women are subject to a demanding set of gendered expectations and responsibilities associated with marriage and with their roles as wives and mothers. Men's work is traditionally considered more important, partly because of sociocultural tradition but also because their higher education correlates with higher income. Although women's mobility may increase during "marriage ages," due to the patrilineal tradition, they tend to be considerably less mobile after marriage (Li and Li 1995). When they do migrate, they are more likely than their spouses to be tied movers.

The Maoist period set itself apart from previous periods by the state's active intervention to mobilize women to engage in production as fully as men. Partly as a result of such efforts, Chinese women's level of labor-force participation is among the highest in the world (Bauer et al. 1992; Riley 1996). Nonetheless, gender continues to be a major source of inequality in China (Maurer-Fazio et al. 1997; Park 1992). The continued resistance to the one-child policy, especially among the rural population, is testimony to the persistent perception that men are more highly valued than women. The exceedingly high sex ratio at birth, reflecting aggressive efforts to ensure male offspring (e.g., gender-specific abortions, female infanticide, nonreporting of female births), illustrates a perpetual undermining of the status of women (Riley 1996). In rural areas, in particular, the gap in access to education between women and men remains large (Bauer et al. 1992; L. Li 1994). Although peasant men may improve their social and economic mobility by joining the military, going

to school, and becoming cadres, many Chinese women in the countryside remain poor and uneducated.

The persistent gender gap in social status is widely considered the key factor explaining gender differences in migration. Researchers who observed that Chinese women had a lower migration propensity than men, and that women migrated shorter distances than men, generally attributed these findings to traditional gender roles and gendered division of labor (e.g., Li 1993; Zhang 1995). The prominence of sociocultural factors underlies another widely accepted notion—that men are more likely to migrate for economic reasons and women are more likely to be tied movers or move for social reasons (e.g., Kuashiji de zhongguo . . . 1994; Rowland 1994).

Nevertheless, the above findings are mostly based on cursory empirical observations, which overlook complexities in men's and women's migration processes. For example, poor and uneducated women constitute a special labor force heavily recruited to fulfill growing demands in industrial and services sectors, especially in coastal open zones. The *hukou* institution reinforces segmentation and gendered division of labor in the labor market, which affects how and where men and women migrate. Female marriage migrants move long distances from the poor western part of China to the rich eastern region, evidence of the importance of spatial-economic factors and of the *hukou* institution. None of these can be fully understood simply on the basis of sociocultural factors; they must be interpreted by integrating sociocultural factors with the spatial-economic changes taking place in the Chinese economy and the *hukou* institution.

Spatial-Economic Changes

The success of China's rural reform, namely, the household responsibility system, has unleashed a large and growing agricultural labor surplus, to which the state responded in 1984 by relaxing its control over temporary migration, allowing peasants to obtain "temporary residence permits" (*shanzhuheng*) ("Guowuyuan dui nongmin . . ." 1984). Subsequently, waves of migrants flocked to towns and cities to look for jobs in the industrial and service sectors. The model of "leaving the land but not the village" (*litu bu lixiang*) has been adopted by many peasants who work in towns adjacent to farmland and continue to engage in farmwork (e.g., during harvests). "Leaving the land and the village" (*litu you lixiang*) has become increasingly popular among peasant migrants who have moved to towns and cities farther away. As discussed earlier, because of their greater opportunities in the labor market, men are usually considered more favorable candidates for migration that is aimed at augmenting household income. In contrast, many women are left behind to take care of the farmland, resulting in the feminization of agriculture already observed by many researchers (Bossen 1994; Gao 1994a). Some households contract their land to other workers, or hire workers from other areas to farm their land, triggering further waves of migration among rural areas.

At the same time, China's reform and open-door policies have produced a spatial economy characterized by a rapidly growing coastal region and by lagging inland

areas, providing a strong incentive to both men and women in poorer areas to migrate to coastal areas (Fan 1995; 1996). In many coastal open zones, foreign investment, in conjunction with local cadres, has brought about a proliferation of industrial enterprises, many of which are found in rural areas adjacent to cities and towns. Rural areas in coastal provinces are especially attractive to foreign investors because of preferential policies, availability of space, more relaxed environmental regulations, and wage rates that are lower than those of urban areas. A peculiar mixed industrial-agricultural landscape (dubbed *desakota* by McGee [1991]) characterizes these rural enterprises. The Pearl River Delta is a prominent example (Lin 1997: 115).

Many rural enterprises recruit migrant workers to take up low-skilled, labor-intensive, low-paying jobs. The availability of large numbers of poor uneducated peasant women, and the widely accepted notion that they are docile and tolerant of long hours of work and poor working conditions, has made them perfect candidates for these rural enterprises. In areas with extensive rural industrialization, opportunities and wages have improved for men, whereas new employment opportunities in export-processing industries have channeled women into the lowest-paid and least secure new jobs, such as in the apparel, footwear, and electronic industries (Gao 1994b; L. Li 1994). Nevertheless, the economic reforms have indeed introduced new, perhaps unprecedented, incentives and opportunities for Chinese women to migrate on their own rather than as tied movers (Kuashiji de zhongguo . . . 1994: 253). Their sheer volume prompted the invention of the term *dagongmei*,³ which challenges the notion that women migrate primarily for social motives. Many *dagongmei* migrated from poor inland provinces to coastal open zones, contradicting another widely held notion that women move primarily short distances.

Another type of migration heavily influenced by changes in the spatial economy is marriage migration. Much research on marriage migration assumes that marriage is the motive and migration is its by-product and that women are more likely than men to migrate in response to marriage. Although this is largely true in China, where the patrilineal tradition prescribes that women move to their husbands' households, recent studies by Fan and Huang (1998) and Fan and Li (2002) questioned the assumption that marriage migration is primarily social rather than economic in nature. Due to a lack of other opportunities, women in poor areas tend to resort to marriage as a strategy for achieving social mobility (Bossen 1984; Honig and Hershatter 1988; Wang and Hu 1996: 287). In their study, Fan and Huang (1998) documented well-defined streams of female marriage migration from the poorer southwestern provinces to the more developed eastern region. This suggests a strong economic rationale and presence of women's agency behind such migration and questions the notions that women move primarily for social reasons and over short distances. Both *dagongmei* and marriage migrants are prominent among female migrants, whose large volumes and unique migration processes are a strong testament to the critical role of spatial-economic changes in Chinese migration.

The Hukou Institution

Hukou is a form of population registration formally introduced in China in 1958 (Chan and Zhang 1999; Cheng and Selden 1994; China reforms 2001; Yu 2002: 18). Every Chinese household has a *hukou* registration "book" that records every household member and their rural (agricultural) or urban (nonagricultural) *hukou* status. The *hukou* institution is a key factor for defining an individual's opportunities and socioeconomic positions in China (Cheng and Seldon 1994; Christiansen 1990). It has for decades tied Chinese peasants to the countryside, and it underlies the segmentation and slow emergence of China's labor market (Knight and Song 1995). Without the proper *hukou* in the destination, a migrant is excluded from the benefits that local people are entitled to (such as housing and education) and is ineligible for many desirable jobs (especially in the formal sector) offering better pay and greater security.

The 1984 directive, outlined earlier, allowed peasants to move as temporary migrants to cities and towns but did not permit transfer of their *hukou* to their destination. These "non-*hukou* migrants," or "temporary migrants," constitute a less formal type of migration, largely based on migrants' initiatives rather than state planning. It contrasts with the more formal, government-regulated "*hukou* migration," or "permanent migration," such as a job transfer from one work unit to another, or a job assignment from the state after college graduation. The temporary migrants, mostly peasants, are generally considered outsiders and are not welcome to enter the local labor market unless they take on the particular kinds of jobs that natives are unwilling to assume (Chan 1996; Mallee 1996; Smith 1996; Solinger 1995; Yang and Guo 1996). Despite their active participation in the destination's labor force, migrants without local *hukou* are shut out from many desirable jobs and benefits local people are entitled to. Many are confined to the bottom rungs and most marginal sectors of the economic hierarchy. The distinctions among urban natives, permanent migrants, and temporary migrants further reinforce the segmentation of the labor market (Fan 2002).

Expansion of the urban economy and increasing consumerism have created new demands for temporary migrants, who by their work could ease the lives of urban residents and allow the latter to participate more fully in their preferred work (Roberts 1997). Gendered markets have come into being targeting male or female temporary migrants for specific kinds of jobs. Physically demanding jobs, such as those involved in construction and manual loading and transporting, for example, are virtually exclusively taken by male migrants; many service jobs requiring low skills and affording low pay, such as those in restaurants and hotels, are primarily assumed by female migrants (Yang and Guo 1996). Markets for nannies and maids now exist in many Chinese cities, drawing migrant women to work in urban homes, enabling female spouses to work outside the home. These examples suggest that the *hukou* institution and labor market segmentation have created new and separate occupational niches for male and female migrants (Fan 2003).

Under the current system, it is very difficult to shift one's *hukou* unless one joins the army or goes away to college.⁴ However, marriage migration is considered permanent, and one is permitted to transfer his or her *hukou* to a new destination in that circumstance, especially if the destination is a rural area.⁵ This opportunity, in conjunction with the economic rationale of marriage migration discussed earlier, is particularly attractive to peasant women from poor areas who wish to migrate to more desirable, albeit rural, areas. Not only can a migrant woman benefit from the resources in her husband's family, she can also achieve permanent residence and be in a better position to gain access to resources in the destination, including employment opportunities and social benefits provided by employers and local governments. In other words, both economic and institutional benefits are relevant to explaining the prevalence of female marriage migration. This, in conjunction with the gendered labor market processes for male and female migrants, underscores the importance of *hukou* for understanding Chinese migration.

Empirical Analysis

The above discussion has sought to establish that gender differences in migration are more complicated than what is revealed by a simple comparison of mobility rates. Various gendered constraints and opportunities shape the migration processes of men and women. The empirical analysis below documents the differences between male and female migration in China and interprets these differences by drawing upon the sociocultural, spatial-economic, and institutional factors outlined above. Specifically, it examines gender differences in migration propensity, spatial patterns of migration, reasons for migration, and the occupation of migrants.

Data for the empirical analysis are mainly drawn from a one-percent village-level sample of the 1990 census,⁶ and accordingly the numerical data presented below have been multiplied by 100. The 1990 census defines a migrant as an individual five years or older whose usual place of residence on July 1, 1985, was in a different urban district, county-level city, or county than that on July 1, 1990. Although this definition underestimates the actual volume of migration by excluding multiple moves, return migrants, migrants younger than five years old, and moves within the same county-level unit, the 1990 census remains by far the most comprehensive source of national migration data in China.

Migration Propensity

Migration is a selective process. Who migrates and who does not reflect differentials in the population in terms of motivation to migrate, access to resources, knowledge and opportunities about migration, and ability to overcome the obstacles to migration. Table 15.1 illustrates some aspects of gender differences in migration selectivity. Among the 35.3 million migrants between 1985 and 1990, 56.03 percent were male and 43.97 percent were female. Male and female migrants accounted for 3.74 percent

TABLE 15.1 Gender Differentials in Socioeconomic Characteristics

	Nonmigrants		Migrants		Male-Female Ratio	
	Male (1)	Female (2)	Male (3)	Female (4)	Nonmigrants (5) ^a	Migrants (6) ^b
Number						
millions	509.65	484.86	19.81	15.54		
%	96.26	96.89	3.74	3.11	99	120
Age						
Mean (years)	31.64	32.22	27.34	26.67		
15-29 (%)	33.93	34.11	64.00	66.35	99	96
Hukou (%)						
Agricultural	78.88	81.56	44.19	57.49	97	77
Education Level (%)						
6+						
Junior high or above	42.70	28.56	71.98	58.29	150	123
15-29						
Junior high or above	67.47	52.32	85.23	70.61	129	121

NOTE: This table refers to population aged 5 and above.

^a(5) = (1) / (2) * 100

^b(6) = (3) / (4) * 100

SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

and 3.11 percent of their respective populations aged five or above in 1990. This table employs the male-female ratio (columns 5 and 6), a technique based on the logic of the sex ratio, in order to evaluate differentials in men's and women's relative proportions in various categories. A male-female ratio larger than 100 indicates a larger proportion of men than women, and a ratio smaller than 100 indicates a larger proportion of women than men. This technique controls for the distribution of men and women in the general population and permits an unbiased comparison of male and female migrants. For example, in 1990, the sex ratio of Chinese migrants was 127, which reflects gender differentials in migration propensity as well as a high sex ratio in the general population (106 for the population aged 5+). By employing the male-female ratio, which compares the relative proportions of male (3.74 percent) and female (3.11 percent) migrants rather than their actual numbers, we control for the sex-ratio effect of the general population. After correcting for the effect of gender distribution in the general population, for every 100 female migrants there were 120 male migrants.

Mean ages of migrants (27.34 for men and 26.67 for women) and nonmigrants (31.64 for men and 32.22 for women) show that the former were significantly younger than the latter. Migration was especially selective of the 15-29 age group, which accounted for 64 percent of male migrants and 66.35 percent of female migrants. The selectivity of young adults will be discussed more fully below.

Agricultural *hukou* represents primarily the rural population in China and accounted for the majority of male (78.88 percent) and female (81.56 percent) nonmigrants. The proportions of migrants with agricultural *hukou* were substantially lower. However, the male-female ratio of 77 indicates that a significantly higher proportion of female migrants than male migrants had agricultural *hukou* and suggests

that female migrants were more likely than their male counterparts to come from rural backgrounds.

The education statistics in Table 15.1 show that migration is indeed selective of the skilled and able. For both the 6+ and 15–29 age groups, the proportions of migrants with junior-high-or-above education were significantly higher than their nonmigrant counterparts. The male-female ratios for the nonmigrant population indicate a large gender gap in education—a ratio of 150 for nonmigrants aged 6 or older means that men were one and a half times more likely than women to have received education at or above the junior-high level. The imbalance was smaller among migrants, however, as illustrated by smaller ratios for both the 6+ (123) and 15–29 (121) age groups. Even though the ratios were still larger than 100, their smaller size indicates that migration was especially selective of women substantially more educated than their nonmigrant counterparts. In other words, female migrants had gained proportionally more education relative to male migrants, which suggests that the former's improvement in human capital was a means to make up for the sociocultural constraints on women's mobility.

Figure 15.1 shows age-specific migration rates, defined as the number of migrants per 100 people. Regardless of gender, and for both intraprovincial and interprovincial moves, age-specific migration rates reached their peaks at the 20–24 year age group. Not surprisingly, migration rates for intraprovincial moves were higher than for interprovincial moves, since the latter likely involved longer distances and more severe intervening obstacles. In terms of gender differentials, men's migration rates were higher than women's across almost all age groups, except for ages 70 and above where the sex ratio of the Chinese population significantly favored women (see also Figure 15.2 and below).

The differential effects of the life cycle on men and women are depicted in Figure 15.2, which plots the sex ratio of the Chinese population and migrants with age. A higher life expectancy among Chinese women than men contributed to sex ratios lower than 100 among the population aged 65 and above. For all other age groups, the sex ratio remained higher than 100, making China one of the few countries in the world where men outnumbered women and reflecting a persistent gap in social status between men and women. The sex ratio of migrants was markedly higher than that of the general population, except for the 70+ ages, again confirming that men had a higher migration propensity than women.

Two age periods of particularly high migrant sex ratios stand out. First, the sex ratio increased through the young-adult ages and encountered its first peak at 25–29 for interprovincial migrants and 30–34 for intraprovincial migrants, which coincided with the “just-married” ages of the majority of Chinese women and reflected marriage's constraints on women's mobility. The majority of Chinese women between the ages of 20 and 24 (50.94 percent), and 94.10 percent of those aged 25–29, were married. Men's age of marriage tended to be somewhat older, hence the relatively lower proportions of married men for age groups 20–24 (30.53 percent) and 25–29 (79.97 percent). By ages 30–34, 98.33 percent of women and 91.13 percent of men were married. Migration did not seem to have delayed women's marriage, as respectively

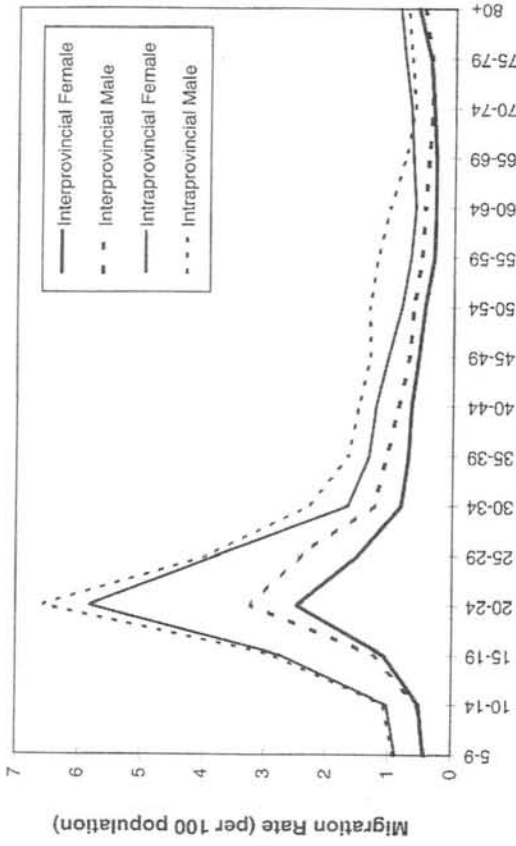


FIGURE 15.1 Gender Differentials in Age-Specific Migration Rate
SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

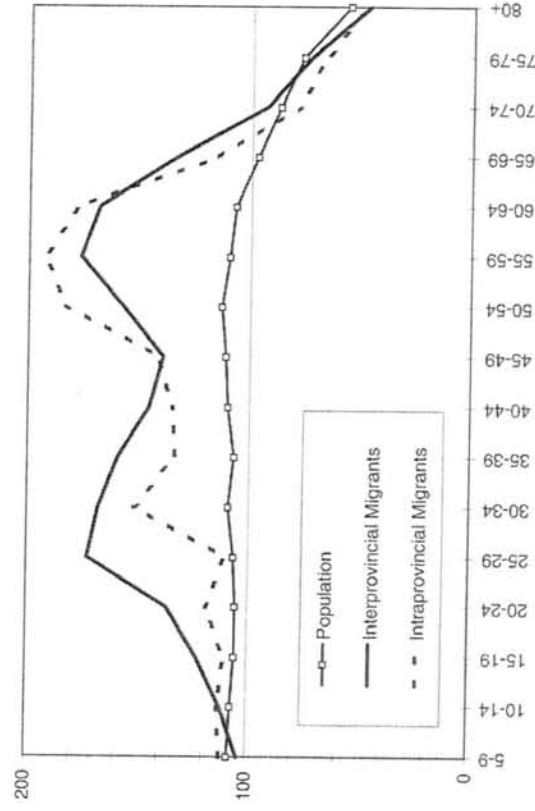


FIGURE 15.2 Sex Ratio of Chinese Population and Migrants
SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

52.96 percent and 92.16 percent of female migrants aged 20–24 and 25–29 were married, similar to the respective proportions in the general population. This confirms that Chinese women continue to be under pressure to marry at a young age, despite the interruption of migration. On the other hand, migration's effect on men's age of marriage was stronger, as the marriage rates of male migrants in age groups 20–24, 25–29, and 30–34 (13.38 percent, 63.48 percent, and 85.86 percent respec-

tively) were significantly lower than the respective proportions for all Chinese men (30.53 percent, 79.97 percent, and 91.13 percent respectively).

Marriage has traditionally had a bigger negative effect on women's mobility than men's. The peaks in migrants' sex ratio at 25–29 for interprovincial migrants and 30–34 for intraprovincial migrants (Figure 15.2) are compelling evidence for this effect. The age differential in the peaks reflects differentials in age of marriage between intraprovincial and interprovincial migrants. Among female interprovincial migrants between the ages of 20 and 24, 57.7 percent were married, compared with 50.95 percent among their intraprovincial counterparts, suggesting that the former's average age of marriage was younger, hence an earlier peak in migrants' sex ratio.

Another factor in the rise in migrants' sex ratio during the late 20s and early 30s is the more concentrated age selectivity among female migrants. The proportion of female migrants aged below 25 was 56.70 percent, compared with 53.13 percent for their male counterparts. Marriage and industry/business were the two leading reasons for migration among Chinese women (see also Table 15.3 and note 9). The majority (53.01 percent and 64.15 percent respectively) of them completed these two types of migration before age 25. The leading reasons for male migrants were industry/business and job transfer, and the majority of male migrants who moved for these reasons (64.67 percent and 80.29 percent respectively) were 25 years or older. In other words, differentials in the age distribution of female and male migrants also contributed to a rise of sex ratio after the age of 25.

The second peak in sex ratio occurred between the 50–54 and 60–64 age groups (Figure 15.2). Unlike the young adult ages, migrants in these age groups accounted for relatively small proportions of total migrants (see Figure 15.1). Nonetheless, the high sex ratios reflect important life cycle and migration differentials between men and women. The leading reasons for migration in these age groups were, in ranked order, retirement, industry/business, and job transfer, all related to employment. Between the ages of 50 and 64, men accounted for more than 80 percent of the migrants for these three reasons, reflecting existing gender discrepancies in labor force participation and men's greater access to labor market opportunities.

Spatial Patterns of Migration

Table 15.2 shows intraprovincial and interprovincial migration rates by region, using the regional schemes popularized by the Seventh Five-Year Plan (see also Figures 15.3 and 15.4). Since the census definition of migrants excluded those aged below 5, migration rate is defined as the number of migrants per 100 population aged 5 or above. As expected, for both men and women, intraprovincial migration rates were higher than interprovincial migration rates. Intraprovincial moves accounted for respectively 65.85 percent and 69.4 percent of male and female migration. The higher proportion of female intraprovincial migration indicates that women were more likely than men to move short distances. But the data on interprovincial migration suggests otherwise, which will be discussed below. Intraprovincial migration

TABLE 15.2 Male and Female Intraprovincial, Interprovincial, and Interregional Migration

Migration Rate	Male				Female			
	Eastern	Central	Western	Sum	Eastern	Central	Western	Sum
Intraprovincial	2.62	2.39	2.16	2.43	2.10	2.11	2.21	2.13
Interprovincial	1.33	1.20	1.23	1.26	0.79	0.90	1.28	0.94
Out-migration	1.78	0.88	0.90	1.26	1.36	0.63	0.64	0.94
In-migration								
<i>Regional Distribution of Interprovincial Migrants</i>								
	Origin				Destination			
Eastern	28.85 ^a	11.41 ^b	3.82 ^b	44.07	24.39 ^a	7.81 ^b	3.07 ^b	35.27
Central	21.80 ^b	8.48 ^a	3.78 ^b	34.06	21.76 ^b	8.92 ^a	3.49 ^b	34.16
Western	8.42 ^b	4.98 ^b	8.47 ^a	21.87	14.58 ^b	7.29 ^b	8.71 ^a	30.57
Sum	59.06	24.86	16.08	100.00	60.72	24.01	15.27	100.00

NOTE: Migration rate = migrants per 100 population aged 5 or above.

^aintra-regional move

^binter-regional move

SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

rates were quite uniform across regions for female migrants, but for male migrants showed a significant downward gradient from the eastern (2.62 percent) toward the western (2.16 percent) region, indicating that men's migration propensity was highest in the eastern region.

In terms of interprovincial migration, men had the highest out-migration rate (1.33 percent) and also the highest in-migration rate (1.78 percent) in the eastern region. While women also had the highest in-migration rate in the eastern region (1.36 percent), their out-migration rate was the highest in the western region (1.28 percent). These differences hint at gender differentials in the paths of interprovincial migration. Regional distribution of interprovincial migrants shows that migration within the eastern region was the most popular and accounted for respectively 28.85 percent and 24.39 percent of male and female interprovincial migrants. But a smaller female proportion for eastern-eastern moves suggests that women were more prone to moves across regions. Specifically, interregional moves in total accounted for 44.8 percent of female interprovincial migrants, and 41 percent of male interprovincial migrants. If the notion that women move shorter distances were valid, then one would have expected a higher proportion of male migrants undertaking interregional moves.

Perhaps the biggest difference in interregional flows is one from the west to the east, which accounted for 14.58 percent of female interprovincial migrants but only 8.42 percent of male interprovincial migrants. Western-central moves also accounted for a bigger proportion of female interprovincial migrants (7.29 percent) than male interprovincial migrants (4.98 percent). These statistics indicate a significant eastward

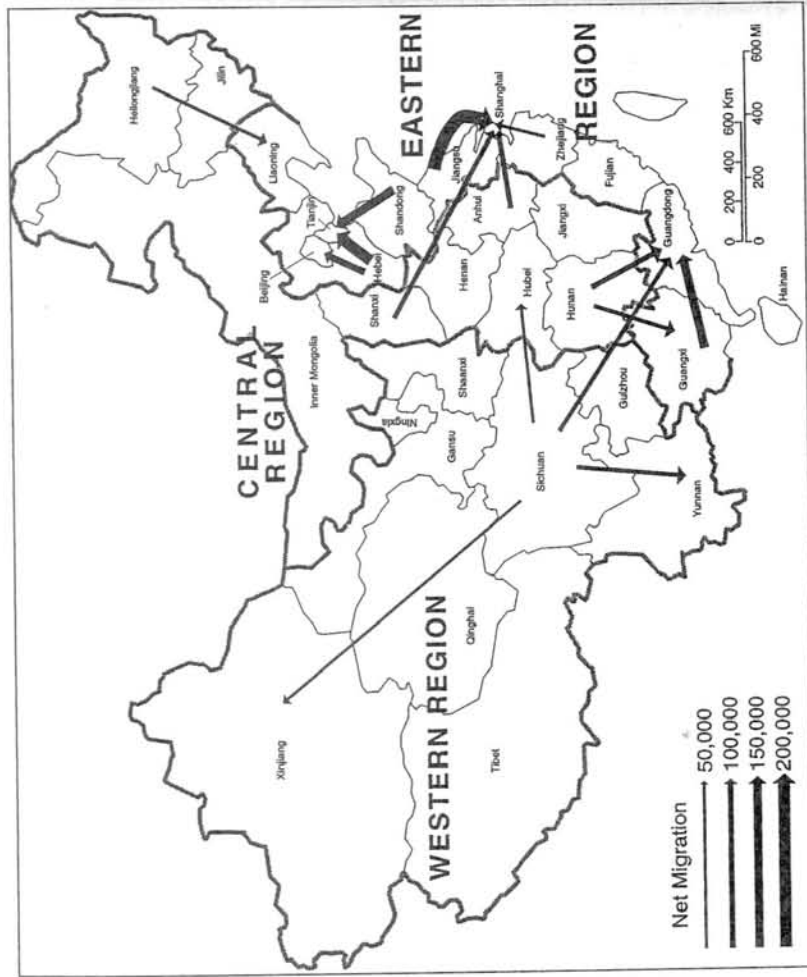


FIGURE 15.3 Male Net Interprovincial Migration, 1985–1990
SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

NOTE: Only the 15 largest net flows are shown.

regional movement among female interprovincial migrants, more so than their male counterparts. These moves, across regions, involved longer distances than average intraregional moves. Contrary to the widely held view that women move shorter distances than men, the interprovincial migration statistics reviewed above suggest that women who moved across provinces were more likely than their male counterparts to move long distances (see also Li 1993).

Although available data do not permit analyses of the exact paths of migration,⁷ it is possible to examine interprovincial migration flows. Figures 15.3 and 15.4 illustrate the spatial patterns of male and female interprovincial migration via the fifteen largest net interprovincial migration flows. A general west-to-east direction characterizes both male and female migration (Fan 1996), but the eastward component is clearly more dominant among female interprovincial migrants. Eleven of the fifteen largest female net flows were from western to eastern, central to eastern, or western to central regions, compared with seven for male net flows.⁸ Fourteen of the fifteen

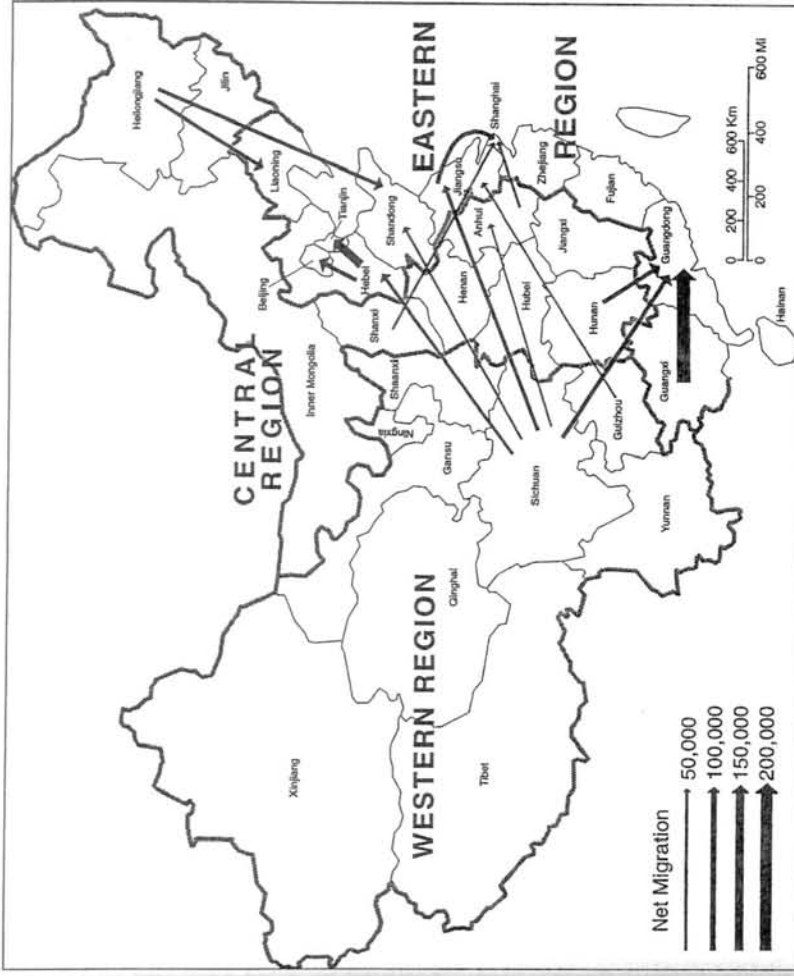


FIGURE 15.4 Female Net Interprovincial Migration, 1985–1990
SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

NOTE: Only the 15 largest net flows are shown.

destinations among female net flows were in the eastern region, compared with twelve for male net flows. Perhaps the strongest testament of the propensity for female migrants to undertake long-distance moves is the number of intervening provinces between origins and destinations. Six of the fifteen female net flows, compared with only one male net flow, crossed two or more intervening provinces; and only five female net flows, compared with nine male net flows, were between adjacent provinces. A clustering of destinations for male migrants in Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai, and Guangdong suggests the existence of regional “migration fields” where migrants were drawn from neighboring and nearer provinces. Female migration, on the other hand, was predominantly eastward, that is, to coastal provinces, which involves relatively longer distances. Although Sichuan was a popular origin for both male and female migration, it sent out female migrants primarily to the eastern region and male migrants to all directions, again reinforcing the notion that long-distance eastward movements were prevalent among female interprovincial migrants.

The predominant eastward movement of female migrants suggests an active response by women in poorer provinces to the concentration of economic opportunities in the eastern region, and a stronger relationship between regional economic development and migration paths than their male counterparts. This interpretation not only challenges the notion that women move shorter distances but also questions the conventional wisdom that women are less prone than men to migrate for economic motives. The latter will be examined more fully in the next subsection.

At the rural-urban level, although the 1990 census did not standardize residence types of origins and destinations, it is commonly accepted that cities and towns represent predominantly urban areas, and townships and counties represent rural areas. For both male and female migrants, the majority moved from townships (57.76 percent and 66.24 percent respectively) and to cities (58.4 percent and 54.23 percent respectively), suggesting a dominance of rural-to-urban moves. Specifically, moves from townships to cities accounted for the largest proportion of male migrants (33.71 percent). Among female migrants, a larger proportion (33.91 percent) moved from townships to counties than from townships to cities (32.34 percent). These statistics indicate that urbanward moves were more prominent among male migrants than among female migrants.

Gender differentials were even bigger among interprovincial migrants. The urbanward tendency of male interprovincial migrants was strong; cities accounted for 60.13 percent of their destinations. The majority of female interprovincial migrants (55.32 percent), however, moved to counties. In fact, rural-to-rural migration is a better description of female interprovincial migration, as moves from townships to counties accounted for the largest proportion (41.25 percent) of female interprovincial migrants.

Reasons for Migration

Although existing macro-statistical data do not address directly the processes of migration, one variable in the 1990 census—reason for migration—sheds important light on the various ways migration took place. Migrants were asked to choose from nine “reasons” for migration (Table 15.3).⁹ Although labeled reasons for migration, their interpretation includes motives of migration as well as what migrants plan to do and what means and processes accompany their moves. Existing research has classified reasons of migration into one or more of the following categories: planned or institutional, economic, life cycle, family, and social (Fan 1999; Li and Siu 1994; Rowland 1994; Shen and Tong 1992:202; Tang 1993; Zhai and Ma 1994). The economic and social dichotomies are most popular (Kuashiji de zhongguo . . . 1994:258; Shen and Tong 1992:218; Wang and Hu 1996:90–92). Specifically, the 1990 census options of job transfer, job assignment, industry/business, and study/training are generally considered economic reasons; and friends/relatives, retirement, joining family, and marriage are generally considered social reasons (e.g., Li 1993; L. Li 1994).

The most commonly cited reasons for migration selected by female migrants were marriage (28.34 percent), industry/business (15.43 percent), and joining fam-

ily (15.03 percent). Marriage and joining family both suggest the importance of family networks, or social channels, for achieving mobility. Male migrants selected primarily industry/business (29.95 percent), job transfer (15.07 percent), and study/training (14.8 percent) reasons, reflecting their greater access to labor market opportunities and their greater likelihood to migrate through work-related channels.

The role of marriage in female migration deserves more scrutiny. As discussed earlier, marriage provides poor rural women limited access to new resources. This includes the potential for physical and social mobility and the possible opportunity to obtain *hukou* in a desired destination. On the contrary, most industry/business migrants are not given local *hukou* and thus are denied the benefits available to local residents. In light of the *hukou* institution, therefore, marriage is indeed a more favorable alternative for women, especially for those whose skills and education render them less competitive in the industrial and business sectors.

Among female marriage migrants, 81.29 percent engaged in the labor force, compared with 65.35 percent for all female migrants, suggesting that the former were not merely tied movers but were indeed active participants in the labor force. While 86.2 percent of female marriage migrants originated from townships, 70.04 percent of them migrated to counties, indicating that female marriage migrants were primarily rural-to-rural migrants. The vast majority of female marriage migrants engaged in agriculture (85.27 percent), again indicating that they may be less competitive in nonagricultural work.

Among female interprovincial marriage migrants, 48.57 percent originated from the western region and 61.55 percent moved to the eastern region, indicating a prominence of eastward and long-distance moves. By moving to more developed, albeit rural, areas, these female migrants sought to achieve both marriage and economic betterment. The strong economic consideration behind marriage migration at least partly explains why marriage accounted for 29.13 percent of female interprovincial migrants, a proportion higher than that of intraprovincial migration (27.99 percent). Although short-distance marriages (especially those involving intraprovincial moves) remain dominant in China (Yang 1991; Zhuang and Zhang 1996), the significant proportion of interprovincial west-to-east marriage migration supports the notion that potential and actual economic gains are important factors offsetting the impediment of distance and intervening obstacles for these “brides from afar.”¹⁰

Industry/business was by far the most important migration reason in China; it was the leading reason for all migrants (23.56 percent) and for male migrants (29.95 percent), and the second leading reason for female migrants (15.43 percent) (Table 15.3). However, this important motivation for female migration has seldom been highlighted in the literature, primarily because of the perception that women are less likely to migrate for economic reasons. For both male and female migration, industry/business accounted for higher proportions of interprovincial migrants (38.24 percent and 16.62 percent respectively) than intraprovincial migrants (25.64 percent and 14.9 percent respectively), again supporting the notion that migration

TABLE 15.3 Gender Differentials in Migration Reason

	All			Male			Female		
	Intra-provincial	Inter-provincial	Sum	Intra-provincial	Inter-provincial	Sum	Intra-provincial	Inter-provincial	Sum
Job transfer	10.90	14.31	12.01	13.29	18.51	15.07	8.01	8.33	8.11
Job assignment	7.36	5.48	6.75	9.31	7.55	8.71	5.00	2.55	4.24
Industry/business	20.78	29.31	23.56	25.64	38.24	29.95	14.90	16.62	15.43
Study/Training	15.14	8.14	12.85	17.73	9.15	14.80	12.00	6.70	10.38
Friends/relatives	9.09	11.08	9.74	6.98	8.60	7.54	11.65	14.59	2.55
Retirement	1.62	1.60	1.61	2.53	2.08	2.37	0.52	0.92	0.65
Joining family	10.97	11.02	10.99	8.02	7.41	7.81	14.53	16.15	15.03
Marriage	14.07	13.24	13.79	2.55	2.05	2.38	27.99	29.13	28.34
Other	10.08	5.82	8.69	13.95	6.40	11.37	5.40	5.00	5.28
Sum	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

backed by strong economic rationale is likely to take place over longer distances. But it was the eastern region that most interprovincial industry/business migrants originated from and moved to. Among interprovincial industry/business migrants, 52.56 percent of men and 52.51 percent of women originated from the eastern region, and respectively 59.62 percent and 70.95 percent moved to another province in the eastern region. The prominence of the eastern region as both origin and destination suggests that potential migrants in the region were most willing and able to migrate to seek employment in the industrial and business sectors. Moreover, such employment opportunities have been heavily concentrated in the region.

Not surprisingly, industry/business migration exhibited a strong urbanward movement, as respectively 85.21 percent and 85.39 percent of male and female industry/business migrants came from townships, and respectively 61.48 percent and 61.07 percent moved to cities. Among female interprovincial industry/business migrants, however, 53.54 percent moved to counties, and only 46.46 percent moved to cities. This is likely attributable to the expansion of rural enterprises in coastal open zones and their strong pull on *dagongmei*, discussed earlier. Guangdong, in general, and the Pearl River Delta, in particular, epitomize the labor-intensive production system that has absorbed large numbers of *dagongmei*. Unlike most other provinces, where marriage was the leading reason for female in-migration, more than half (51.42 percent) of female migrants entering Guangdong were industry/business migrants, underscoring the pull of economic opportunities there (Fan 1996).

Both job transfer and study/training, the second and third leading migration reasons for men, are highly economically oriented, as the former involves change in employment and the latter involves improvement in human capital, which likely brings about future economic gains. The third leading reason for female migration is joining family, which by definition refers to migration following the job transfer of other family members. It accounted for 15.03 percent of female migration and only 7.81 percent of male migration, suggesting that men's employment continued to be considered a priority in the Chinese family.

Migrants' Occupations

The above analyses provide convincing evidence for the argument that economic motives are the key to explaining both male and female migration in China. Both male and female migrants are active participants in the labor force. In 1990, among nonstudent migrants between the ages of 15 and 60, 90.40 percent of men and 78.94 percent of women were in the labor force. The extent to which migrants' economic goals are achieved, and the gender differentiations in these achievements, depend largely on the work attained after migration.

Table 15.4 shows the distribution of male and female migrants and nonmigrants by occupation. The male-female ratio is again used here to evaluate differentials in men's and women's relative proportions in each occupation (columns 5 and 6). A comparison of the nonmigrants' and migrants' male-female ratios can shed light on whether migration has contributed to more or less balanced gender distribution by occupation.

Although the vast majority of male and female nonmigrants (68.19 percent and 76.03 percent respectively) engaged in agricultural work, the proportions of migrants in that category (14.5 percent and 39.66 percent respectively) were significantly lower. However, the decline in proportion for male migrants was substantially larger than that for female migrants, so much so that the male-female ratio for agricultural work decreased from 90 for nonmigrants to 37 for migrants. Inasmuch as a shift from agricultural to nonagricultural sectors is likely to improve one's standard of living, male migrants seemed to have undertaken that sectoral shift more successfully than female migrants.

A shift in the labor force from agricultural to industrial work clearly accompanied the migration process. The proportions of male and female nonmigrants engaging in industrial work were, respectively, 16.95 percent and 11.58 percent, compared with 50.72 percent and 29.36 percent for male and female migrants. Nonetheless, the male-female ratio for migrants (173) was higher than that for nonmigrants (146), suggesting that migration contributed to a more uneven distribution of female and male labor in industrial work. As suggested in the last subsection, male migrants in industrial work were more likely than their female counterparts to have moved to urban areas, where wage rates are higher. This, in conjunction with men's higher success rates of shifting from agricultural to industrial work, suggests that male migration, more so than female migration, is accompanied by significant economic gains.

An increase in male-female ratios also characterized occupations commonly associated with greater power and higher prestige, namely professional, government, and administrative/clerical occupations. Although the proportions of female migrants in these occupations were generally higher than their nonmigrant counterparts, men have garnered greater proportional gains than women as a result of migration, leading to more uneven distributions of male and female labor in these occupations. For example, the male-female ratio in government work was 613 among nonmigrants, indicating a very uneven gender distribution; a migrant male-female ratio of 779 suggests that migration contributed to a worsening of gender distribution in that

TABLE 15.4 Gender Differentials in Occupation

	Nonmigrants (%)		Migrants (%)		Male-Female Ratio		Temporary Migrants (%)	
	Male (1)	Female (2)	Male (3)	Female (4)	Non-migrants (5) ^a	Migrants (6) ^b	Male (7)	Female (8)
Professional	5.12	5.25	11.91	11.41	98	104	3.26	3.63
Government	2.84	0.46	3.61	0.46	613	779	1.86	0.22
Administrative/clerical	2.12	0.97	6.30	2.02	218	312	2.02	0.73
Commerce	2.72	3.07	7.31	7.59	88	96	9.82	11.33
Services	2.03	2.60	5.53	9.42	78	59	7.41	13.20
Agricultural	68.19	76.03	14.50	39.66	90	37	11.92	30.38
Industrial	16.95	11.58	50.72	29.36	146	173	63.61	40.45

NOTE: This table refers to population aged 15 and above.

^a(5) = (1) / (2) × 100

^b(6) = (3) / (4) × 100

SOURCE: 1990 Census One-Percent Sample.

occupation. The representation of women in services, on the other hand, has increased due to migration. The male-female ratio was only 78 among nonmigrants but decreased further to 59 among migrants. These statistics suggest that migration has reinforced the funneling of women into less prestigious, low-paying jobs and the positioning of men in occupations of leadership and responsibility (Riley 1996).

The occupational distribution of temporary migrants (columns 7 and 8) underscores the importance of the *hukou* institution as well as gender. Temporary migrants were less highly represented in professional, government, and administrative/clerical occupations and more highly represented in commerce, services, and industrial work than migrants as a whole. However, the interaction of gender and *hukou* status is even more revealing. While the vast majority of male temporary migrants worked in the industrial sector (63.61 percent), female temporary migrants were more widely spread among industrial, agricultural, services, and commercial occupations, further demonstrating the gendered division of labor among migrants. It appears that the feminization of agriculture has taken place for both temporary migrants and migrants as a whole. Women were clearly in greater demand in services, characterized by low prestige and pay, as the Chinese consumer market expanded and created needs for nannies, maids, restaurant servers, and similar kinds of positions (Yang and Guo 1996).

The analysis suggests a process of labor market segmentation accelerated by migration. As households send out men to work in nonagricultural sectors, the women who remain constitute the dominant labor force in agriculture. Even if women manage to migrate, a large proportion of them remain in the agricultural sector in their new destinations. The feminization of agriculture reflects sustained discrepancies in

women's and men's human capital and access to opportunities in the labor market (Lu 1997). The higher proportions of female migrants in agriculture and services and their lower proportions in more prestigious occupations, relative to their male counterparts, suggest that not only has migration reinforced labor market segmentation, but it has also increased men's social mobility relative to that of women.

Conclusion

The main objective of this chapter has been to highlight the differentials between male and female migration, a topic largely absent in the voluminous literature on Chinese migration. Through analyzing gender differences in migration, I have highlighted the complexities in the migration processes for both men and women in China and the important role of gender in these processes. I have argued that gender differences in migration reflect not only the age-old sociocultural tradition, which continues to undermine the status of women, but also structural factors unique to the Chinese transitional economy. These factors include spatial-economic changes, which opened up new opportunities and specific destinations for male and female migrants, and the *hukou* institution, a mechanism of state control.

The empirical analysis examines several widely held notions about gender differences in migration. It supports, in general, the notion that Chinese men have a higher migration propensity than women and shows that women's mobility is especially constrained after marriage. The finding about migration distance is less conclusive. Although women were more highly represented than men in intraprovincial migration, suggesting that the former moved shorter distances, female interprovincial migrants were more highly represented among long-distance interregional moves. Such long-distance migration also contradicts the notion that men are more likely to migrate for economic reasons and women for social reasons. Although women's leading reason for migration was marriage, the very focused eastward movements signaled a strong economic rationale behind this type of migration and highlighted the agency of women. Large waves of women migrating for industry/business employment further underscored the economic motives behind female migration. On the other hand, male migrants were more successful than their female counterparts in their efforts to move to urban areas, transfer their labor from agricultural to nonagricultural sectors, and find work in more prestigious positions. The interaction of gender and *hukou* further reinforced the segmentation of China's labor market so that despite migration, poor and uneducated peasant women continued to be entrapped in the lower socioeconomic niches of the economy. This chapter's findings underscore the importance of examining both male and female migration, highlighting the differences between them, and mainstreaming the study of female migration. Not only is gender a key to explaining differences in migration, it also provides an important perspective, integrating the sociocultural, spatial-economic, and institutional factors for understanding the patterns and processes of migration in China.

Notes

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1. The definition of migration has changed between the 1990 and 2000 censuses. Specifically, (1) the minimum duration of stay was reduced from one year to six months, and (2) individuals who moved within county-level units were not considered migrants in the 1990 census but were considered migrants in the 2000 census. At the time of this chapter's writing, only summary statistics from the 2000 census were available to the public. Thus, the analysis in this chapter uses primarily data from the 1990 census.
2. Two exceptions are Yang and Guo (1996) and Huang (2001), who provided rigorous and comprehensive analyses of occupational attainment by gender and type of migration (permanent versus temporary).
3. *Dagongmei* is literally translated as "working girls" and refers specifically to young women who migrate from the countryside to work in industries and services.
4. Despite recent efforts to reform the *hukou* system, only the most successful peasant migrants have benefited from these changes, and only small cities and towns have granted urban *hukou* or variants of urban *hukou* to significant numbers of peasant migrants (Yu 2000).
5. *Hukou* transfer to urban areas through marriage remains strictly controlled.
6. The one-percent sample is a clustered sample containing information about every individual in all households of the sampled village-level units (villages, towns, and urban neighborhoods in cities), drawn from China's 1990 census and made available by the National Information Center. It has a total of 11,475,104 records.
7. The 1990 census specifies the origin provinces of migrants, but not their county-level origin.
8. If Guangxi were considered a central-region province, which in fact is a more accurate description of its level of economic development, there would have been twelve eastward net flows for women and eight for men. Since the Guangxi-Guangdong net flow (223,700) was the largest among female migrants, allocating Guangxi to the central region would have strengthened even more the argument that eastward movements dominated female interprovincial migration.
9. Definitions of these reasons of migration are as follows: job transfer—migration due to job change, including demobilization from the military; job assignment—migration due to assignment of jobs by the government after graduation and recruitment of graduates from different schools; industry/business—migration to seek work as laborers or in commercial or trade sectors; study/training—migration to attend schools or to enter training or apprentice programs organized by local work units; friends/relatives—migration to seek support of relatives or friends; retirement—cadres or workers leaving work due to retirement or resignation, including retired peasants in rural areas with retirement benefits; joining family—family members following the job transfer of cadres and workers; marriage—migration to live with spouse after marriage; and other—all other reasons (SSB 1993: 513–514, 558).
10. A popular saying in rural Zhejiang, one of the main destinations of female marriage migrants, describes the current prevalence of long-distance marriage migrants: "In the 1960s, wives were from Subei (the northern and poorer part of Jiangsu, an east coast province); in the 1970s, they were from the rustic countryside; and in the 1990s, they come from afar" (Xu and Ye 1992).

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16

Engendering Industrialization in China Under Reform

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China's program of economic reform is a set of national modernization and development strategies in the broadest sense. The nature of the reform program encompasses both domestic perspectives and internationalized development strategies, especially in the arena of macroeconomic policy. This chapter examines the geographical characteristics of major reforms to show how, as development strategies, the reforms have borne gendered values and produced gendered results. While this survey focuses on the reform period, many gendered characteristics of reform policies and impacts cannot be simply attributed to the Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin eras. The gendered characteristics of the contemporary reform program carry amalgamated histories of gendered social structures and gender-specific policy perspectives from earlier periods. It is the complex interaction of combined contemporary forces and historic social and economic conditions that creates gendered geographies in China under reform.

Changes in social and economic conditions as a result of reform—including population growth, household formation, education, migration, agricultural production, and manufacturing labor—have affected men and women differently all across China. At the aggregate scale, the macroeconomic reform policies restructuring the organization of production have promoted new patterns of gendered labor as well as heightened awareness of gender issues. Among more specific reforms, trends produced by the complex interactions among five initiatives have particularly structured gendered geographies: the open-door policy and the emphasis on export-oriented industrialization, which depends on low-wage women's labor for manufacturing production; the birth planning policy emphasizing one child, which has tipped the birth rate in favor of males; the rural household responsibility system, which has re-anchored many rural