

GLOBALIZATION IN RURAL XI'AN: THE SOCIO-ECONOMICS OF FEMALE
RURAL RETURN MIGRATION IN CHINA

by

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Globalization in rural Xi'an: The socio-economics of female labor migration in rural China

by Jessica Shadian

This thesis will examine the economic and political processes occurring on a world scale during an era of globalization and how these processes impact socio-developmental strategies of China and thus the participation of women in the labor process. From a global perspective, Mies (1986), Kim (1997) and other argue that the recent participation of Chinese women into the international labor force appears inherently exploitative, perpetuating China's patriarchal society. Drawing upon conclusions from fieldwork conducted in rural Xi'an, this thesis however, centers on Chinese women's participation in the paid labor force and how in effect, this participation is creating new opportunities for rural women. As rural women return to the countryside from their urban employment, their accompanying capital and new ideologies are effecting China's rural development and as a result are transforming the traditional status of women in rural china.

In order to understand the rapid changes taking place in rural China and the subsequent consequences profoundly affecting women's lives, Chapter One first provides an overview of the most recent incorporation of Asia into the global economy and its successful development over the past three decades. Chapter 2 then examines Chinese female rural migration and the significance of this mobility on the attitudes and roles of women in urban as well as at home in rural China. Chapter three uses original fieldwork to examine the effects that the most recent global economic processes are having on

Abstract (continued)

women working and residing within Xi'an. The research centers on why women have left the countryside in search of employment, why they have returned, and more importantly, the ways in which their time in the city have provided them new opportunities as well as have changed their values and status within in their home town. This chapter examines questionnaires answered by female labor migrants from rural China in urban Xi'an, and discuss why they have migrated as well as issues accompanying their migration. This chapter also analyzes several focus groups I conducted with female rural return migrants concerning the issues accompanying their stay in the city as well as their return. The final Chapter of this thesis demonstrates how China's economic growth, conditioned by the dynamics of Globalization, continues to be accomplished through the political policies traditional to Asia. For women from my field research, this process of globalization is transforming generations of patriarchal tradition as well as creating new opportunities for women throughout Chinese society as capital mobility and recent technological innovations leave the world's state of affairs in a globalized context that has not been reached before in world history.

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

The most recent incorporation of Asia into the global economy, and its successful development over the past three decades, is argued by many to be based upon state-led development where the notion of "Confucian" or more recently "Asian" values (Ong, 1997, p. 184) are much more than a mere reaction to Western led forces of Globalization. As has been argued by Andre Gunder Frank and others, the world capitalist system travels as far back as 5,000 years.¹ Any notion of a unitary path of world development would be misleading and in China, it is believed that, Asia's "organically" produced capitalism in a "polycentric world of late capitalism" (Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 15) has been reconstructing itself throughout history of this world system.

In this latest era of the world-system, referred to often as globalization, "flexible production" has influenced the emergence of a new Global Division of Labor. Asia's recent economic development has become a central element furthering this new global order. Development within Asia, however, while continuously reconstructing, continues to be accomplished according to its own historical, informal institutions such as patrilineal family ties and *guanxi*, which extend deep into the history of the world system. More specifically, with the recent expansion of Chinese transnationalism, the Chinese "business network" in particular, the informal historical institutions within China have become an integral component to the contemporary success of Chinese development as

¹ See *The World System: Five Hundred Years or Five Thousand?* Andre Gunde Frank, 1998.

well as Asian development overall, and are significant in the current process of globalization. This chapter will examine the global economic and political processes occurring on a world scale during an era of Globalization, and how these processes are currently impacting the socio-developmental strategies of China. This chapter will first review world-systems theory of historical economic expansion to help explain recent global developments in Asia. Contrary to the notion that recent Asian development is merely a reaction to Western led forces of capitalist development, this section will focus on why the most recent phase of Asian globalization is an extension of a historical process that has been occurring for over 5,000 years.

The next section will focus on the international division of labor, an inherent component of the world capitalist system, and shifting theories emerging as a consequence of this most recent evolution of global capital. This section will first analyze the role of production chains and will then demonstrate how current production known as “flexible production” has influenced a new Global Division of Labor (GDL)² which is centered largely on the influence of culture and cultural traditions.

The last section will focus on Asia's, and more specifically, China's role within this new Global Division of Labor (GDL). Given the cultural and political economy of China throughout the Maoist period, as well as the Confucian ideologies preempting Mao, this section will analyze how past ideologies are inherent to the contemporary political economic strategies (China's socialist market system) since the open door policies of 1979. It will focus on how the informal institutions of Asian capitalism, such

² See *Rethinking the International Division of Labor*. James Mittelman, 1995.

as clientalism, patrilineal family ties, and *guanxi*, have been the basis for the "Chinese business network" fostering contemporary development in China.

In conclusion, this chapter will summarize how all of the above factors occasion China's incorporation into globalization. Through its historical role in the world system, China is not only adapting to the most recent global economic occurrences, it in actuality, has been reconstructing itself throughout history to meet its own internal needs. At present, China is transforming itself from the inside out in order to adapt to global economic conditions (while simultaneously influencing these global changes), and in return, successfully advancing itself into the next century.

1.2 Asia in the World System

Despite a thirty-year deceleration in the world economy, the economies of East Asia, until the recent Asia crisis, continually progressed reaching stages of growth not reached before in recent history (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172). In the 1960s, Japan increased real income per head fourfold through the quarter of the century and the 1990s left the Japanese Yen the strongest in the world for a substantial period (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172). The "four tigers," South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, and Hong Kong entered into their own industrial revolution, doubling real gross domestic products every eight years from 1960 to 1985 (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172). In the late 1970s China began its own reforms and opened up its economy to foreign investment. By the early 1980s, China became the fastest growing economy in the world, averaging ten percent growth a year for the subsequent fifteen years (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172). Simultaneously, Indonesia, Malaysia,

and Thailand sustained growth rates of more than seven percent per year, doubling the size of their economies every decade for the past thirty years (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172). Until the recent crisis, these three economies of East Asia grew three times faster than the OECD (Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development) countries, twice as fast as the rest of Asia, three times as fast as Latin America and South Asia, and five times as fast as sub-Saharan Africa (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172). Their share of the world's exports went from nine percent in 1965 to twenty-one percent in 1990. Asia's economic growth has been referred to with such titles as the "East Asian Miracle," the "Pacific Shift," and the "Pacific Century" to name a few (Aseniero, 1996, p. 172).

Many argue that Asia's recent incorporation into the global economy, and ensuing recent economic growth has been nothing more than the unfolding of western capitalism as an alternative to the failures of communism, or even a subsequent reaction to globalization. Alternative arguments, however, contend that the world capitalist system has existed for at least 5,000 years and Asia's role in the world system has always been a principal component within it (Frank, 1998).

To begin, according to scholars such as Gunder Frank, the world capitalist system has a much more historical origin than many contend.³ However, Frank demonstrates how in fact the world capitalist system began much earlier than in the most recent period of Western hegemony. Gunder Frank's in a somewhat similar position parallels the

³ See David Landes in the *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, 1998. Landes argues that the global economic system as it exists today is a direct product stemming from the Western Industrial Revolution. Landes argues that cultural traits are predominant motivators behind the burgeoning wealth of the West and the persistent poverty of the rest. Any other type of world capitalist system prior to the Industrial Revolution was at its best minimal and fragmented. In addition, Landes argues that all other development since the Industrial Revolution has been, and can only be achieved through the recognition by others that the way to prosperity can only be attained by adopting the successful cultural traits of the West.

theory of world development put forth by Immanuel Wallerstein. Wallerstein analyzes the world economy by focusing on cyclical fluctuations, economic recessions, depressions, upswings and booms.⁴ According to Wallerstein, individual countries are only secondary features of the world system and their prospects are determined not autonomously, but rather by global circumstances. Wallerstein sets individual countries into three categories of center, semi-periphery, and periphery. Individual states may move out of one category to another, however the framework of the world system remains in tact. Ander Gunde Frank takes Wallerstein's world system theory and places it in a longer historical context. Frank argues in his book *ReOrient*, that in accordance with world systems theory, the most recent western domination of the world system should be regarded as the "rise of the west," and that from a global historical perspective Asia, not Europe, held the center stage for much of early modern history (Frank, 1998, p. XV). According to Frank, parts of East Asia, and more specifically, China, were the core of the world economic system until about 1800. The rise of the West was not only late in historical terms, but in reference to recent global economic phenomena, was only brief (Frank, 1998, pp. xxiv, 5). Therefore, when attempting to deconstruct Asia's current economic developments, it is necessary to first apprehend its historical role in the world system.

1.3 Production Chains

Within this world-system the role of Asian tradition and the current path of Asian industrial development are continually being shaped by the historical occurrences of

⁴ See Immanuel Wallerstein in *The Capitalist World Economy*, 1979

world capitalism. Two structures of the world-system, production chains and the global division of labor, also profoundly affect current Asian development.

To begin, unlike the Fordist model of production, the current era of "post-Fordism", has very limited goods and services, including heavily specialized products, being produced within one specific location (Moody, 1997, p. 68). The production of specialized goods and services such as the automobile or computer industry operate along a production chain which Kim Moody defines as "a series of production phases which are often separated in space and time" (Moody, 1997, p. 69). In more recent times, the addition of cost-saving technology has intensified competition as well as the complexity of the production chain (Moody, 1997, p. 68). In addition, to further enhance the complexity of this process, recent technological advances have enabled cross border production to occur unlike anything possible in previous periods of manufacturing (Moody, 1997, p. 69).

Traditionally, international commodity chains operated under the premise that a company would set up operations in a specific country (other than the host country) if a market for consumption of the product existed in that specific country. The introduction of this type of production chain was namely a way for Ford and other US companies to operate in highly protected countries such as Britain, Argentina and Mexico in the 1920s and 1930s (Moody, 1997, p. 70). Despite the fact that corporations during this time were considered global, production was focused within the country in which the production was taking place.

Another traditional production chain was production for export. Companies set up production in one country with the intention of exporting the commodity back to the

host country to be sold. An example of this production was the Japanese automobile industry which increased outsourcing to South Korea, Taiwan, and later Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines (Moody, 1997, p. 71). In the beginning, Japan outsourced much of its product and exported back into Japan and other countries of consumption such as the United States.

Eventually, however, trade further intensified competition as well as the necessity to cut costs. As a result, the need for even greater regional location became prevalent in order to expand access to tax exempt and low wage areas located in close proximity to the country where the product was sold. In light of this intensified market structure, eventually Japan began to set up production facilities in Mexico for consumption in the United States.

Because of this, for industries that produced heavy goods, the location of the low wage countries was imperative, especially as "just in time production"⁵ has, of recent, become critical for remaining competitive in the present conditions (Moody, 1997, p. 72; Mittleman, 1995, p. 280). In turn, many regions such as Asia, previously excluded, are now being incorporated into the global economy.

When Japan's introduction of "just in time" manufacturing proved successful, the rationale was exported to neighboring countries. By doing so, Japan created a regional hierarchy that has been able to shape and control labor supply as well as exercise transnational influence over the bargaining power of workers (Mittelman, 1995, p. 280). James Mittelman argues that these regional power structures create regional hierarchies

⁵ which through synchronization and continual supplies reduces the need for storage and overhead costs even further

of inner and outer globalization in which the inner variant places the majority of its focus on the regional market and the outer force seeks to generate maximum benefits from the global market (Mittelman, 1995, p. 281). In Asia, specifically, inner globalization operates according to many state administered policies and government-sponsored private corporate production (such as the *karetsu* in Japan and the *chaebol* in South Korea), which produce competitive products for the world market. High tech production in states such as Japan and South Korea complete production process by working directly with other closely linked countries that provide the necessary skilled and low cost labor. Together these regional centers of state initiative as well as private entrepreneurship, which Mittelman refers to as growth triangles (Mittelman, 1995, p. 281) or regional nodes, according to Arif Dirlik (1994, p. 55), are transforming the international division of labor along new parameters and will be discussed here in detail. It is also through these conditions that rural women throughout China, including this field research, are migrating from their rural homes to the cities to join the global labor force (which will be analyzed at length in the proceeding chapters).

1.4 The International Division of Labor

There remains no single definition or theory to define the current process of economic globalization. However, there exist certain trends that help to explain the current forces that global capitalism is experiencing. In the recent past, production chains determined the NIDL according to the traditional north south divide in which the south were the producers and the north the consumers. Currently, however, various types

of regional as well as interregional divisions of labor are emerging, forming new cores of development, new inequalities of growth and finance as well as the incorporation of new regions into world production. It is within this latest era of globalization, operating by and within varying modes of production chains, that the impetus for a new international division of labor unfolds.

Many argue that the most recent global capitalist occurrence, which Mittleman refers to as the Global Division of Labor (GDL), erodes the old categories of core, periphery and semi-periphery within the world system. Rather, the current global economy of transnational capital breaks down national boundaries, undermines national sovereignty, and isolates capitalism from the nation as the unit of development creating what Dirlik states as the decentralization of capitalism (Dirlik, 1994, p. 61-62).

According to classical political economy, Adam Smith argued that large numbers of people carrying out specific activities afforded the ability for one individual to accomplish the work of many. Through this there would be productivity gains as the number of tasks per person were reduced, saving time from performing one activity and then moving on to performing another (Mittelman, 1995, p. 275). Smith believed that this division of labor would bring about higher standards of living overall (Mittelman, 1995, p. 275).

However, Smith's theory failed to anticipate overspecialization and dehumanization by repetition of factory work (Mittelman, 1995, p. 275). By the 1960s, a much more intensified global market for production than previous eras of world capitalism evolved. Frobel et. al (1979) demonstrated how through the decentralization of production (for example subcontracting), transnational capital used labor to optimize

profit, production itself became global and created what Frobel et. al termed as the New International Division of Labor (NIDL).⁶ This decentralization resulted in the shift of low skilled manufacturing jobs from advanced capitalist countries to developing countries, as industrialized countries retained advanced research and production. The NIDL abetted transnational companies in creating a global manufacturing system based on a labor intensive export-led production scheme (Mittelman, 1995, p. 278).

More recently, James Mittelman, in his article *Rethinking the International Division of Labor*, argues that the NIDL overstates the significance of low cost labor and does not take into account other predominating factors of production, namely, culture (Mittelman, 1995, p. 278). It is believed that through various types of production chains, individual countries are increasingly relying on regional trading blocs to grow their economy. However, Mittelman argues that it is not only production chains that are integrating increased transnational trade. Rather, Mittelman attests that often overlooked are transnational linkages that are held together by marriage, clans, or dialects. Ultimately, states become transparent, and regions for trade are not solely divided according to class, but are bound together by means of a common culture (Mittelman, 1995, p. 286).

It is through these means that Chinese transnationalism has been able to keep pace with as well as transform the current process of globalization. Considering culture a fundamental element in the critical analysis of the division of labor, Mittelman helps to provide a clear understanding of the present transnational economic conditions of

⁶ See *The New International Division of Labor*, F. Frobel, J. Henrichs, and O. Kreye, 1979.

globalization, and more specifically how it relates to current migration patterns within China.

1.5 Transnational Trade in Greater China: The role of informal institutions

David Harvey defines the latest occurrence of "flexible accumulation" in late capitalism, as depending upon

“flexibility with respect to labor processes, labor markets, products, and patterns of consumption. It is characterized by the emergence of entirely new sectors of production, new ways of providing financial services, new markets, and above all, greatly intensified rates of commercial, technological, and organizational innovation” (in Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 10).

Consequently, these changes have increased the mobility of people, commodities, ideas, and capital on a global scale. Harvey refers to this entire phenomena as “time-space compression” (Harvey in Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 10). Accompanying this "time-space compression," socio-economic conditions are being vastly transformed as more expanding proportions of society come in contact with the burgeoning global economy.

Recognizing the importance of culture as an integral component of the current global economy is imperative. Concerning greater China, societal tradition is transforming to meet present conditions while, simultaneously, culture continues to remain as profound to Chinese development as it has throughout Chinese history. For example, Doreen Massey observes this process where old asymmetrical power relations are reinforced while new ones emerge as a “power geometry” (Massey in Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 10). Mike Featherstone also examines the predominance of cultures with what he regards as “third cultures” (Massey in Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 11). According to

Featherstone, global culture flows are virtually independent of the nation-states and arise when groups face “problems of intercultural communication first hand” and, therefore, move between and within different cultures (Featherstone in Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 11). Featherstone contends that modern Chinese transnationalism is an example of a third culture and has created “new types of flexible personal controls, dispositions, and means of orientation, in effect, a new kind of habitus” (Featherstone in Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 11). Joel Kotkin asserts this cultural economic system as “global tribes” (Chang, 1995, p. 955). Kotkin defines the advent of global tribes as “cultural groups whose members are geographically dispersed, maintain worldwide business and cultural networks, and share a strong sense of common origin as well as important values on the primacy of science and knowledge in general (Chang, 1995, p. 955). Maria Chang, in her article, *Greater China and the Chinese “Global Tribe”*, avows that these “global tribes” are largely responsible for the economic boom in the PRC since the open door policies in the late 1970s. She further attests that the “Chinese tribe may well determine the future of China as well as some other Asian states” (Chang, 1995, p. 955).

An inherent component of Chinese tradition, which has become imperative within contemporary globalization, is the traditional hierarchical structure. Xin Lu depicts this importance of social power and its relation to upward mobility. According to Lu, the Chinese hierarchy has always meant traveling from rural to urban areas (Lu, 1997, p. 92). During the Maoist era, in attempts to climb the hierarchical ladder, one would move to the center (cities), which was considered the top and is where the most power and prestige exists. The further one moved into the periphery (rural areas), the less power existed, and prestige diminished (Lu, 1997, p. 92).

In light of this structure, Lu argues that it is important to parallel this social hierarchical organization to China's opening to global capitalism. Lu states, the difference, however, is that this hierarchy is no longer state administered, but rather one that is a voluntary and conscious decision (Lu, 1997, p. 93). The possibilities of relocating to urban economic zones and other locations of wealth are a common concern of everyday life. For example, many female rural return migrants in China have been able to utilize this hierarchy to their advantage. Upon returning home from the city the many women's status within their rural hometown often improves largely as a result of their time spent working and residing in the urban areas.⁷

In fact, this hierarchy now exists on a global level as the everyday relations between north and south, coastal and inland areas, special economic zones and other areas, the relations between China and Southeast Asia, as well as between China and the West are of great importance concerning power relations and prestige (Lu, 1997, p. 93).

Mitchell takes a similar stance, but, rather than focusing on hierarchical organization, Mitchell focuses from the position of "cultural citizenship" (Mitchell, 1997, p. 228). Mitchell asserts that in an era of transnational trade and investment, the "global subject" must be in harmony with local practices, which include class, lifestyles, and "neighborhood histories" among other aspects. Simultaneously the global citizen must be able to adjust to the transnational flows that affect both business practices and business entrepreneurs (Mitchell, 1997, p. 228).

As significant, if not even more so, to help understand Greater China's globalization is the notion of *guanxi*. Mayfair Yang, in her book *Gifts, Favors, and*

⁷ See Chapter 3 to see how this theory compliments the field research of this thesis.

Banquets, demonstrates how *guanxi*, the act of gift giving in return for favors, has evolved from its ancient old tradition to its present act in which monetary exchange has replaced gift giving. According to Yang, the exchange of useable goods for direct use and consumption has been replaced by “exchange value” or the exchange for future wealth and opportunities (Yang, 1994, p. 159). This change has been fostered by economic reforms and the introduction of market forces and transnational linkages to the global capitalist economy (Yang, 1994, p. 159). Besides changing the work organization, consumption patterns, and production, the economic reforms have, in addition, changed the way in which Chinese citizens value work, money and relationships (Yang, 1994, p. 159). These new interpretations of *guanxi* retain their original attributes in which the circumstances remain limited to those that have a preexisting relationship such as classmates, those born in the same place, relatives, colleges, or those sent out to the rural areas during the cultural revolution (Hsong, 1997, p. 153).

Jointly, hierarchical organization and *guanxi* are inherent factors amongst Chinese throughout the world, within transnational trade linkages, as well as shaping China’s role in the global economy. These same relationships are prevalent within corporate privatization efforts, factory floor relations, and are indispensable factors dominating rural-urban Chinese labor migration creating direct consequences on the changing roles of women in rural China. Under these conditions, nation-states come second to culture and personal relationships.

1.6 Chinese Globalization

By understanding the manner in which Chinese tradition has transformed and is an inherent component of China's globalization efforts, it is possible to determine why developments in China are, therefore, not subject to comparison to the growth of Western capitalism. Each region has its own historical context in which to base present occurrences. One example of China's organic economic development is Keng Koon's article, "Robert Kuok and the Chinese Business Network in Eastern Asia: A study in Sino-capitalism." In the article, Koon asserts that traditional Confucian values have shaped the present day Chinese capitalist system. He uses Gordon Redding's description of the Chinese family firm to describe the current Chinese business community as "a cultural artifact 'and a creature of Chinese tradition'" (Koon, 1997, p. 155). For example, cultural foundations, Koon argues, are how Robert Kuok grew into the multibillion empire that it is today. Koon uses Mittleman's argument that capital and labor flows are not only a response to wage levels and foreign investment incentives, but also a result of culture and ethnicity (Koon, 1997, p. 156). Koon argues that the roles of culture, state, and marketplace are the three determinants that guided Kuok's career. The Kuok family demonstrates the advantages and extent of Chinese transnational ties necessary for successful business transactions in greater China.

As it is evident, culture has remained an engrained component internal to much of the prosperity gained in greater China. Many scholars and economists, however, view this cultural web of socio-economic conditions as a negative attribute. Many Western investors have concluded, "it is the rule of relationships, not the rule of law" that

determines business interactions in China (Koon, 1997, p. 164). In 1993, the World Bank concluded, when stressing the central role of government and private sector cooperation in the “East Asian Miracle”, that “only those authoritarian and paternalistic governments that are willing ‘to grant a voice and genuine authority to a technocratic elite and key segments in the private sector’ had achieved impressive growth rates in the region” (Koon, 1997, p. 164-165). Other arguments attest that informal institutions are promoting corrupt clientalistic ways of doing business in replacement of the necessary formal legal institutions that dominate western capitalist business transactions. This argument is a weak attempt to justify why China has been able to prosper at such greater phenomenal rates than the west over the past few decades. In the business operations of Sino-capitalism cultural ties are a formal part of the process. It is not ancient Confucian “artifacts” (Koon, 1997, p. 155) as Koon states that dominate Asian business, rather it is past historical occurrences that can help explain how China has adapted to recent globalizing forces. In return, globalization is simultaneously transforming the whole of Asia socially, politically, and economically.

Rather than defining China's incorporation into globalization as the perseverance of stagnant traditional Confucian ideologies, Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini argue that Chinese transnationalism is a “recent global phenomenon with historical roots in pre-modern trade systems, European colonialism, and more recent American geopolitical domination of the Pacific” (Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 12). While the West accounts for this phenomena as a process entering a new stage of development from Fordism to flexible accumulation, China’s incorporation into globalization entails an entirely

different history impossible to define chronologically from the Western perspective of modernity into post modernity.

Ong and Nonini summarize the changing cultural formations in Asia by attesting that Asia's culture is "organically produced in relation to other regional forces in the polycentric world of late capitalism; forces with new cultural ecumenes independent of older centers of power have arisen" (Ong & Nonini, 1997, p. 15). It is these historical factors, which began with the onset of the world system, that remain integral to China's new look and role within the present era of globalization.

What has been outlined reflects the current dynamics of globalization such as flexible accumulation, the emergence a new Global Division of Labor and the role of culture and tradition in China's economic development. In the latter characteristic, the role of traditional Chinese attributes such as family ties, guanxi, and hierarchical status have influenced Chinese development and thus generated new strategies of economic growth that are incomparable to that of Western neo-liberal capitalism. In this sense economic growth in greater China is far more complex and historical than to simply assume that it is just an appendage of Western development.

1.7 Problem Analysis and Methodology

Following what has been covered in the preceding pages, this thesis will examine the economic and political processes occurring on a world scale during an era of globalization and how these processes impact socio-developmental strategies of China and thus the participation of women in the labor process. From a global perspective,

Mies (1986), Kim (1997) and other argue that the recent participation of Chinese women into the international labor force appears inherently exploitative, perpetuating China's patriarchal society. Drawing upon conclusions from fieldwork conducted in rural Xi'an, this thesis however, centers on Chinese women's participation in the paid labor force and how in effect, this participation is creating new opportunities for rural women. As rural women return to the countryside from their urban employment, their accompanying capital and new ideologies are effecting China's rural development and as a result are transforming the traditional status of women in rural china. The next chapter, Chapter 2, will present a preliminary examination of China's migration trends. The chapter provides a historical account of China's economic development policies beginning with the first one-percent population census in 1953. The chapter also explores thoroughly the role of state policies in relation to the various definition and boundary changes dividing rural and urban China. This chapter will also analyze China's recent migration trends, the role of women within these trends, as well as the ways in which these trends are impacting traditional gender roles in rural China.

Chapter 3 details a case study of female rural-urban migration trends in Xi'an. This case study examines one of the many consequences concerning the impacts of the global division of labor on women in rural China. Human subjects approval was obtained on August 15,2000. This research was garnered with intentions to add to past case studies done by others. However, the sample size is relatively small in comparison to the general female population residing in Xi'an. Therefore, this case study does not

make an attempt to state that these occurrences are affiliated to broader patterns of female rural return migration, rather, they are the occurrences of those in Xi'an that I interviewed.

In this case study two types of field surveys were completed. The surveys themselves were designed to directly address the questions that my thesis explores. Eighty-one questionnaires, containing approximately thirty-eight questions were answered by rural migrant women working in urban Xi'an. The questions began more general in nature and overall focused on attitudes and feelings about working in the city, life in the rural areas and ways in which living in the city has changed these women's perceptions of themselves and their attitudes concerning the role of women in Chinese society (Appendix 1.). The questionnaires were read and explained to each respondent, filled out by those assisting me and later analyzed using SPSS. In addition, approximately two, one-hour long focus group surveys were conducted with nine female and one male rural return migrants residing in Lantian County (seven from Lantian) and Weinan County (three from Weinan).

These focus groups centered primarily on the respondents attitudes about themselves and rural life prior to migration, their experiences in the city, and consequently, how those experiences have changed their attitudes and as well as the attitudes of others in their village upon returning. The total surveys and focus groups were conducted between April and July of 1999.

With the support of the Provincial and city level Family Planning Commission,⁸²⁰ who helped to select those who were rural migrants working in urban Xi'an, we distributed forty-one questionnaires in the *Jinhua* market in downtown Xi'an and approximately twenty more in *Lantian* County. In addition, another twenty questionnaires were conducted undercover in the *Jiao da* market, located directly across from the Jioatong University campus in Xi'an.⁹

With the assistance of the Provincial, City, County, and Village Family Planning Commission, we were provided with nine female rural return migrants and one male (despite our requests for women) rural return migrants (See Appendix 2.). The five women and one male from Lantian County were surveyed as one group in a conference room set up by the Family Planning Commission, all of whom were present during the entirety of the focus group. I would argue that the participation of the male respondent altered the dynamics of the focus group and perhaps some of women's responses as well. This particular male was extremely vocal and had a lengthy response for every question, which often left him dominating the focus group. As a result, it is possible that some women's answers were partly influenced, as they may have felt uncomfortable providing personal information in front of him, us, in addition to the legal authorities. However, it could also be fairly argued that his presence ensured that the women's responses were a valid representation of their experiences.

⁸ In China, it is not legal to conduct random sampling. Therefore, with the bulk of my financial aid money Sun Fubin, my translator, and myself were able to receive the assistance of the Family Planning Commission in order to carry out our field research.

⁹ The questionnaires were conducted by myself, my translator, and two of her close friends.

Further, because a few of the women got up during the focus group and left for an extended period of time, my impression was that some of these women did not want to partake in the survey.¹⁰ As a consequence, we were not able to receive all of the information we were asking from all of the respondents.

The focus group of the other three women was conducted by an unauthorized underground operation with the help of my translator's connections in Weinan. All three of the women were interviewed without the company of the authorities and at someone's home. In addition, all three women felt comfortable with our presence and with the questions asked. As a result, this focus group survey was most applicable, thoroughly conducted, and beneficial for this research.

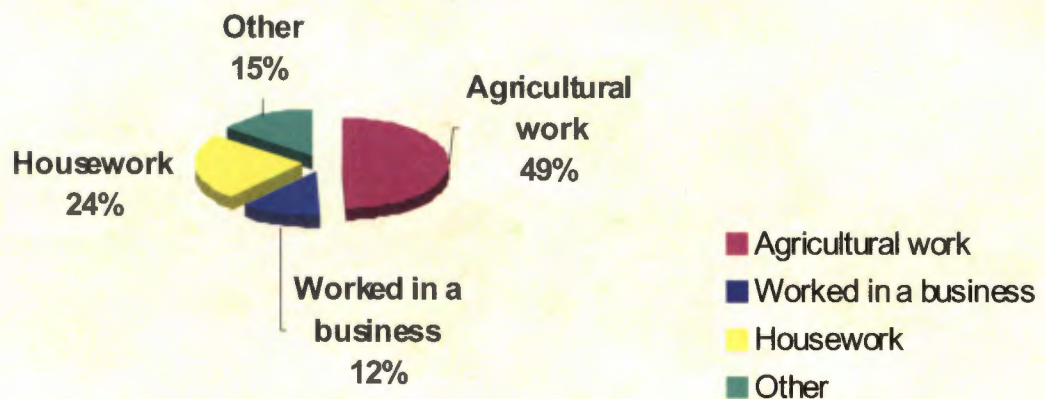


Figure 1. What was your main work at home?

¹⁰ To my amusement, I want to note that fruit as well as eight packs of cigarettes were generously provided for the interviewees with my money I paid for in fees in order to access the Family Planning Commission's assistance. Ironically, for the most part, it is not socially accepted for women to smoke in China.

Chapter 2

2.1 Introduction

The adoption of market socialist policies in 1979 occasioned China to become a fundamental component in the emergence of a new Global Division of Labor. The result has prompted massive migration within China and incorporated rural China, specifically a large proportion of women into the global labor force. These circumstances have changed the social dynamics of the rural village and the role that women employ within these circumstances, as well as the very definition of urban areas, which now include the Special Economic Zones, set up along China's coast. In more recent years, many female labor migrants have begun returning to the rural areas, often their place of origin, aiding the advancement of China into a second phase of development in an era of globalization. Due to escalating freedom of mobility, with new skills and capital from the cities, China's female rural return migrants are a vital source inducing China's economic development in the interior.

As women throughout China make up more and more of the migrant labor participating in the global labor force, this chapter will examine Chinese female rural labor migration. The consequences of women's participation in the global economy and changing roles of China's female rural population have become contention for much controversy. It is argued by many that the impacts of the global economy on women are primarily negative. Often the focus centers on women who are exploited as a cheap source of labor, in addition to being subject to unsafe living and working conditions.

Simultaneously, however, other circumstances are materializing. Currently, China's female rural migrants are returning home from the city with not only money to invest back into their hometown, but also a new set values and ideas procured in the cities. These new roles women are assuming of working and earning money, are in turn vastly changing their value in the countryside, as well as contributing to overall rural development.

This chapter will first review the complexities and varying conditions for defining "urban" China. From a historical perspective, this section examines how shifting state-sponsored policies have changed the boundaries that divide rural and urban China, modifying the definition of China's "cities." In addition, this section will focus on the ways in which official and unofficial state planning has been much cause for the differing hierarchies dividing the rural township and village level from the urban cities.

The next section will look at China's recent migration trends. From a theoretical context, contemporary economic development in China's appears distinct from other economies in transition. This section will first provide a brief literary review of general development theory and the ways in which these theories account for rural-urban migration trends in developing regions. This section will then examine how current rural return migration trends materializing in China's globalization process differs capaciously from the underdevelopment that plagues much of the developing world. This section will also focus on how these migration trends are a central element initiating the most recent phase of Chinese rural development and industrialization.

Lastly, this chapter will focus on the role of rural women on China's development. More specifically this section will examine the ways in which economic transition are

provoking changes concerning the traditional role of women within the countryside.

Contrary to prevailing arguments portraying rural women merely as the victims of globalization, this section focuses on the way in which women are participating in the global economy and improving their overall standards of living in the countryside.

As rural women move to the cities, their newly founded independence inherent of their move away from home, as well as their eventual return home are disintegrating histories of patrimony as well as ingrained female subordination prevalent to rural China. Further, the rural economic investments women are engaging in as a consequence of migration are preeminent for China in sustaining economic development in the 21st century.

2.2 China's Regional Design

In attempts to thwart the development of regional power bases, in 618 AD, Li Yuan, the ruler of the Tang dynasty divided the empire into 300 prefectures (Zhou) and 1500 counties (xian) (Buckley, Lindenmayer et al., 1996, p. 17). Largely, this regional breakdown persists in contemporary China.

Urban China is made up of two components, cities (shi or chengshi) and towns (zhen) (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 331). Individual cities are further broken down into provinces, prefectures, and counties. Within each city and town there exists an urban proper (jianchengqu) and surrounding suburban districts (jiaoqu) or counties under the administrative authority of the city (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 331). Overall, the urban area remains clearly separated from the rural areas, which sets China's regional organization in a layout dictated by hierarchical status. These state-drawn distinct

divisions have, in the past, separated specific powers and privileges according to the region's hierarchical status.

As a result of this formally administered hierarchy, the farther a designated place exists from a city center, the less autonomy and direct access it has to state resources. These resources include money for infrastructure, food subsidies for its citizens, industrial investment and the autonomy to make local decisions concerning issues such as raising taxes and approving foreign investments (Chan, 1994, p. 248).

In addition, the cities themselves have a specific hierarchical status. The larger the city, the higher its status. For example, Beijing, Shanghai, and Tianjin, which have the largest populations, lie directly under the central administration and are considered provincial level units (Chan, 1994, p. 248). Below these three cities are the prefectural-level cities (*Dijet*), under the administration of the provincial administration. At the bottom of this city hierarchy is the county-level city, which comes under the direct authority of the prefecture (Chan, 1994, p. 248). In addition, aside from this general outline, the central government has changed its criteria concerning the qualifications for what is necessary to obtain and relinquish city status, all of which will be discussed below.

2.3 State Policies and Historical Politics

In the first, one-percent population census in 1953, all people living within designated cities, including the suburban areas were required to be registered as city residents. Despite the many Chinese citizens in these areas engaged in agriculture, these

requirements disregarded occupational status and all those living in the city were labeled as urban residents (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 340). All other residents were automatically considered the rural population (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 340).

In 1955, the State Council issued two documents with criteria for dividing the rural from the urban. The most pronounced of these criteria were the settlements administrative status, economic functions, population size, as well as the share of non-agricultural production (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 336). These documents, however, were quickly abandoned as the onset of the Great Leap Forward garnered an estimated twenty-three million peasants to the urban centers. The reason for the massive migration was to accommodate and sustain fast paced production of steel in the urban enterprises- Mao's plan to industrialize China via producing vast quantities of steel communally (Solinger, 1999, p. 40-41). In 1963 (the time of the second one percent census), as a result of the Great Leap Forward as well as the repatriations which began in 1957 (Solinger, 1999, p. 40), the Chinese government determined it necessary to control the urban population as food shortages and starvation grew rampant (Solinger 1999, p. 41).

The household registration system, (or *hukou*), whose purpose is to restrict as well as monitor migration, originally determined who would be labeled agricultural producers and who would be considered eligible for food subsidies (Zhang, Simon and Zhao, 1998, p. 346). According to the 1953 census, anyone holding urban *hukou* status was eligible for subsidies (Wu, 1994, p. 677). However, in the following population census in 1964, in order to reduce the given distribution of government food subsidies, along with the new criteria dismissing previous urban areas, only those with *hukou*, non-agricultural status were eligible for food subsidies (Wu, 1994, p. 677). Therefore, according to the

1963 census, the required population to be considered a city was increased and at the same time the suburban areas were largely reduced under state policy changes to such proportions that a city's total agricultural population could not exceed twenty percent (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p.336). As a result, many cities lost their urban status and the overall urban population decreased substantially (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 336).

In 1979, China opened itself up to the global economy. As a result of the new open door policy, the accompanying economic reforms largely affected the definition of urban China once again. The rural communes were eliminated and China increasingly sought to attract foreign direct investment. As a consequence, many rural laborers became redundant (Solinger, 1999, p. 45), curtailing China's ability to control the massive migration that followed as a consequence. The urban areas dramatically increased in size as many rural citizens migrated to the cities to supply the vast amounts of surplus jobs. In addition, with an official end to the Cultural Revolution, many previous urban residents who had been sent to the countryside returned (Solinger, 1999, p. 45).

In 1982, another population census was conducted. As a result of the furthering economic reforms occurring at that time, the criteria determining urban status was changed once again (Wu, 1994, p. 679). It is argued, however, that these changes, for the first time, appropriately reflected the number of those migrating in search of labor. The urban population in the 1982 census was based on a one-year period of residence in urban areas. Therefore, it included all people who lived within the official boundaries of a city or town for one year or more and those who had resided in that city/town for less

than a year, but were absent from their place of origin or *hukou* registration for one year or more (Zhang and Zhao, 1998, p. 346).

In addition, throughout the 1980s, many counties were suddenly relabeled as towns and later cities (Wu, 1994, p. 680-682). The purpose behind this policy change was to accommodate for the many rural citizens who sought employment in urban areas as well as to help alleviate the increasing pressure from local officials to have more autonomy over their localities. This policy was designed under the notion that the towns would lead the development of the countryside (Chan, 1994, p. 252).

As a result of China's open door policy (aside from those who became urban dwellers through policy changes), rural to urban migration in China has generated an estimated more one million temporary residents in each city of Beijing, Tianjin and Shanghai (Yang and Guo, 1996, p. 772). In total, in 1988, this floating population (*liudong renkou*)¹¹ were estimated to be at 50 million citizens (Chan, 1994, p. 265).

As a result of the increasing number of "floaters" as well as further studies derived from the 1982 census, the Chinese government resolved to monitor as well as control the vast and increasing numbers migrating in search of labor in the new Chinese global economy. In 1985, new regulations were created at the national level. These new regulations were set up with hopes to monitor the numbers of floating population. The regulations were also set up to better calculate urban migration trends by allowing self-initiated migrant workers to register for "temporary residence permits."

¹¹ The Floating population specifically refers to the population residing in places where they do not hold permanent household registration status (Chan, 1994, p. 265),

The result of this permit afforded many rural citizens the opportunity to legally work in the city and not have to worry about being sent home by state authorities. At the same time the permits also alleviated pressure on urban infrastructure because those with permits were unable to obtain the benefits of permanent urban residents (such as free compulsory education, health care and other benefits of state-owned enterprises) (Chan, p. 270 and Ma, Liaw, and Zeng, 1997, p. 711).

While the temporary residence cards have helped monitor China's population to a small degree, accurately tracking China's migration trends remains capricious, as many informal determinants prevail and remain unaccounted. One example thwarting the ability to track migration is a report stating that by early 1994, three million urban residence cards had been sold to peasants unofficially, generating a revenue of RMB 25 billion (Chan, 1994, p. 271) on the black market. Another example includes the inability to compare data. For example, Shanghai included those migrants living in its suburbs and Guangzhou did not (Solinger, 1999, p. 17). Further, there remains the problem of interviewers providing false information on questionnaires. Despite the vast and continued obstacles for tracking rural-urban migration, of recent, China's migration is demonstrating a trend anomalous to other countries in economic transition. These differences are clearly China's continued efforts to contain rural peasants in the countryside. Before addressing this, however, the following section first looks at some general theories of urban development and their effects on rural-urban migration.

2.4 China's Shifting Migration Trends: A new phase of development

Inherent to urban development is the factors that create urban expansion. Several theories exist to help explain the urbanization processes occurring throughout the developing world. One theory is the modernization development model that emerged after World War II at Bretton Woods and dominated international policy unabated throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Focusing on the western industrial revolution as the basis for economic development, modernization theory contends that rapid urbanization is a natural process of development and is a necessary step in a country's attempt to become a "modern" society. Led by market forces, the major cities are the primary catalysts for economic growth (Smith, 1996, p. 4). These cities are also the locus for "innovation, opportunity, and political transformation" (Smith, 1996, p. 5). The succeeding wealth, information, and technology would then trickle down and garner the development of the countryside.

As it became apparent that industrialization through urbanization was not occurring in the developing regions of the world, growing criticism emerged from within the social sciences (Smith 1996, p. 5). Through empirical studies it was found that urbanization in the contemporary developing world was typified by uneven growth and inequality (Smith, 1996, p. 5). In fact, it was found that uneven development, accompanied by rapid urbanization, tended to thwart overall development, often leading to economic stagnation (Smith, 1996, p. b 5).

As a result, another theory emerged from these conclusions. This theory, known as the comparative political economy approach was created. According to comparative

political economy, development is an inevitable attribute to expanding global capitalism and the world-system (Smith, 1996, p. 7) within which global capitalism exists.

Consequently, according to this school, in order to discern contemporary urban development, it is critical to examine from a historical perspective a region's changing role within the world-system. It is within this world-system, Smith (1996) argues, that the state and its society struggle to achieve independent development.

Specific to China, historical context is significant to present economic development. China's historical role within the world system lends to the present, well-developed urban centers. In addition, traditional forms of *guanxi* have transcended into contemporary business and family relations. Third, contemporary state policies extend from the historical role of the state in Chinese development. For these reasons, it can be argued that China is less likely to over-urbanize its cities as present development does not pertain to traditional theories of development such as the debate between dependency and modernization theory.

For example, in late traditional China, approximately ten percent of China's population was living in cities. When China was at the center of the world-system Xi'an, Kaifeng, Hangchow, Nanking, and Peking were all at some point the largest cities in the world (Smith, 1996, p. 98). In addition, China never had one predominating urban area where the majority of the population exists, known as urban primacy (Smith, 1996, p. 6). In late-imperial China, there already subsisted regional city systems. As a result, as China aims to industrialize its countryside (as will be discussed in detail later), it can be argued that it has an advantage over other predominantly agricultural states through its historically well established urban centers.

In addition, as the first chapter has indicated, culture was a central component of China's past and presently is significant to economic development. Informal institutions such as family ties, which effect trade relations, labor relations, and more significant to this Chapter, labor migration, remain integral. Solinger remarks how the "bond to ones land" is a theme throughout Chinese history. In pre-communist China, the land was central to a family's stability and while some family members were sent out to earn extra money, the money always returned home as they never severed their ties with the hometown (Solinger, 1999, p. 185). When recent reforms began and the communes were dismantled, each family was allocated a plot of land. Often the family who has supplied its own grain was given the option to give up its land and register in urban areas, however, as the land is symbolic of family and security, the majority of the families kept their lands in the countryside (Solinger, 1999, p. 185-186). According to a state newspaper sixty-six percent of those who migrated from Guizhou to Guandong to work, eventually returned home due to feelings of "sentimental attachment" (Solinger, 1999, p. 187).

Out-migration into the urban centers has grown exponentially with reforms. However, unlike other countries where migrants often linger in the city for indefinite periods of time exhausting the urban infrastructure, in China, family tradition remains a looming pull for migrants to earn some money and return home.

Lastly, entirely counter to the logic of the market and the natural evolution of urban development that modernization theory attests, in China, the state has been, in the past, as well as currently, the predominating force directing China's path of industrialization. Within China, synonymous to development in all areas of the world,

temporary migrants have played an invaluable role in China's recent development. At the outset of China's new market economy, beginning in the 1980s, many businesspersons in Hong Kong and Taiwan relocated their factories to China's coastal zones. At this time Chinese migrant labor was cheap and land was inexpensive. Rural labor migrants were eagerly employed as they accepted lower wages, made up the surplus of jobs in the cities as well as performed jobs considered unsuitable for urban dwellers (including construction, urban industrial development and providing services for urban dwellers). Without this supply of labor migrants, development of the coastal regions would have been substantially slower and in some cases, it is argued, never as successful as it has been (Ma, 1999, p. 792).

Despite the economic boom in the urban areas, disparity between rural and urban China remained substantial and the impacts of rural migration on the urban areas (typical of most developing countries in transition) were becoming increasingly apparent. As a consequence, the state concluded to forge several initiatives to thwart this increase as well as to prevent China from over-urbanization, typical of the developing world. One such example was when, then premier, Li Peng expressed at the second session of the seventh National Peoples Congress in March 1989 concerning the need to curb massive urban migration. "Peasants entering the cities in large numbers isn't a way out; for the past few years we have specified a policy of 'leaving the land but not the countryside'; I think this policy is still very feasible. In the rural areas, continue to develop agricultural production, engage in the tertiary industries and in the town and village enterprises, absorb this labor power, create wealth, improve livelihood" (Solinger, 1999, p. 52).

In another instance, in the mid 1990s, Zhu Rongji, who was at the time a member of the standing committee, determined by stating at an interview that "to stop the influx, we are creating rural industries and liberalizing agricultural prices" (Solinger, 1999, p. 52).

Qiao Shi, a politburo standing committee member and chairman of the NPC recommended "putting the idle peasantry to work in the countryside at this point, building rural roads and water conservancy facilities...[t]he other options he saw were to ensconce them in town and village enterprises (TVE's) or small towns and cities, all plans that would keep them away from the metropolitan areas" (Solinger, 1999, p. 53).

Consequently, both government pressure to alleviate the impacts on the urban centers from mass migration the pressures of living in the city without urban registration, as well as businesses looking to find cheaper labor and more inexpensive land, businesses began to move their factories into China's periphery. These peripheral areas, where often the rural migrants originated, labor was once again cheap and land was inexpensive (Ma, 1999 p. 796) and many rural migrants slowly began to return to their rural hometowns.

Some additional factors that helped China in its attempt to return the rural population to the countryside were the overall motives of the rural population themselves. A predominant proportion of the "floating population" never intended to migrate permanently. In addition these floaters did not migrate only in search of higher wages (Ma, 1999 p. 797). In fact, currently, vast numbers of rural migrants go to the cities without temporary residence cards. Working in the black market is often exhausting and many migrants work without adequate pay to survive the costs of city life permanently. In addition, for those migrants with children, they must return to their

hometown in order to be able to send their children to school.¹² As a result, many rural residents see migration as a temporary option to make extra money to bring back to the countryside.

According to some estimates, approximately 35 percent left their place of origin for less than six months (Ma, 1999, p. 787). Between 1990-1995 rural destined migrants totaled 11.8 million. Among those, approximately 4 million were return migrants who migrated from the rural areas and returned within a five-year period (Ma, 1999, p. 795). Together, China's urban tradition, state policies, as well as cultural ties historically within the world system are predominant factors instigating China's current labor migration patterns, governing Chinese development as well as influencing the course of globalization.

For many, returning home has proven much more desirable than permanency in the cities. The money saved, as well as the skills acquired while working in a factory or restaurant, has ultimately increased their social stature in their rural hometown upon returning. These migrants now have the necessary skills and the knowledge to start their own businesses or joint ventures. Many also maintained connections or business relations with their urban employers. Therefore, often, return migrants have been awarded managerial positions within a subsidiary (labor intensive branch or processing factory) of the Town and Village Enterprise they worked for in the city. Eventually, many migrants have been able to take over the entire factory (Ma, 1999, p. 798).

Rural return migration is becoming largely responsible for rural economic expansion and is sending China into its latest phase of economic development. Dr.

¹² See Chapter 3 for research conducted in Xi'an.

Zhongdong Ma terms the process of rural economic development as the "diffusion" process where development goes from the core to the periphery (Ma, 1999, p. 796-797). Ma argues that as this diffusion process continues one group of return migrants not only has the ability to develop an entire community (Ma, 1999, p. 798), but in addition, engage rural citizens from farther and farther into the interior of China into the global economy.

Because of this influx of rural return migration, rural Town and Village Enterprises have become an invaluable component of China's economic development. For example, according to the article "Small is Beautiful" in September 23rd edition of *Forbes* magazine, Tanzer exclaims that over the past 15 years rural enterprises have expanded by about twenty-five percent (Tanzer, 1996, p. 90). In addition, these rural enterprises are responsible for the majority of non farm jobs and have raised the share of industrial output in China from nine percent to over forty percent (Tanzer, 1996, p. 90). These profits are then, according to Tanzer, invested back into the local economy via rising wages and expanding payrolls, as well as new schools and other public works (Tanzer, September 23, 1996, p. 92).

2.5 Female Migration and the Global Labor Force

By 1990, estimates claimed that approximately 800 million of China's citizens were constituted as the "floating population" (Lee, 1998, p. 67). Of that population, according to surveys done by scholars in mainland China and Hong Kong, women in certain areas, rather than men made up a majority of this "mobile" population (Lee, 1998,

p. 68).¹³ A study done by Si-ming Li in 1989 of the Pearl River Delta found that seventy percent of those sampled were female. Furthermore, the study indicated that the average distanced traveled by women for employment was farther than the distance men traveled in search of employment (Si-ming Li, 1989, p. 43, 50). In Guandong, the 1987 state statistical bureau found that fifty-eight percent of the migrant workers from within Guandong and sixty-three percent who migrated from outside the province were female (Lee, 1998, p. 68). What prompted the motivation among China's women to leave the countryside often to acquire low wage and often physically and mentally arduous work?

Several possible theories to explain female migration exist. According to Western feminism, the emergence of export-led development in the third world stemming from the New International Division of Labor (NIDL) is only a mere extension of traditional familial and societal patriarchy. As new participants in the paid labor force, Western feminists argue that women are not only exploited at home, but are now marginalized by transnational corporations as well (Choudhry, 1997, p. 217). A common stereotype is a picture depicting "young, single, female factory workers suffering long hours, low wages and insecure, unhealthy and unsafe working conditions in the multinational factories. Further, these women are also exploited by their own families who claim a disproportionate share of their wages without according them any power or status within the household" (Choudhry, 1997, p. 217).¹⁴ While this argument

¹³ While some have argued that that a large percentage of the female mobile population migrated with their spouses, these women have also migrated with the same intentions of their male spouses. Women and men alike migrated in search of urban employment.

¹⁴ Also See Shadian, J. (1998). Lateral Transformations for Asia's Women: Patriarchy from Family to Industry in on line *Global Society Journal*, www.humboldt.edu~

is highly valid, other dimensions to this same scenario have emerged. A new feminist movement has been constructed by the subaltern themselves within the developing world.

According to Saud Choudhry (1997), indigenous feminism argues that the viewpoint of Western feminism is characteristically eurocentric as it generalizes women's experiences in attempting to find "global explanations" for the subordination of women (Choudhry, 1997, p. 220). In addition, indigenous feminism argues that if women are provided with the opportunities to be economically self-sufficient, then overall autonomy increases in comparison to women left to perform only unpaid family labor (Choudhry, 1997, p. 220). According to Choudhry, in her article *Women Workers in the Global Factory*, one example of this is the research conducted by Safra in 1992. Safra reported that women workers in the Caribbean who engaged in export manufacturing used their acquired income as a bargaining tool for increased control within the household (Choudhry, 1997, p. 220). In addition, Ecevit (1991) determined that Turkish wives doubled their authority within the household as a result of economic earnings (Choudhry, 1997, p. 220).

When attempting to determine the impacts and impetus behind the migration patterns of rural women in China, specific cultural and local factors are imperative to take into account in order for sound comprehension and the alleviation of misguided stereotypes (Choudhry, 1997, p. 220). Lee (1998) argues that in order to look earnestly at specific women's perspective, it is essential to "render women's lives and turn them into resources for reconceptualizing social realities" (Lee, 1998, p. 166).

For example, official statistics of the early 1990s stated that prosperous and skilled laborers were returning home and investing their wealth and resources back into

the countryside. Solinger (1999) argues that this example of modernization theory, in reality, falls shortsighted as the harsh realities for rural migrants stand in great contradiction to this glamorous portrayal. Solinger states that it is the already skilled and educated who were actually migrating. If they happened to not already possess various skills, the expertise that was acquired from working in the city was most often not applicable to the countryside (Solinger states as an example- What skills does a prostitute take home?) (Solinger, 1999, p. 189-190).

Counter to Solinger's arguments, in China, modernization theory is not applicable to recent development. As modernization theory depends on the unfettered logic of the market, in China, as this and the preceding chapter have determined, the state as well as its informal institutions are predominate to rural and urban development as well as migration trends.¹⁵ In addition, as will be further detailed in Chapter 3, it is not always the most skilled who migrate as women are among the many who do and typical of Chinese tradition, rural women are most often the least skilled and least educated.

Further, Ching Kwan Lee in her book, *Gender and the South China Miracle* (1998), contends that on the one hand, it has been acknowledged that many young women migrated to the cities in search of greater employment opportunities. Often these young women sought to make money in order to alleviate the familial economic burdens pervasive in the countryside. Some accounts have stated that one family member who worked in a city abated all economic stresses of the entire family. However, Lee states that the reasons for female migration extend well beyond aiming to improve familial

¹⁵ In reference to field research, see 3.3.d. for relation to the female migration patterns of those I interviewed in Xi'an

conditions. Lee, found that many girls migrated to the cities to escape parental control as well as familial obligations (Lee, 1998, p. 73).

Life in rural China often marginalizes women. In addition, rural women overwhelmingly receive a disproportionate percentage of the family's resources.¹⁶ In the countryside, the majority of lucrative non-agricultural jobs were passed on to sons leaving daughters with nothing to do (Lee, 1998, p. 76). Because of these disadvantages, many females have begun to leave their hometowns in order to escape unwanted marriages as well as an attempt to determine their own futures.

However, it is important to note that while rural women migrate to the cities to gain freedom and autonomy inaccessible in the countryside, Chinese cultural tradition thwarts their aims for complete independence. Women even after leaving the countryside are not immune from the nexus of their family and relatives within their hometown. While gaining one particular source of independence and autonomy, rural women often remain largely dependent on their hometown for providing the local networks necessary for successful urban employment (Lee, 1998, p. 84).¹⁷

Local relationships (*lao xiang*), defined either as immediate family, kinship, or even neighbors, and *guanxi* predominately control the rural-urban labor supply as well as the means by which continued migrant labor becomes available (Lee, 1998, p. 84).

Rural migrants are often unable to find employment in a factory without some type of local connection. Often, in addition, changing jobs depends on word of mouth and

¹⁶ Traditionally, raising a girl in the countryside is viewed as a poor economic investment. Women most often married out of the family while men stayed to eventually take care of their parents and other family members. Because of this, spending money for education and the general well being of boys has traditionally been considered a priority over girls.

¹⁷ However, men also work according to these parameters.

recommendations from other locals in the area (Lee, 1998, p. 86). Often females first learn of the idea to leave the countryside from other girls who have left their village. When those who have migrated return to visit, they customarily recruit others from their hometown to acquire jobs at their place of employment. In certain instances, someone from the community such as an uncle, brother or family friend who works in a city comes back to recruit teenage girls in his hometown to his factory. Li, 1989, found that most females were accompanied to their urban destination by family members and friends from their hometown. In addition, before migrating, frequently females already had family members and friends living in their place of destination (Li, 1989, pp. 50-51).

Concurrently, however, in the city the same localistic network and *guanxi* ties generate a tight network of females from the same area. These networks provide the necessary support in order to alleviate some of the hardships of living in the city. Often locals will help each other financially when falling ill. In other situations family from home are able to help obtain new employment positions in the cities. It is this intertwined network of support that has enabled girls to leave the confines of the countryside in search of new opportunities.

As is the case of the majority of rural migrants, female rural migrants eventually choose to leave the city and return their hometown. Several factors are responsible for this return and simultaneously help to maintain the persistent network between the families in the rural countryside and those who have migrated.

One reason, women often return home is because any social security is always allocated by the government back to the rural area from which the migrant originated. Another reason women return to the countryside, is that if a woman marries and has a

child, education for that child is only provided in the originating area in which the mother has *hukou* status. In addition, many women return home because work in the cities is often sporadic and inconsistent. Often migrant workers are laid off without given notice. Further, there is continued open hostility to migrants¹⁸ as well as poor shanty living conditions. All of these factors together make permanency in the city a less than an attractive option (Davin, 1996, p. 716).

Predominantly, for these reasons, the large majority of migrant labor have found their sojourn to the city a temporary one. This phenomenon has been referred to as circulation. Each year a number of young migrants depart for the city, most will return, often permanently, and within a few years their place will be taken by other young hopefuls (Davin, 1996, p. 716). As this pattern continues, the skills, ideas and styles brought back to the rural areas from the cities eventually influence change as well as development of the rural areas.

¹⁸ See Solinger, D. (1999). *Contesting Citizenship in Urban China: Peasant Migrants, the State, and the Logic of the Market*.

2.6 Changing Rural Tradition: The impacts of female rural return migration

Globalization and the rapidly transforming Chinese city life are inevitably impacting the opportunities for female rural migrants. As women have opted to migrate to the cities, their urban experiences are transcending back into rural life, disintegrating traditional roles for women in rural China. For example, after tracking female return migration for three years, Xu Ping, the director of the Sichuan Province Women's Research Center, has concluded that there is a connection between women's economic contributions and people wanting to keep their baby girls (Farley, 1998, p. A11). In addition, among the approximately 50,000 people living in Zugao, the largest town in Jintang County, Sichuan, between 1985-1993, 24 women committed suicide. However, in 1998, local officials encouraged and arranged for women to migrate to Guangdong to work and allow men to continue heavy farm labor. Since this time the suicide rate has decreased and of late disappeared completely (Farley, 1998, p. A11).

While boys ultimately remain in a position of greater status within the home, female return migrants are able to negotiate greater personal autonomy within their households. They are also often able to generate a sense of self-esteem for being able to pay their families back for their upbringing with the wages garnered in the city. Female return migrants are also increasingly able to set money aside for home construction, financing events such as weddings, and starting businesses of their own (Davin, 1996, p. 717).

Studies have also found that young women have brought back capital to their villages and set up shops and even small manufacturing enterprises (Davin, 1996, p.

718). A case in point is Yang Xiaohua, 22, who migrated from Zugao in 1994 to Guangdong to work in a shoe factory. At first she sent her earnings back home to help her family move away from severe poverty. However, eventually she saved her earnings and returned to her village to open her own restaurant (Farley, 1998, p. A11). Other studies have determined that women who migrate to the cities tend to marry later than non-migrants as well as acquire savings, clothes and other personal property while away in the cities (Davin, 1996, p. 717).

All of these combined experiences are vastly influencing the role of women in the countryside. While the trip to the city itself provides women with a sense of autonomy and self-esteem for becoming part of the paid labor force, this same sense of self-confidence and monetary leverage, carries over into their future marriages. For instance, many women may then possess an extent of control over their new family budget (Davin, 1996, p. 718). In addition, studies have also found that women who migrate to the cities have lower fertility rates than those who do not leave the countryside and are often more receptive to, and knowledgeable about birth control (Davin, 1996, p. 718). These factors together have already begun to transform gender relations in the rural areas. As this trend increases, a larger proportion of women are assisting in the development of the countryside through their economic activities, as well as improving their status at home. Earning an income is affording young women greater respect and more personal autonomy not traditional to the role of women in rural China. Liu Chunlan from Lianhuacun, Sichuan states that “Now girls can do a lot of things they couldn’t before; go to school, travel and work, choose who they marry, it’s all because of money” (Farley, 1998).

2.7 Conclusion

China's migration patterns over the past four decades were largely the direct result of development schemes put forth by the Chinese government. While the definitions of cities themselves changed over the years to accommodate the plan at hand, there always remained the same aim: to induce economic development. At present this same goal predominates when tracking contemporary migration trends. As China has completed its initial wave of development, encouraging, yet keeping under control migrant labor, these same migrants, along with the efforts of the government are now helping create rural industrialization. With the various factors encouraging migrant workers to eventually return home, China has been able to successfully curtail massive urban over-population and severe urban poverty common to much of the underdeveloped world. In various regions where women make up half of these return migrants, beyond assisting as the catalysts developing China's countryside, their labor has helped to acquire economic independence and new skills. This new role in which women are assuming as a consequence is changing persistent social tradition in which women were not given opportunities to improve their inferior status within rural China.

Chapter 3

3.1 Female Rural to Urban Migration in Xi'an

This chapter examines, in depth, the issues of female rural to urban migration through a case study of Xi'an. It analyzes how China's informal institutions, such as *guanxi*, effect the female rural migration trends for those working in urban Xi'an. It also explores some of the factors controlling migration rates in Xi'an, and how these factors help contain over-urbanization in the city. Finally, the chapter examines the changing values and perceptions of female rural labor migrants arising from their duration in urban Xi'an and has transpired for female rural return migrants after their return to rural Xi'an from their experiences in an urban environment.

Comparatively, Xi'an is located far from various regions receiving direct benefits of economic growth along China's coast and border with Hong Kong. An overwhelming amount of research has been conducted on the core area surrounding the Special Economic Zones (SEZ's), and more specifically, examining the effects of flexible production on women. However, the economy in Xi'an, as well as other remote economies throughout China have continuously progressed over the course of the past two decades at rates incomparable to much of the world.

Xi'an is a prototypical representation of what has been determined as globalization. In the context of the changing world economy, in Xi'an, the first world and the third world have grown to exist simultaneously. As an outgrowth of China's incorporation into the structures of flexible accumulation, manifold histories of tradition are presently disappearing under the creation of new wealth and social interactions.

Development in Xi'an is a culmination of China's recent changes stemming from these growing market reforms. Directly alongside Xi'an's bustling downtown markets of freshly cooked noodles, vegetables and spices for sale or plastic vanity mirrors and Titanic key chains, skyscrapers are miraculously materializing over night. The official white tiled decor almost symbolic of economic reforms is littering the landscape providing the infrastructure ushering in new capital and economic activities. New private owned high-rise apartments are replacing the traditional brown state owned housing with ambitions to rent out to the burgeoning entrepreneurial class.

Despite Xi'an's location situated deep in the interior of China's Shaanxi Province, development as an outgrowth of globalization has not failed to reach its borders. Accompanying this new growth is new business and new people migrating to urban Xi'an in search of work from the countryside, in surrounding Shaanxi, as well as other provinces throughout China.

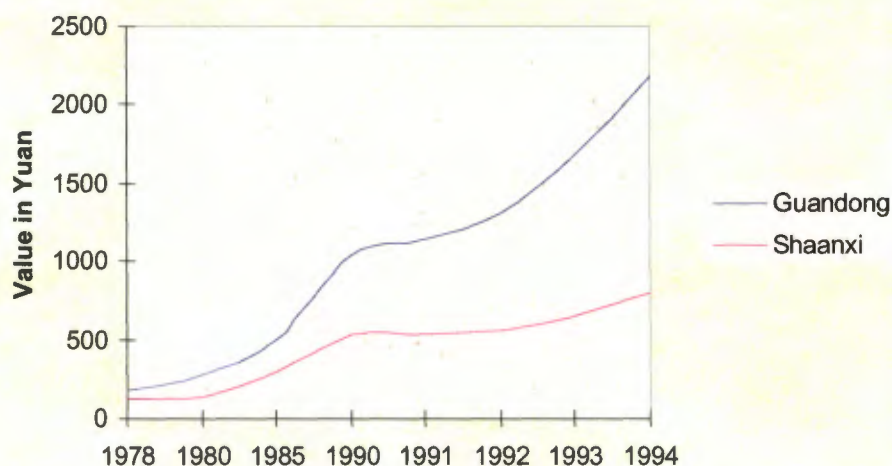
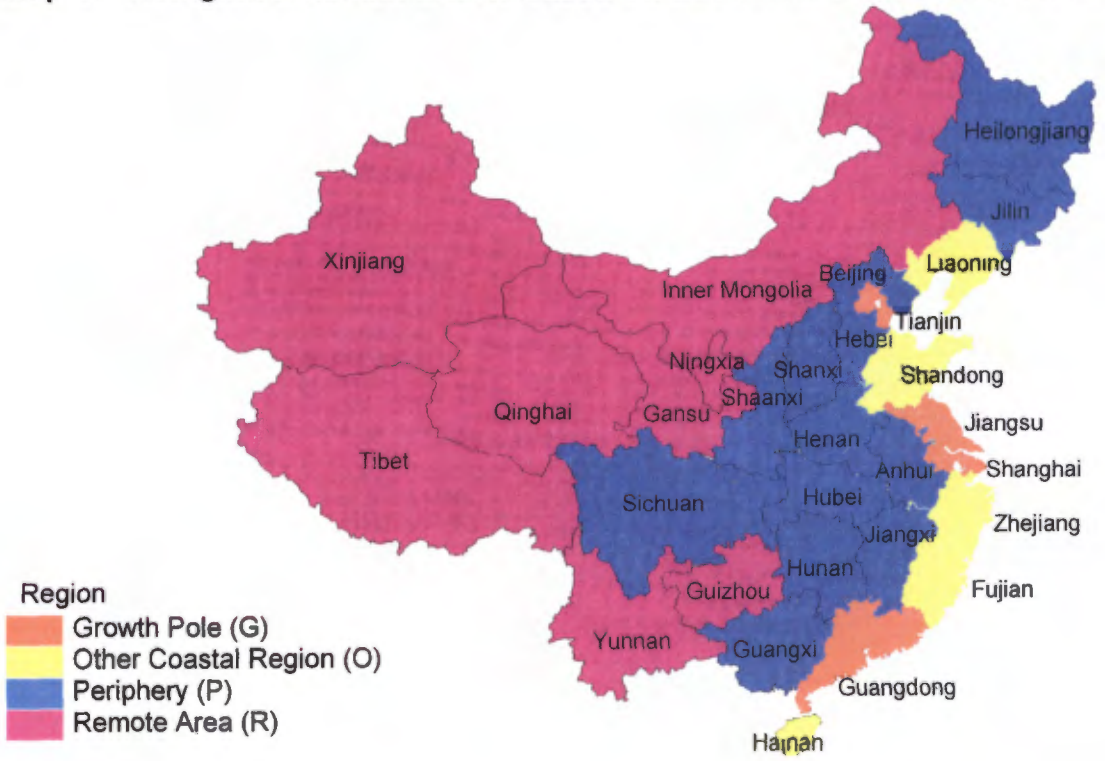


Figure 2. Rural Household Per Capita Net Income by Region
China Statistical Yearbook, 1994

Map 1. A Regional Classification Based on Economic Conditions, China



To begin, Shaanxi province is located in central northern China and has a population of 34,810,000 people (Statistical Yearbook of Shaanxi, 1994). Compared to the other Provinces in China, Shaanxi is not as populous. For example, Guandong Province located on China's coast, which has one of the fastest growing economies since the open door policy, has a total population of 66,890,000 people (China Statistical Bureau of China, 1994). Shaanxi has a GNP of 132,604 RMB,¹⁹ which falls into the bottom third of the total 30 provinces. Based on Ma's regional classification's concerning overall economic growth in China, Shaanxi is a peripheral region due to its far location from the economic center or growth pole (note that Guandong Province is a growth pole- See Map. 1) (Ma, 1999, p. 789). The growth pole areas are characterized by high rural and urban incomes as well as a large flow of foreign investment (FDI) (Ma, 1999, p. 789). The (O)ther coastal regions have high rural employment in the TVE's, a high rural income, and some foreign investment (Ma, 1999, p. 789). The (P)eripheral and remote regions, in comparison, have much slower growth, are far from the economic center and have relatively smaller FDI or TVE's (Ma, 1999, p. 789).

Contrasting Shaanxi's rural household per capita net income to that of Guandong, Figure 1., illustrates Shaanxi's much slower growth rates than other provinces which contain the Export Processing Zones set up by the state and located on China's coast.

Shaanxi's agricultural sector generates 27,152 billion RMB annually. However, the industrial sector provides the majority of the province's GNP, accumulating 55,586 billion RMB a year. The major industries are textiles, electricity, machinery, and

¹⁹ The Yuan is the Chinese currency and RMB is another way of referring to it.

construction. Despite this, Shaanxi's percentage of foreign capital is diminutive compared to Guandong (Figures 2- 4.).

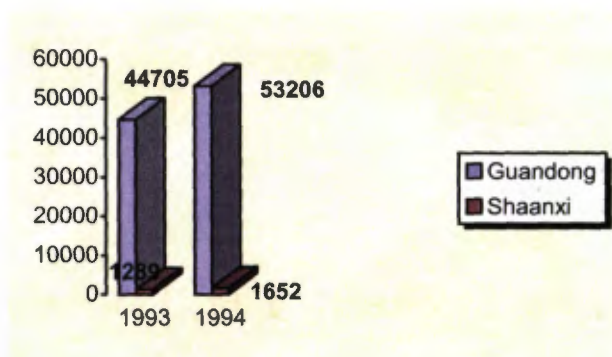


Figure 3. Number of Registered Enterprises with Foreign Capital
China Statistical Yearbook, 1994

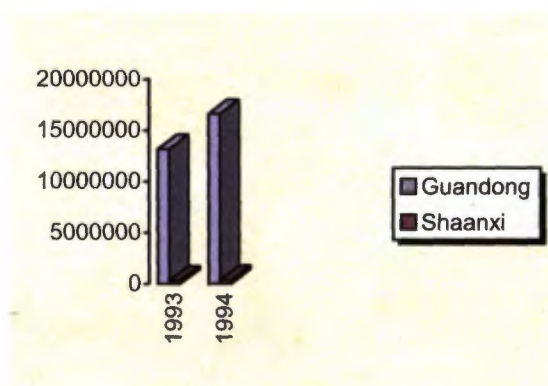


Figure 4. Total Investment with Foreign Capital in USD
China Statistical Yearbook, 1994

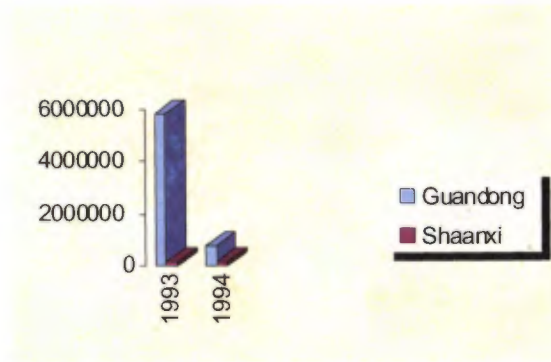
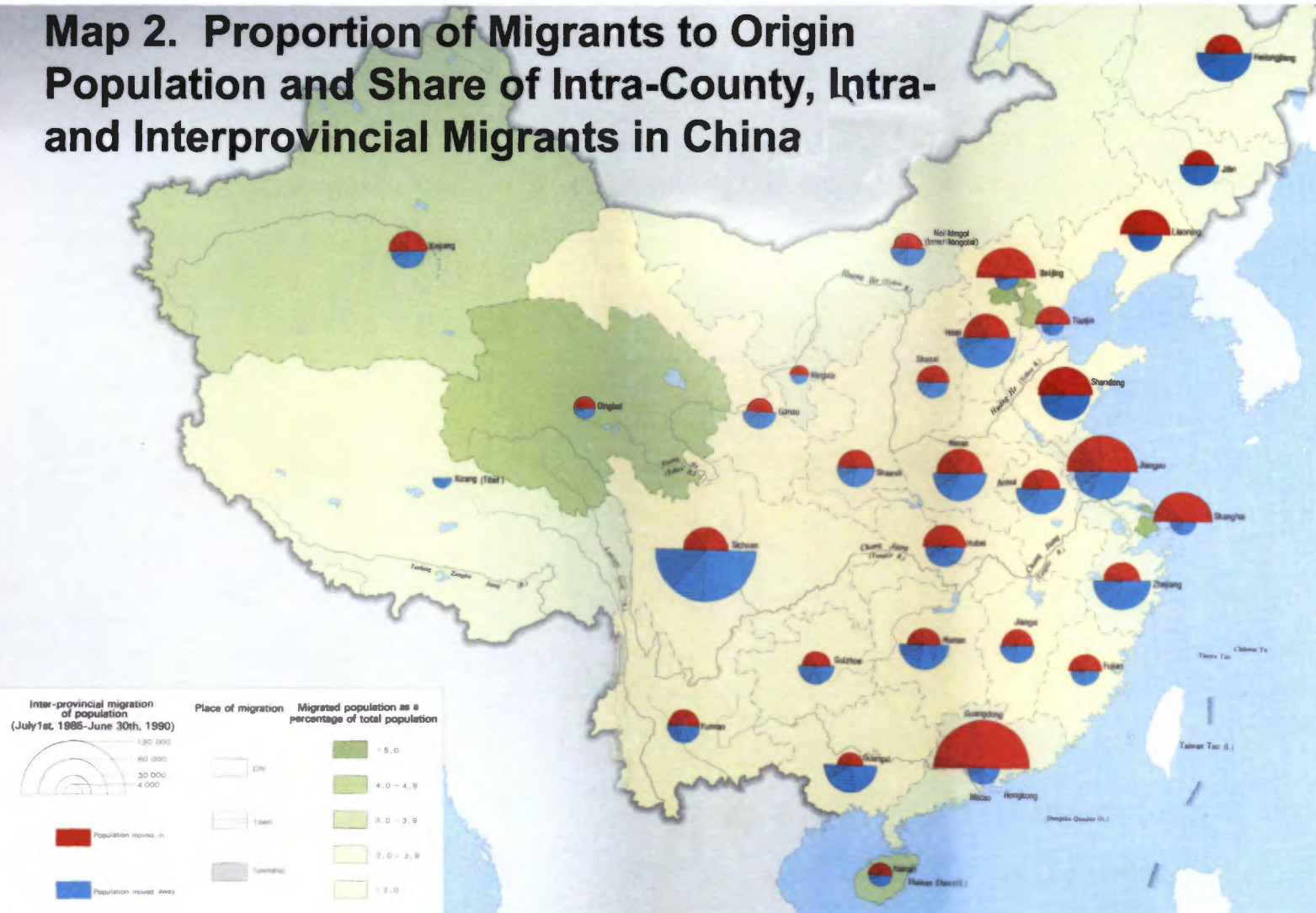


Figure 5. Foreign Partners
China Statistical Yearbook, 1994

Map 2. Proportion of Migrants to Origin Population and Share of Intra-County, Intra- and Interprovincial Migrants in China



Official migration statistics state in-migration as 1.9 percent and out migration at 1.7 percent. In comparison to much of China these figures also remain low. The coastal region (which has the highest percentage of overall migration within China) has migration rates greater than five percent (Ma 1999, p. 790) (See Map 2). Consequently, it is apparent that despite broad changes rapidly taking place throughout China, disparity looms large within this development process and Shaanxi remains on the fringe of this booming economic transformation.

Nevertheless, while migration patterns, foreign direct investment, and economic growth may be less extreme in Shaanxi than in the coastal regions of the Export Processing Zones, the effects of globalization are paramount to the lives of everyday citizens within and surrounding its capital, Xi'an.

The city of Xi'an, itself located within the Guanzhong plains, is the largest and most populous city in the Shaanxi province. It has a GNP of roughly 50 billion RMB making it the wealthiest city in Shaanxi Province. While it does not have the benefits of provincial level status, as a city Xi'an generates the largest revenues in Shaanxi. In addition, as Xi'an also maintains a substantial amount of state owned enterprises, it receives a disproportionate amount of funds from the central government. Further funding for the city comes from the Provincial level (Shaanxi) as well.

Despite its relative wealth to the whole of Shaanxi, because Xi'an is located far from the SEZ's, competition for foreign direct investment is hampered. In addition, the overwhelming proportion of state owned enterprises also hinders this expansion. However, privatization exists and is steadily increasing its business ties beyond its borders. Specifically, the top five countries invested in Xi'an are Hong Kong, the United

States, England, Japan, and Singapore. These foreign counterparts have been significant to Xi'an's growth rate which has increased exponentially. Starting with the origins of the open door-policy, the growth has increased at a rate of 9.5 percent in 1979 to 18.1 percent in 1985 to 40.5 percent in 1990 to 132.6 percent in 1998 (See Figure 5).

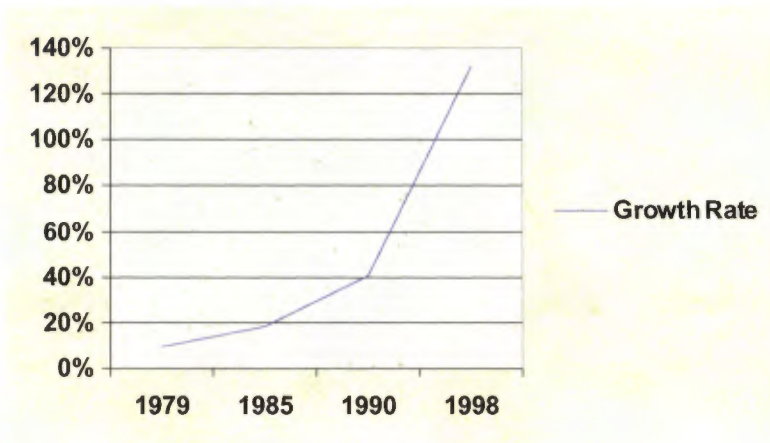


Figure 6. Growth Rates in Xi'an

Specifically, in the agricultural sector, private industry rose from 26,274 billion RMB in 1996 to 27,152 billion RMB in 1997. In the industrial sector private enterprises rose from 47,501 billion RMB in 1996 to 55, 586 billion RMB in 1997. This move towards private industry is stimulating overall growth and contributing to the steady rise in GNP.

Analogous to growth in any city, Xi'an's recent urban development has attracted rural migrants from other parts of Xi'an, Shaanxi, as well as from other provinces throughout China. According to the 1990 Tabulation on the 1990 Census of Shaanxi Province, Xi'an's out-migration into other areas of Shaanxi is 1.6% and 1.9% come to Xi'an from other areas of Shaanxi.

For example Lantian County (the residence of one focus group survey) continues to grow economically with a current GNP growth rate of twenty one percent (Statistical Bureau of Lantian County, 1996, p. 2). Its 1996 GNP per capita is 1,152 RMB, up from 1,116 RMB in 1995. Currently, ninety percent of the population is engaged in the agricultural sector. In 1996, Lantian had a total in-migration of 1.3 percent of its total population and ninety-five percent of those migrated into Lantian from other parts of Shaanxi. For 1996, out migration was 1.4 percent of the total population and ninety-four percent of out-migration relocated to other areas within Shaanxi (Statistical Bureau of Lantian County, 1996, p. 13). Lantian County has a total of 157 enterprises, 137 of these being collective enterprises²⁰. Taken from the sample survey for rural household in

²⁰ Collective enterprises are various enterprises and institutions with collective ownership of the production means. These include various rural economic organizations engaging in various activities such as agriculture, forestry, or sideline production. The enterprises and institutions are run by townships and villages and collective enterprises and institutions are run by cities, counties, towns and street committees (China Statistical Yearbook 1994, p. 53).

1996, Figure 6. shows the educational attainments for Lantian County.²¹ As the figure shows, Lantian County has a relatively high illiteracy rate. While about half have completed Junior Middle School, only one percent of the entire county made it to a professional school or has achieved a higher education.

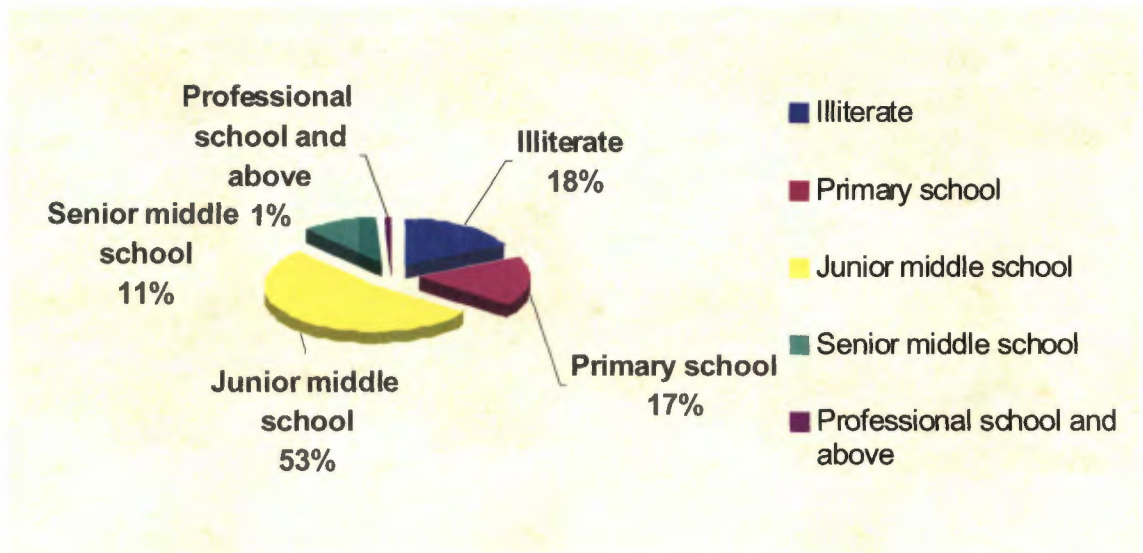


Figure 7. Education Information of Sample Survey for Rural Households in 1996
Sixty households surveyed and 269 residents from Lantian County in 1996. Source: Lantian Statistical Yearbook of 1996.

²¹ Background information about Weinan (the residence of the other focus group surveys) is not available.

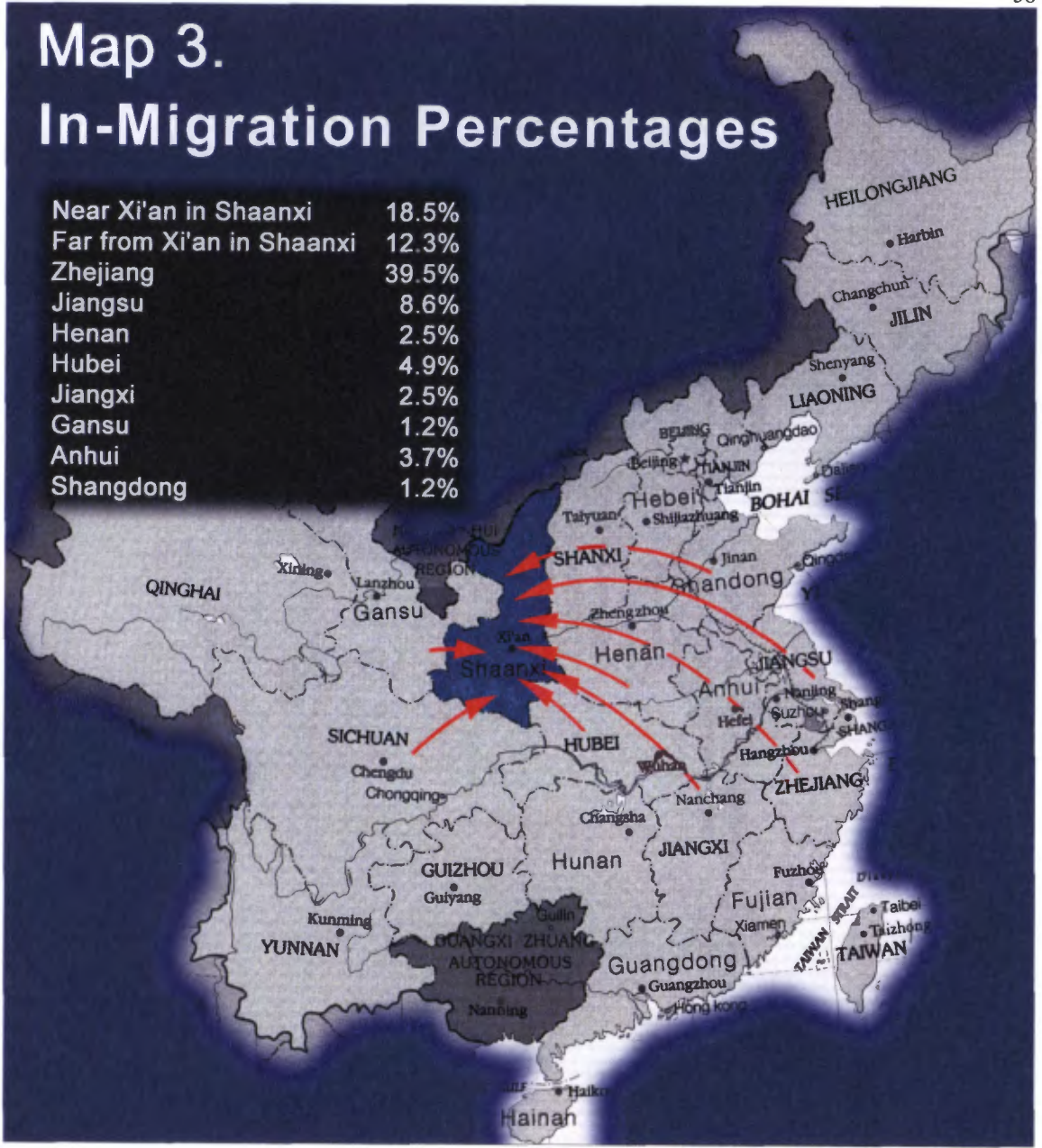
3.2 Background Information

All respondents from my surveys are female as well as from rural areas throughout China and have migrated to urban Xi'an for employment. Prior to migrating, most of the women were either engaged in agricultural work or other domestic duties (See Figure 7).

All of the surveys were conducted at their job site. Of the forty-one respondents surveyed in the *Jinhua* market, all are in retail clothing and pay rent to the market for their stalls. The respondents surveyed in the *Jiao da* market do varying economic activities, primarily food vending (vegetables, fruits, spices, etc.) and pay rent for their space as well.

Map 3. In-Migration Percentages

Near Xi'an in Shaanxi	18.5%
Far from Xi'an in Shaanxi	12.3%
Zhejiang	39.5%
Jiangsu	8.6%
Henan	2.5%
Hubei	4.9%
Jiangxi	2.5%
Gansu	1.2%
Anhui	3.7%
Shandong	1.2%



Statistics taken from: Statistical Bureau of Shaanxi (Eds.), 1991

Unfortunately, it is uncertain what type of work the respondents from Lantian County are engaged in as the Family Planning Commission completed these without our presence. However, being a female rural migrant worker was a mandatory prerequisite for conducting the surveys.

From the information collected in the questionnaires, almost seventy percent of the women were from provinces other than Xi'an. This indicates and supports other studies, stated in Chapter 2., which have concluded that women in China often travel long distances in search of employment.

In particular, forty percent of the respondents came from Zhejiang Province. This could be because, as research has determined, Zhejiang has the most pervasive land shortage problems in China (Ma, 1999, p. 790). (For total breakdown see Map 3). Whether or not these women have traveled farther than male rural migrants in Xi'an is not available from my research or any other I have been able to locate, however it is also quite possible that many of these women traveled with their husbands in search of employment opportunities.

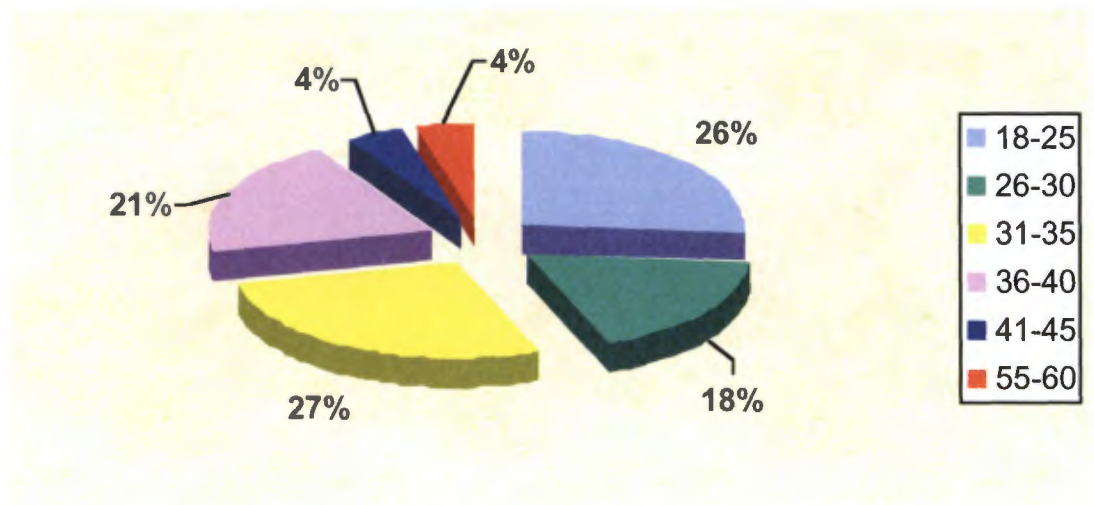


Figure 8. Age of Respondents from Questionnaires

The majority of the respondents are married and their age levels varied. All respondents were at least eighteen years of age and only three were over the age of sixty. The median ages were between twenty-six and thirty (See Figure 8). Concerning education, almost half of the respondents have completed Junior Middle School (equivalent to Middle School in the U.S.) and only four percent stated that they are illiterate.

Of the focus groups, the ages varied, the youngest being twenty-one and the oldest forty-seven. The mean age was thirty-two. In addition, all of the women were residing in their hometown of either Lantian County or Weinan County. Their current economic activities varied, yet were never specified during the focus groups. Further, while feelings on education were discussed in the surveys, specific education attainment was not questioned.

3.3 Research Findings

3.3.a. The Role of *Guanxi* and its Effects on Migration Trends in Xi'an

China's incorporation into globalization has induced the vast migration of rural women into the Global Division of Labor. As rapid changes currently take place throughout China in order to participate in this global economy, informal institutions continue to prevail and in some cases govern China's economic development process. While vast literature has been published and expansive research formulated concerning female labor migration, the majority of these studies have been on southern China,

specifically Hong Kong and the Export Processing Zones on China's coast. This section examines the role of *guanxi* and family ties. More specifically, this section focuses on how these informal institutions effect female rural urban labor migration trends in Xi'an.

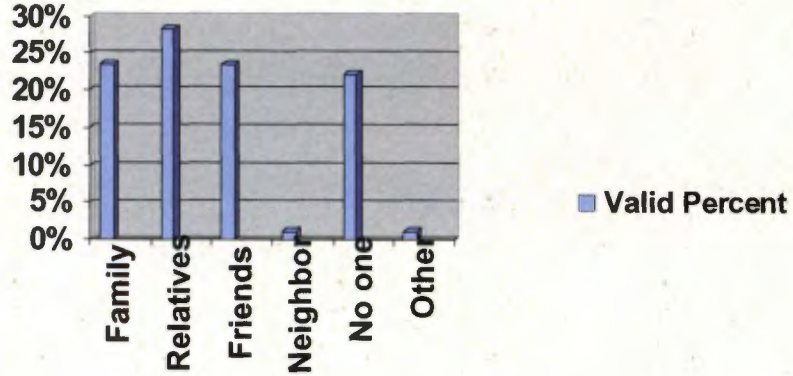


Figure 9. Who told you about job opportunities in the city?

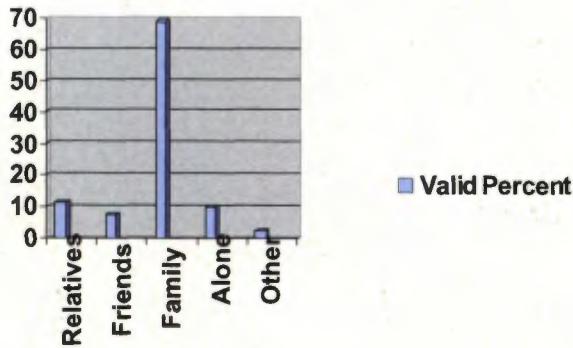


Figure 10. Who did you come with?

My research suggests that as family and friends migrate from the countryside to the city, they maintain close connections to those back home and pass along information about opportunities to those left in the countryside (See Figure 9.). Almost half of those from my focus group surveys were able to secure jobs before even leaving the rural area with the assistance of fellow villagers. Others from my focus group surveys attested that they acquired information from a relative or family member about job opportunities in the city. Specifically, three of the women received information from other villagers and another found a job from a classmate who asked her to go to Beijing with her to work as a barber. Another women found out about a job opportunity from her brother and another women found her job at a clothes factory through her cousin.

Though a few decide to make the trip to the city on their own, for the most part my research found that the majority of the women migrated with their immediate family, often their husbands. That is not to say however, that they are not employed. In fact all the women I questioned were employed independent of their husbands and carried out their own economic activities (See Figure 10. for specific breakdown). Only one woman from my focus groups declared that she migrated to the city merely to accompany her husband.

The information passed on by other villagers as well as the continual ties with those in the city and others back home becomes a major determinant as to where many migrate. My questionnaires found that once in Xi'an, many of the respondents had a friend or other relatives in the city that helped them with their living arrangements or with providing additional job opportunities (See Figure 11). Despite this, in reference to

Ching Kwan Lee's argument that in southern China, *guanxi* controls the rural-urban labor supply, the extent to which *guanxi* is mandatory in Xi'an seems to be less dogmatic.

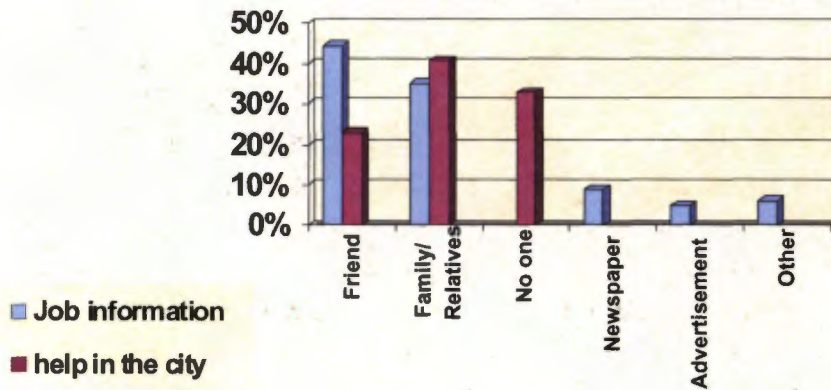


Figure 11. How did you get information for your job? Who helped you for your living in the city?

To begin, Xi'an has much smaller migration rates as well as less foreign direct investment than areas in southern China such as Shenzhen or the Pearl River Delta. As a result, finding work in Xi'an may be more relaxed as many jobs are not dictated according to managers on the factory floor. However, my questionnaires were not focused on factory work, rather, on those employed in the markets of urban Xi'an. Perhaps if more research were focused in southern China on female migrants outside the factories of multinational companies, similar findings would prevail.

Based on the information from this research, it is apparent that local family and community networks are pervasive as well as quintessential to many of the respondents for getting to the city, securing their job, and receiving overall assistance while living in the city. Therefore, informal institutions traditional to China, specifically *guanxi*, remain prominent factors to the rural migrants from my research that have been incorporated into the global economy by working and residing in Xi'an.

3.3.b. Limitations of Migration and its Role in Controlling Over-Urbanization

Contrary to over-urbanization typical of many developing countries, some argue that, currently, China has numerous advantages for controlling urban expansion. This section of my field research focuses on several of these occurrences as they pertain to Xi'an.

As discussed in Chapter 2, unlike traditional migration patterns of much of the developing world, in China, women currently make up vast proportions of the labor migration pool. Many of the women from my research face challenges analogous to the challenges all migrants face throughout the world when attempting to maintain a life in

the city. In addition, other factors are evident from the case study which hinder rural migrants stay in the city, and consequently help to control over-urbanization in Xi'an. One woman simply noted that she did not like the weather in Guandong (where she resided) and another women thought that the working hours in the city were too long. However, many of the respondents from my research have determined that the actual difficulties of getting to the city as well as the impediments for sustaining a life there often are often overriding realities curtailing their stay. For the most part many stated that the high costs of transitioning to the city, family obligations back home, as well as the daily expenses of city life, are the imperious factors curtailing their duration in Xi'an (See Figure 13).

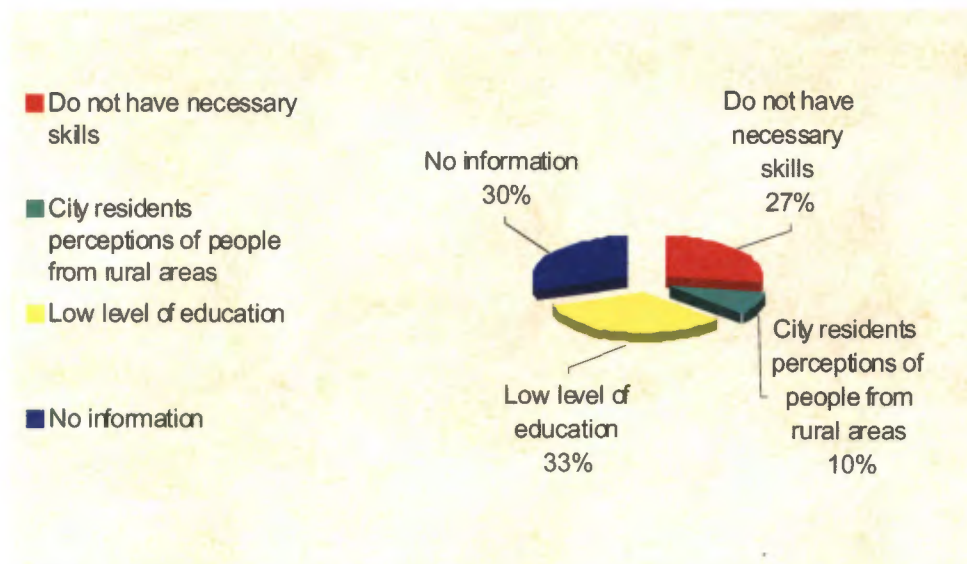


Figure 12. What are your biggest barriers for finding work in the city?

In addition, it was also determined that many women did not have sufficient education or appropriate skills necessary in order to attain a secure job (See Figure 12). Further, for those who migrated alone and without the assistance of family or other connections, urban Xi'an. Of these, some of the women stated that the risks involved with having a business in the city were overbearing they were not able to obtain information concerning job opportunities (See Figure 13). Several women from my research also experienced other impediments to living in the city and others stated that excessive taxes were a fundamental constraint for sustaining a business in the city. A few others declared that their largest deterrent in Xi'an was persistent discrimination that the rural migrants from the countryside felt migrants from the city residents. Overall, these hindrances expressed by the women from my research are typical of all migrants around the world moving to the city with the aims to live and start a business.

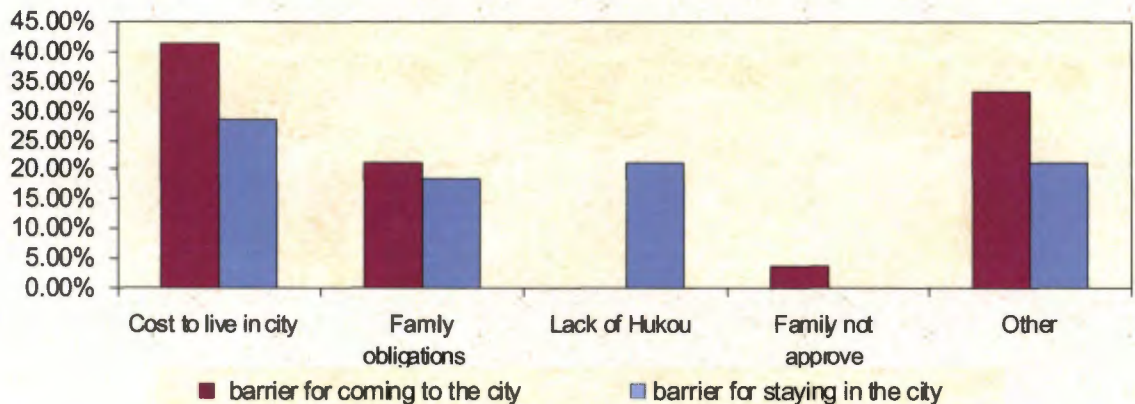


Figure 13. What are your biggest barriers for coming to the city? What are your biggest barriers for staying in the city?

I did find, however, that ideally many of the women I questioned would like to reside in Xi'an for an extended duration. Over half of the respondents indicated that they want to live in Xi'an for more than three years. According to the focus group surveys, six of the nine women determined that while residing in the city, if feasible they wanted to continue living in the city. Three of the six women (all three from Lantian County) believe that the living conditions in the city were better than their rural hometown. Another woman stated that she liked living in the city because she enjoyed living in the work dormitories with other girls her age. She asserted that she enjoyed the friendships she acquired and felt she had much in common with the other girls in the dormitory creating a community of common women and in a sense her own *guanxi* relations. The other two women stated that the city offers substantially more opportunities than their

hometown, as the level of education in the city is higher. One of these two women even determined from her time in the city that she wanted to pursue more education for herself and decided to take the college entrance exam but, unfortunately, did not pass. Despite these desires, the daily hardships and inconveniences impel many of these women to eventually return to the countryside.

Secondly, in China (as argued in Chapter 1), unlike traditional theories of development, current economic development is constructing according to its own historical circumstances. As a result, migrants in China are further faced with conditions exclusive from migrants in other regions throughout the developing world. For example, in Chapter 1, Ong and others have addressed the argument that China's economic growth, which has exceeded the growth of the majority of the world for the past two decades, has in part been a result of its market oriented socialist policies. These arguments attest that the new wealth accruing throughout China is being constructed with coordination by the state, which persistently maintains a strong hold over the urban development processes. For example, without an urban residence card, which the central government has made difficult to acquire, permanency in the city for the vast majority of migrants (who were principal components of initial urban development) is difficult. For those migrants with a family, without permanent urban residence, it becomes even more arduous. Not many rural migrants can afford the additional state fees to send a child to school in the city.

My research indicates that for many, the largest barrier to staying in Xi'an is not having *hukou* registration. For some women, lack of urban status becomes cumbersome if they have a child. Children are unable to attend school in Xi'an without either a residency card or paying an exorbitant fee well beyond what most migrants are able to

afford. As a result, many women expressed that they will have to return home eventually in order to send their child to school. It could be possible that *hukou* status and the subsequent responsibilities many women garner concerning the education of their children, may be one aspect of a more significant determinant affecting return migration rates in China.

Looking at this in depth, traditionally, (as in the case of Africa, Asia or parts of Latin and South America), men make up the majority of migrant labor. These men most often migrate by themselves, leaving their family back home in the rural areas. Most often, jobs in the city are scarce, and unemployment is high. As a result, in many cases these migrant men spend extended lengths in the city and send little if anything back home to help support their family.

As will be discussed further in detail later, much like other countries in Africa, Asia, and parts of South and Latin America, the women in my research remain the principal homemakers and caretakers of their children. As a consequence, women remain reliable for the welfare of their children. A plausible argument is that women may become more likely to return home in order to send their child to school, therefore adding an addition pull factor back into the countryside.

According to many studies done, small banking programs and micro-lending initiatives have determined that poor women make very good credit risks (Black, 1999, p. 284). In China, specifically, of recent, young married women have proven to be good credit risks. Wedding money, traditionally give to the mother-in-law, is now directly allocated to the young bride providing her a resource in which others may borrow money

as well as being in charge of the family finances (See Yan Yunxiang, 1996 in *The Flow of Gifts*).

Once providing women with access to credit, they then become empowered which then directly improves the well-being of their children, particularly girl children.²²

Currently, in various parts of China, as women make up a large majority of those migrating in search of labor, most likely, these same women who migrate from the countryside, are very apt to be efficient money managers. They are very likely to save a high percentage of their earnings to send back home to their family or upon returning home, apply their resources from the city towards other existing family commitments and obligations back in the countryside.

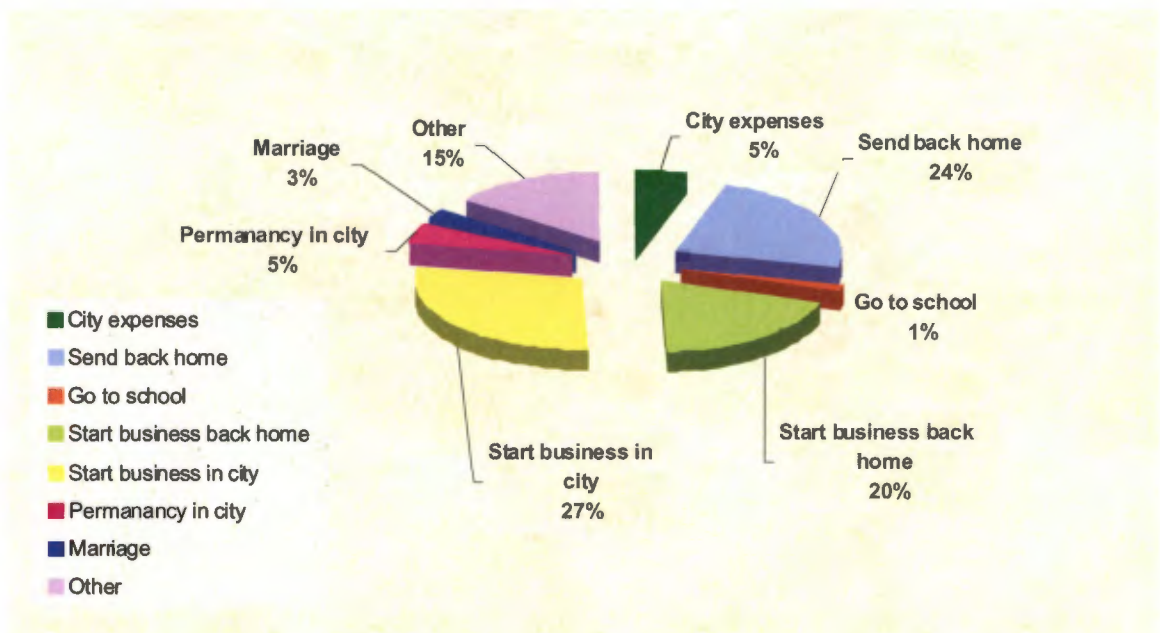


Figure 14. What do you plan to do with the money that you have earned in the city?

²² <http://www.soc.titech.ac.jp/icm/unicf.html>

My research findings support this theory. From my questionnaires, I determined that many of the women plan to send the money they earn back home to their family (see Figure 14.). In addition, according to the focus group surveys, six of the women indicated that the money they earned while in the city was used to help educate their children. They also indicated that this money earned also is used to help out with family expenses. Of these women, one indicated that the money also went to help build a new house for her family. Another of these women stated that the money she sent home went to build a well in her village and another stated that her money went to help buy fertilizer for her family. A fair number of women also attested that they were planning to use their earned money to return home and start a business in the countryside. These earnings would then most likely be put directly back into family, or community expenses. The extent to which female rural migrant's family obligations eventually do pull them back into the countryside, creating an even further factor curtailing over-urbanization in China, falls beyond the scope of my research, but is worth investigating.

Lastly, concurrent to other research, my research also found that the strong family ties increases the desire to return home (Solinger, 1999, p. 186-187). Many of the women from my research stated that they migrated only as a temporary means by which to earn some supplementary money. Over half of the total women enjoyed their life in their rural hometown and only 1.2 percent stated that they wanted to live permanently in the city. Some women from the surveys stated that they liked life in the rural areas better because in the countryside it is more peaceful and comfortable and eventually they plan to return home. Others mentioned that they had spare time as there was nothing for them to do in the countryside. Further, almost all of the surveys stated that the respondents

wanted to migrate temporarily to earn more money for the family because the income in the countryside was not enough to make ends meet.

Economic development in China has engaged vast proportions of those residing in the countryside to the cities. However, several prominent factors are instigating these labor migrants, eventual return back home. As my research supports, some of these varying influences are typical of all migrants worldwide trying to make ends meet in a city, and others remain unique to China.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Ma argues that the diffusion process has not yet reached the interior of China. While Shaanxi is a region with slow growth and small outside investment relative to the rest of China, the global economy nevertheless has drawn many women from the countryside to urban Xi'an for work. As this changing economy brought these women to Xi'an, many significant forces thwart their abilities to remain in the city. Ma has indicated that state involvement has been an important determinant of rural return migration trends in southern China and its surrounding rural development. It is apparent from my research, that while the extent may be less extreme in Xi'an, my research supports Ma's findings that *hukou* registration is a salient force pulling women back into the countryside. In addition, strong family ties back home contribute to these women's desire to return to the countryside and contribute their earnings to the development of their family's well being as well as the development of their community. It is possible to determine that these female return migrants have the potential to develop the rural regions of Xi'an as well as aid in the overall development of the interior of China.

3.3.c. Changes in Traditional Gender Attitudes

Many women from my research originally migrated to the city with the overall intention of earning some extra money. This section of my research, however, looks at how the values and perceptions of those women from my research have changed since their incorporation into the global economy.

Traditionally in China, when a woman migrated, it was to her new village where her husband and his family resided. Not knowing anyone, often without much money and even less education, women in these circumstances were wholly dependent on this new family for her own well being. In addition, the prime responsibilities as a new wife were to raise a family and fulfill the domestic responsibilities. As a consequence of the changing economic conditions in China, stemming largely from the present conditions of globalization, young women are leaving their rural domestic duties in order to help fill the labor pool in the cities.

Research focusing on this changing role of women, has focused primarily on the great numbers of young women hauled off to be cheap, exploited labor while their fate is determined by the will of the multinational corporations. In addition, this research has focused chiefly on the areas directly surrounding the SEZ's and only on women either working in factories or that, unfortunately, end up in prostitution. While this research is of paramount importance and has demonstrated a few of the many negative side effects of globalization, my research illustrates that, in addition to southern China, specifically, Xi'an, vast numbers of women in the interior of China, are migrating in search of employment opportunities as well. Further, a significant number of these women are

engaged in independent businesses of their own and avoid the poor conditions that often accompany factory work.

Two decades ago, China adopted its policy of market socialism. Various studies since this time have argued that with the inundation of female migration stemming from this new economy, attitudes concerning the role of rural women within the family are changing. From their experiences working and living in the cities, women are attaining new ideas, values, and a sense of independence quite counter to the traditional roles of rural women and often not available in the countryside.

My research largely supports these ideas. From my focus group surveys, it was determined that every woman enjoyed the work they did while residing in the city. Most stated that the work they were engaged in afforded them with new skills and for many it enabled them to make new friends.

In addition, many of those from my research stated that their duration in the city improved their personal well being. One woman stated that the principal reason she liked working in the city was because doing work for herself helped her find her niche in society and she felt proud to be doing something of value. When the women were asked what they feel they learned from their overall time in the city several women stated that they learned how to be independent. Another woman stated that she appropriated the skills to successfully operate a business. She also stated that from her time in the city, she became street smart and another stated that she acquired new sewing skills. Four others indicated that the city broadened their horizons and made them more open-minded. Another woman determined, that although she did not take classes while she was in the city, she is going to go back to the city this fall to go to school.

On average, all of the women from my studies have spent approximately three or more years in the city. During this time, beyond living and working in the city, the independence and open-mindedness they gained has helped them acquire values about themselves and life that stand in great contrast from the traditional values concerning the role of women in China. In fact, these values have transcended into many aspects of their lives. For example, according to the questionnaires almost all of the women believe that a girl child is as important as a boy child and they place great importance on educating female children (See Figure 15). The majority even stated that if they had a girl child education is most important, scoring higher than marriage or a good job (see Figure 16).

A small minority of the women did state that marriage is most important to them for a girl child but they all concluded by stating there are not many good opportunities for women in rural China and marriage is one way to move beyond their village.

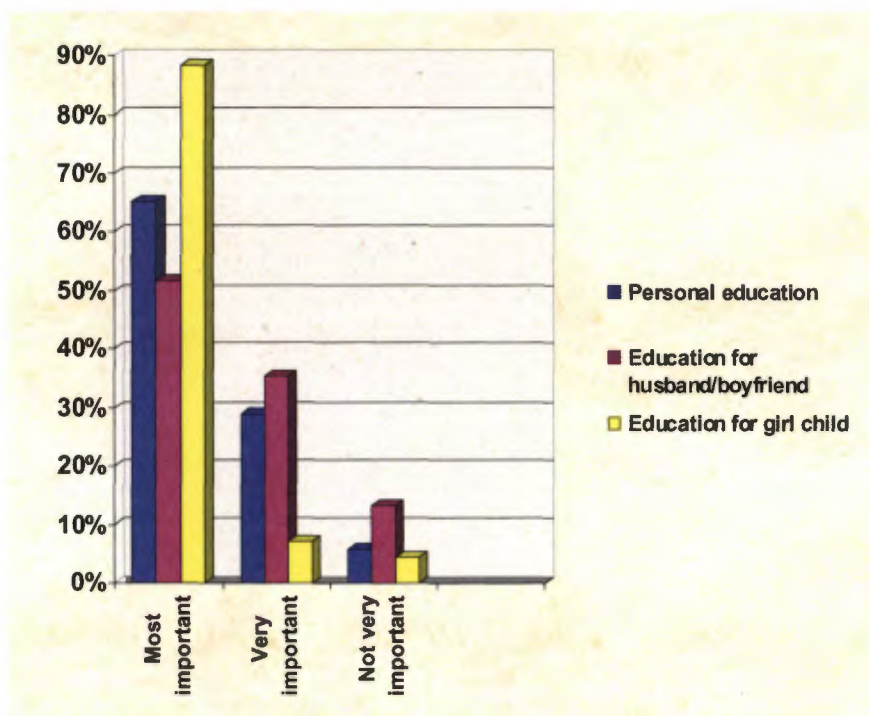


Figure 15. What are your feelings about education for yourself? for your husband? Do you think that education is very important for her if you have a girl child?

Concerning personal education almost all the women from my research attested that education was of critical importance important to them. However, interestingly, when we asked them their thoughts about education for their male counterparts a fewer percentage of the women declared that education is most important for their husbands or boyfriends. In addition, while very few of the women believe that education is not very important for themselves, more than double the amount of women stated that it is not very important for their husbands or boyfriends (See Again Figure 15. for total education breakdowns). While believing that education is of paramount importance to the majority of the women and their daughters from my research, concurrent to traditional family

values in China, the majority of the women also feel that marriage remains important to them. Further, my research found that most of the women believe that a woman's most important role in the family is to be a homemaker and nearly all of the women declared that a man's most important role in the family is to earn an income for the family (See Figure 18.).

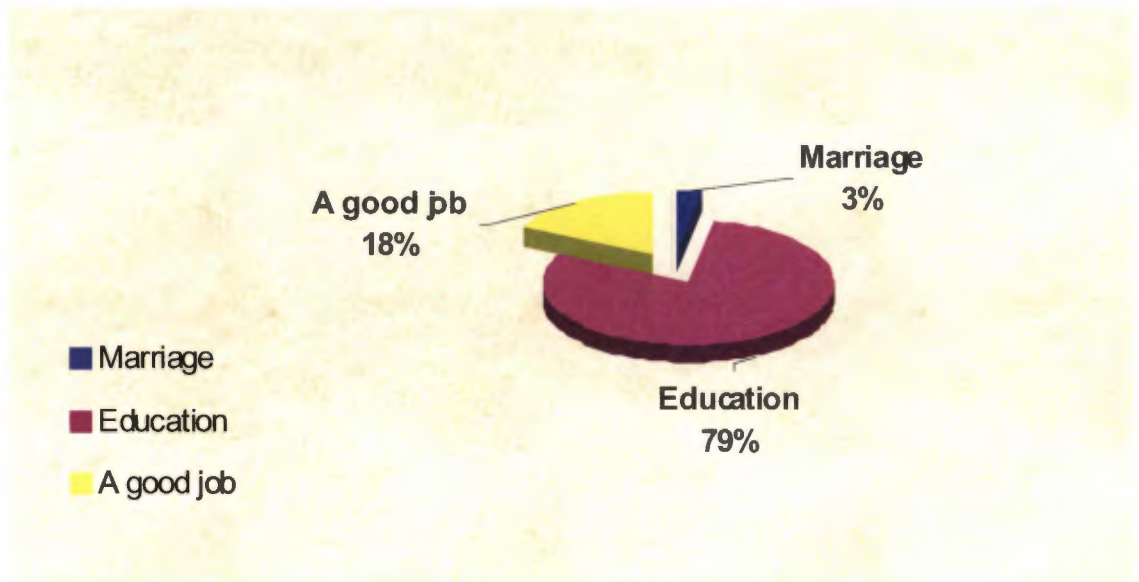


Figure 16. What do you feel is most important for your daughter (if you have one)?

In addition, only a fair amount of those questioned believe that a woman's most important role in the family is to provide a secondary income or that men and women have the same role in the family. However, contrary to what the respondents from my questionnaires may have indicated, embedded tradition changes slowly. I would argue that paramount changes have already occurred; yet acknowledging these changes are occurring at a slower rate. From my research, the outstanding contributions that the women are making toward their own economic independence, towards their family's economic status, in addition, to the overall contributions for their community, indicates that their primary role within their family extends far beyond their domestic obligations. For example, almost all of the women from my research resolved that it is important for women to be part of the workforce (See Figure 19.). Further, eighty percent of the

women from my research believe that women are of equal importance concerning the development of rural China and seventy percent feel personally, that they have an important role in the countryside.

Eighty-three percent of the women from the questionnaires also confirmed that their personal progress is important.

Interestingly, however, not one woman stated that a man's most important role in the family is to be a homemaker. Do these results indicate, perhaps, that many of the women from my surveys have a double workday? As these conclusions demonstrate, the role of women has changed substantially. However, tradition persists and women remain the primary family homemakers as well as caretakers of their children. While it is apparent that the women from my research value themselves highly, as well as their role in society, unfortunately, the true significance of their work seems to go largely unaccredited.

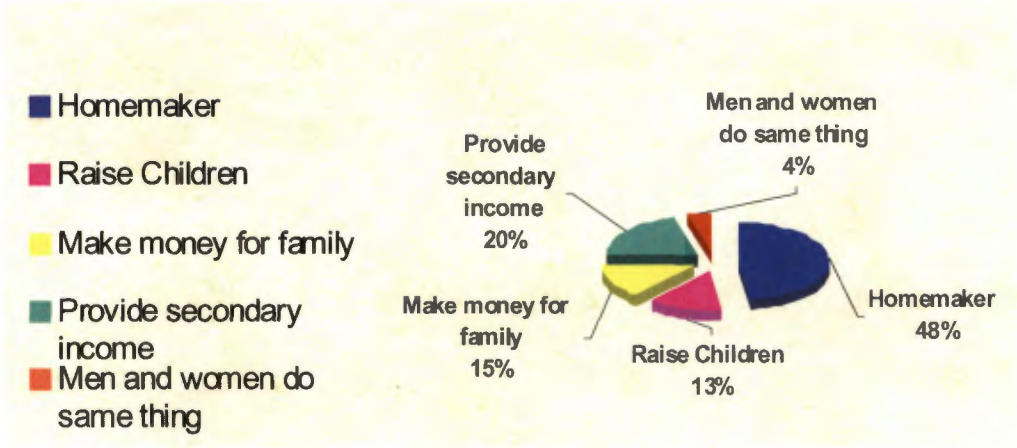


Figure 17. What do you think is the woman's most important role in the family?

Nonetheless, these findings demonstrate undoubtedly the influence that globalization has ensued. As a consequence of migrant women's sojourn to the city, they have founded a sense of awareness and independence often not available in the countryside. In addition, migrating to Xi'an has provided them the ability to become

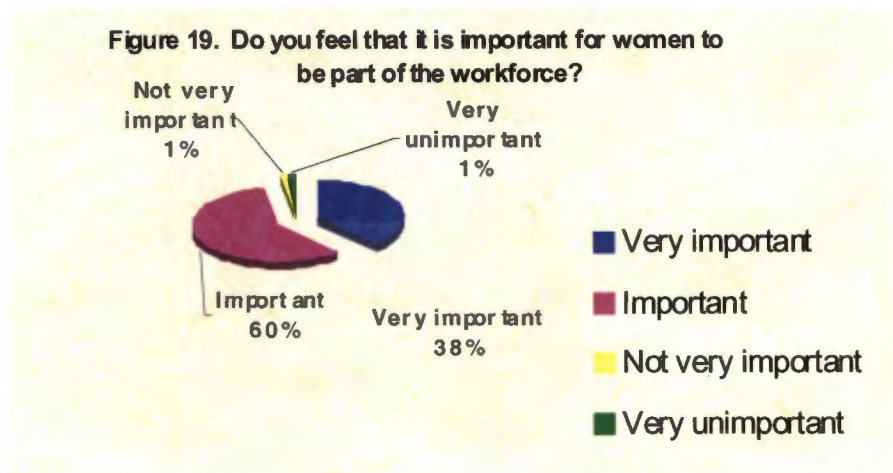


Figure 18. Do you feel that it is important for women to be part of the workforce?

more open-minded. As these women in Xi'an believe in the paramount importance of education for themselves, they will pass these ideals on to their children, specifically girl children and so the process of change is reinforced and perpetuated, expanding future opportunities for women in China.

3.3.d. Female Return Migration and Transformations in the Rural Areas

This section focuses on the changes to the rural women from their time spent working and residing in the city. Contrary to Solinger's glum perspective (discussed in Chapter 2) concerning China's female rural return migrants, my research has determined that these migrant's travels were in actuality advantageous for their role in the countryside upon returning. From my focus group surveys, I found that all of the women's families have been supportive of the women's efforts in the city as well as their efforts now that they have returned. Some stated that they have changed the relationship between themselves and their family. One woman improved her relationship with her mother-in-law and other relatives, and others stated that their sense of independence and knowledge has gained them greater respect within their family. One woman stated that the money she earned improved the overall status of her entire family within their village. In addition, another women stated that her personal status has largely improved. With the money she has earned, she stated that she no longer is dependent on her husband or has to seek his approval for her actions.

All of the women who responded stated that they believe that their overall role in their community has changed. Most stated that the villages now give them more respect as a result of either, helping out with family expenses being more economically self-

sufficient, or generally becoming more mature. Many women also expressed that community and family members envy them for their experiences in the city.

All of the women who responded to the focus group believe that they have influenced their community by introducing new values and ideas they acquired in the city. One woman stated that her friends and cousins now want to have the chance to experience living in the city and become mature and independent like herself. Another woman stated that her friends, relatives, brothers, and sisters all think that her time in the city was important and would now like to have an opportunity to go to the city and start a business of their own. In addition, several others stated that those in their community want to have the opportunity to make money in the city after seeing her successes from being away.

It is clear that for many rural migrants including all of those from my research, the experiences in the city, have been a positive one. Further, the changes succeeding their duration in the city transpire back into the countryside. Other community and family members now look up to these women that have become independent and proven to be able to work for themselves in the city. Their new way of regarding their own role and the overall role of women within their family, their community, and the development of China has proven apparent and will hopefully be passed down to their children.

Chapter 4

4.1 Connecting the Global to the Local

When China reentered the world market in 1979, the global economy as a whole was at a point of restructuring. Shifting away from the Fordist model, the introduction of flexible production fostered the creation a new Global Division of Labor. Since this time, beyond the impacts that this transition has had on world trade and production, the significance it has ensued on society and cultures have been multitudinous. This thesis has looked at China's role in this most recent process of globalization as well as the impacts that this incorporation is having on rural women in China.

When the communal land holdings dissipated and rural-urban migration for many became a necessity for economic self-sufficiency, because of Asia's historical role in the world system, China, for two main reasons was well prepared for the incorporation of the new market forces now an inherent part of Chinese politics.

Chapter 2 explored China's historically unique circumstances, which dictated rural-urban migration trends as well as the complex conditions that continually changed the boundaries between the "urban" and the "rural." These controlling factors, which have all been a direct result of the immense efforts put forth by the government to control migration, presently remain principal to China's successful development.

Chapter 2 has also examined the significance of China's informal institutions such as *guanxi* and the persistent bond of family ties. These factors in conjunction with labor migrant's connections to their hometowns, their ensuing relation to current migration trends, as well as the ways in which these conditions have become integral in the desire

for many temporary migrants to return home have further been explored. It is these foundations, consisting of state policy and informal institutions, which stand entirely counter to the western ideals of neo-liberalism and have afforded China the ability to successfully develop its new economy.

Accompanying this new economic opportunity, the need for cheap labor was soon recognized. As women became incorporated into the workplace, female labor migration soon became commonplace throughout China. Taking advantage of the new opportunities in the cities passed along by other family members, Chapter 2 further examined how many women suddenly became responsible for earning an income in order to help support the family. This, in turn, has afforded women a new respect for their responsibilities within their communities and consequently, the traditional roles of women throughout rural China have since begun to change. Rural women's perceptions about themselves, as well as the way in which they are perceived from family and community members have improved and are transforming traditional attitudes towards women in rural China.

The case study in Chapter 3 supports this evidence. It has demonstrated that for the migrants in my surveys, not only did family ties remain strong with those who remained home in the countryside, yet, even further, it is these strong family connections and affiliations that has enabled most of the migrants the ability to move to the city at the outset. In addition, for many of the migrants, obtaining employment opportunities would not have been possible without the assistance of family or friends.

As a direct consequence of these family ties the vast majority of the women from my research have determined that they either plan to return home or in the case of the

focus group surveys, they have already returned home. In addition, in relation to working in the city, the majority of those surveyed stated that part of the money they earned was to be sent back home for either family expenses or education for their children directly affecting the economic development of their rural origin's.

The prevalence of these family ties and other forms of informal institutions are further accompanied by direct control of the state through the *hukou* registration policy. This case study found that for many of the migrants in urban Xi'an, lack of urban status is a prominent barrier for remaining in the city as well as an insurmountable obstacle concerning the education of their children. This research supports the arguments, which contend that it is through these family affiliations in conjunction with sustaining state policies that China has been able to curtail over-urbanization. While many rural citizens have indeed migrated to the cities in search of new job opportunities created by the global economy, China's historical foundations have been invaluable in creating the desire and necessity for many of these migrants to return home. As a consequence they have begun to channel their money earned and new skills into the development of China's countryside.

Chapter 3 also determined that as many rural members see women as more autonomous, independent and of greater value, they are more inclined to invest in the education of their daughters. This chapter has also found that as these female labor migrants return home they have become essential money earners for their families as well as invaluable in their contributions to their communities. The women from my surveys, all of which started a business of their own, have impacted their families by improving

their status in their hometown communities as well as helped in the development of their entire communities.

Collectively, this thesis has explored the very institutions (state and informal), essential to the recent successes of Chinese development within the new global economy. Often unique to China, these factors have, in the past been a catalyst exacerbating gender inequality, and recently in many instances this inequality has only augmented as a result of China's new market forces. However, for those in the case study in this thesis, it has been determined that these equivalent factors created by the conditions of globalization are likewise, the impetus transforming Chinese culture and tradition, and specifically the role in which women have assumed for centuries within Chinese society.

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Appendix A
Questionnaire on Rural (Women) Migrants in Cities

Questionnaire on Rural (Women) Migrants in Cities

(This research is being conducted for research purposes only.

None of this information will be shown to the public)

No.:
Date:
 Place:

A. Background information

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Sex: (1) Male (2) Female
4. Education:
 - (1) Illiterate (2) Primary school (3) Junior Middle School
 - (4) Senior middle school (5) Professional school and above
5. Marriage status:
 - Single (2) Married (3) Divorced (4) Widowed

B. Information about coming to the city

6. Where do you come from?
 - (1) Near Xi'an in Shaanxi (<100km)
 - (2) Far from Xi'an but still in Shaanxi
 - (3) Other province
7. Whom did you come with?
 - (1) Relatives (2) Friends (3) Family
 - (4) By yourself/alone (5) Other
8. Why did you come to the city?
 - (1) Marriage (2) To learn new skills (3) Personal
 - (4) To build a house (5) To start a small business
 - (6) To live permanently in the city
 - (7) To earn money (8) Other
9. What was your work at home?
 - (1) Agricultural work
 - (2) Worked in a business (ex. Restaurant or shop)
 - Housework (4) Other

C. Working in the city

10. Who told you about job opportunities in the city?
 - (1) Family (2) Relatives (3) Friends
 - (4) Neighbor (5) No one (6) Other
11. How did you find your job?
 - (1) Someone helped you (introduced you to the work)
 - (2) By yourself
 - (3) Someone set up your job before you arrived in the city
 - (4) Other

12. How do you get the information for jobs?
 (1) Newspaper (2) Advertisement (4) Family
 (4) Friends (5) Labor market (6) Other
13. How long does it take to find a job (your first job)?
 (1) Less than a week (2) One week (3) Two to three weeks
 (4) One month (5) 1-2 months (6) 2-3 months
 (7) More than three months (8) Job was arranged before coming
14. Who has helped you for your living in the city?
 (1) Friend living in the city (2) Family living in the city
 (3) Relatives living in the city (4) No one (5) Other
15. How much do you spend on remittances per month?

D. Duration of stay in the city

16. How long did you plan to stay before you came to the city?
 (1) One week (2) Two-three weeks (3) One month
 (4) Two-six months (5) Six months to one year (6) 1-2 years
 (7) 2-3 years (8) More than three years (9) No idea (0) It depends
17. How long have you been here?
 (1) One week (2) Two-three weeks (3) One month
 (4) Two-six months (5) Six months to one year (6) 1-2 years
 (7) 2-3 years (8) more than 3 years

E. Barriers in the city

18. What are your biggest barriers for coming to the city?
 (1) Family obligations (2) Money too expensive to live in the city
 (3) Family members disapprove (4) Other
19. What are your biggest barriers for staying in the city?
 (1) Money (cost of living in the city) (2) Family obligations
 (3) Having no city household registration
 (4) Finding work is sporadic and undependable (5) Other
20. What are your biggest barriers for finding work in the city?
 (1) Do not have the necessary skills
 (2) The city residents' perceptions of people from the rural areas
 (3) Low level of education (4) No information (5) Other

F. Plans for your earnings and future

21. Are you here in the city because you hope to live in the city?
 (1) Yes (2) No
22. Did you learn that people can earn money in the city when you were
 in the countryside?
 (1) Yes (2) No
23. What do you plan to deal with the money you have
 earned in the city?
 (1) It all goes to living expenses in the city

- (2) Send money back home to family (3) Go to school
- (4) Start a new business back home (5) Start new business in the city
- (6) To save for living in the city permanently
- (7) Marriage (8) Other

G. Since you have been in the city

24. Do you feel that a girl is as important as a boy?
 (1) Yes (2) No
25. Do you think that education is very important for her if you have a girl?
 (1) Most important (2) Very important
 (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at all
26. What are your feelings about education for yourself.
 (1) Most important (2) Very important
 (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at all
27. What are your feelings about education for your husband
 (or your boy friend)?
 (1) Most important (2) Very important
 (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at all
28. What are your feelings about life in the rural areas?
 (1) Do not like it (2) No difference (3) Like rural life
29. (a) Do you think you have an important role in the countryside?
 (1) Yes (2) No
 (b) Why or why not
30. What are your feelings on marriage?
 (1) Most important (2) Very important
 (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at all
31. Do you feel what is the most important for your daughter (if you have)?
 (1) Marriage (2) Education (3) A good job
32. Do you think what is the woman's most important role in the family?
 (1) To be the homemaker (2) To raise children
 (3) To make money for the family
 (4) To provide a secondary income
 (5) Man and woman do the same thing
33. Do you think what is the man's most important role in the family?
 (1) To be the homemaker (2) To raise children
 (3) To make money for the family
 (4) To provide a secondary income
 (5) Man and woman do the same thing
34. Do you feel it is important for women to be part of the workforce?
 (1) Very important (2) Not very important (3) Very unimportant
35. Do you think that women are as capable as men at most jobs?
 (1) Yes (2) No

36. Do you think that women are of equal importance in helping in the development of rural China/ your community?
(1) Yes (2) No (3) Never thought about it
37. Do you think that your personal progress is important?
(1) Very important (2) Important (3) Not very important
38. What are your goals in life?

Thank you very much for your time. It is greatly appreciated.

Appendix B
Outline for Focus Group Interviews on Rural Return Women Migrants

Outline for Focus group Interviews on Rural Return Women Migrants

Date:

Place:

Leaving the countryside

1. Why did you leave your home in the countryside and go to the city?
2. How did you decide where you would go?
3. How did you get there?
4. Did you go with anyone (family, relatives, friends, villagers)?
5. What were your main duties before leaving the countryside?

Finding a job

6. How long did it take to find a job?
7. Did you have your job in the city before leaving the countryside?
8. Do you think it is easy to find a job in the city?
9. How did you find your job?
10. Did anyone help you find a job? Who gave you the information to find a job?

Living in the city

11. What was your job in the city?
12. Did you like your job?
13. What about your job did you like? What about your job did you dislike?
14. Did you want to stay in the city? Why?
15. What were the main barriers of living in the city?
16. Do you want to go back to live in the city?

Income and expenditures

17. How long did you live in the city?
18. Did you send money back home?
19. What did the money go towards (family expenses, did they save your money for you, etc.)?
20. Did you take any type of classes while you were in the city? What were they?
21. What did you learn in the city?

Family and community feelings

22. What have you done with your money now that you have returned?
23. What are the feelings of your families on your return after working in the city?
24. Have you changed you and your family in any way since going to the city? What are the changes?
25. Has your feelings about your role in your family changed? In what ways?
26. Are there any changes of the feelings from your community on you? What are they?
27. Do you think you have influenced anyone with any new values and ideas you may have acquired in your community (Friends, sisters, brothers, cousins etc.)?

Before and after leaving the city:

1. Did you feel that for yourself having a girl is as important as having a boy?
(1) Yes (2) No
2. Did you think that education is very important if you have a girl?
(1) Most important (2) Very important (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at all
3. What were your feelings about education for yourself (1) Most important (2) Very important (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at all

(b) for your husband? (1) Most important (2) Very important (3) Not very important (4) Not necessary at All

(c) your children (boys and girls)? (1) most important (2) Very important (3) Not very important (4) not necessary at all

(d) did you think it is as important for women to have an education as men?
(1) Yes (2) No

4. What were your feelings about life in the rural areas?
(1) Did not like it (2) Was indifferent (3) Liked rural life

5. (a) Did you think you had an important role in your community? (1) Yes (2) No
(b) Why or why not?

(a) What were your feelings on marriage (1) most important (2) Very important (3) Not very important (4) not necessary at all

(b) did you want to marry later? (1) Yes (2) No

(c) did you think about living with your side of the family (husband living with in-laws)?
(1) Yes (2) No

(d) did you want to live with your side of the family? (1) Yes (2) No

7. What did you feel if you had a girl was most important?:
(1) marriage (2) Education (3) a good job

8. (a) how many children did you want to have? (1) None (2) 1 (3) 2 (4) 3 (5) more than three
(b) if you had any, did you want any more? (1) Yes (2) No

(c) did you prefer a boy or a girl or did you feel both were of equal importance? (1) Boy
(2) Girl (3) Both of equal importance

9. (a) what did think the women' s most important role in the family? (1) To be the homemaker (2) To raise children (3) To make money for the family (4) To provide a secondary income

(b) what did you think was the man' s most important role in the family? (1) To be the homemaker (2) To raise children (3) To make money for the family (4) To provide a secondary income

10. (a) did you feel it is important for women to be part of the workforce? (1) Very important (2) Not very important (3) Very unimportant

(b) did you think that women are as capable as men at most jobs? (1) Yes (2) No

11. Did you ever think that women are of equal importance in helping in the development of rural China/ your community? (1) Yes (2) No (3) Never thought about it,

12. Did you think that your personal progress was important?

(1) Very important (2) Important (3) Not very important

13. What were your goals in life?

1. migration policies

2. the Hukou. (household registration system)

Appendix C
Photos



Yao, my interpreter and myself at the house where we conducted our undercover focus group survey.



Left to right: Matt; myself; Jin from the Population and Economy Institute (her son above); Dr. Lee, the Director of the Population and Economy Research Institute



Lantian County: back row SUN Fubin, Yao, myself and the respondents of the focus group survey.