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WOMEN, MIGRATION AND
CURRENT URBAN DYNAMICS
IN CHINA: Fertility and
Family Planning

Caroline Hoy

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*For further copies contact the Working Paper Secretary,
School of Geography, University of Leeds, Leeds, LS2 9JT
Telephone 0113 233 3300*

Introduction

China is experiencing unprecedented levels of spontaneous mobility which has wide ramifications for demographic and urban development. Under this rather general title I will be discussing the more specific topic of urban migrant women in China. In this paper I discuss attempts to use legislation on marriage and contraception status to control mobility and access to resources by migrants. I will show that descriptions of the extent to which migrants engage in any form of 'deviant' behaviour relating to marriage or births such as marriage below the legal ages or births out of plan tend to be exaggerated and are in fact characteristic of the wider population. Using data from a survey of temporary registered migrants conducted in Beijing in June 1994 I explore patterns of marriage and fertility in response to migration.

History of the household registration system

Population mobility in China is mediated through the system of household registration, the *hukou*. Household registration was introduced as a unified system for rural and urban areas in 1958. Its function was overtly for the:

'preservation of social order, the protection of the rights and interests of the people in the service of the construction and formulation of socialism'.

(Zhang 1987a: 2)

Every household was defined as being either urban or rural, and in addition, either agricultural and responsible for provision of its own basic foodstuffs, or non agricultural and subsidised by the State. Household registers contain information on each individual's position in a household - whether it is as head of a household or the form of relationship with head of household; wife, son, granddaughter as well as name, sex, birth place, date of birth, age and marital status. The register acts as birth certificate and proof of age. New registers are created by marriage, or through the death or alterations to household head (Lavelly 1982). Previous mobility events are also recorded (Zhang 1987). On marriage a woman's details and with them her existence, are deleted from one set of records and re-entered into the register of her marital household. An individual will only rarely take the initiative in mobility, outside of marriage, commensurate with movement from one household to another. Even marriage does not give a partner with a rural registration the right to live with their partner with an urban registration in an urban area. Both can live in a rural area, however.

The household register and the related systems of *dang'an*, or personal reports, rationing and identity cards have created a social accounting system. The nature of this is so pervasive and personally definitive in its positive assertion of person and state, that it has been suggested that these are not external representations of the individual for the purpose of administration, but are the history incarnate, of the individual (Yang 1994).

The function of the registration system shifted over time. From being a tool of social control it became a taxonomy of social strata. Rather than reflecting economic activity and opportunities the *hukou* dictated it (Gong 1989, Christiansen 1990). Each strata was determined by household location and the benefits and disadvantages associated with that location within the urban hierarchy (Gong 1989). Prohibitions on personal mobility and thereby social mobility ensured that there was very little communication and exchanges of population and information between each level. This segregation was predictable in a situation where the 'new state accepted more or less axiomatically from the start (presumably derived from Soviet practice) a responsibility that no previous Chinese state had ever assumed: to provide jobs and subsidised food and housing for all urban residents' (Cheng and Selden 1994: 650).

The household registration system and migration

The chronology of the establishment of the household registration system is intertwined with measures specifically concerned with allocation of resources and importantly, the flow of the population. The household registration system was designed to reduce urban population in a situation in which the state takes on full responsibility of provision for its urban population (Dutton 1993). To legally move between households, permission was required from work units and their related public security offices.

The household registration system controlled migration in four ways. Firstly rural to urban migration, especially to the municipalities of Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin was prohibited. Secondly, mobility up the urban hierarchy was severely restricted. Thirdly, sideways movement from town to town, city to city was permitted, but in practice could be difficult unless it involved rural to rural migration. Hence female migration associated with marriage was possible in rural areas. Fourthly, movement down the hierarchy, for example and especially, from cities to rural areas, was positively encouraged. By the late 1970s the restriction on migration to urban location in the *hukou* had reduced to a small minority, the number of people who held rural registration but who lived for any periods of time in urban areas (Wu 1994). The severe distinction drawn between urban and rural population was to create a structure of differentiated opportunities for each population (Cheng and Selden 1994).

Definitions of the mobile population were based on the legitimacy of that mobility which has led to division in terminology and status.

Migrants (*qianyi renkou*) have established approval for their movement from one area to another, crossing an administrative boundary, such as a county border, and whose household registration moves with them (Goldstein, Goldstein and Guo 1991). Approval has to be granted by the work units in both in- and out-migration areas and public security bureaux in both areas. Applications for migration have to be submitted prior to the event at origin.

To be designated a migrant, a person should have been resident in an in-migration area for 30 or more days. Those who remained in an area for between one month and

one year are classified as temporary or seasonal migrants, Those remaining for more than a year can be regarded as permanent migrants (Guang 1995).

The floating population (*liudong renkou*), have not been granted licence to move. A member of the floating population is defined as someone absent from their place of registration/usual place of residence for one night (Gui 1992, Yang 1992, Tang 1993), if they have not moved, or do not intend to apply to move, their household registration. Their registration remains at origin and they are classed as residents of that origin, irrespective of the duration of their absence (Goldstein, Goldstein and Guo 1991). Lacking legal residence status at destination they are not eligible for benefits. Terms such as 'temporary' or 'transient' are politically expedient calming fears of urban residents and avoiding planning requirements since the needs of temporary residents do not have to be accounted for.

In this paper the floating, transient or temporary registered population (*liudong renkou*) will be referred to as *migrants*, those who have formally applied to move their household registration (*qianyi renkou*) will be referred to as *formal migrants*.

A degree of legitimisation for migrants was made possible in 1985 through regulations codified in national policy by the Ministry of Public Security. Migrants are required to register their presence if they are resident for between 3 and 30 days and to arrange for a temporary residence card if remaining for longer than 30 days (Doc. 49 1994). Registration for a temporary residence permit can be undertaken by anyone over the age of sixteen and must take place in person. Proof of identity is required along with a family planning card for married women of child bearing age plus recent photographs of the applicant. Permits are legal documents which allow the holder to stay in the location where issued for periods of up to 6 months or a year and can be renewed. Registration details are held in the police station of the area in which the migrant is resident and the card is only valid for that area. A fee is required when the card is issued, and there are reports of migrants having to pay additional monthly 'protection' fees to the police. Holders are required to abide by state and local regulations, to show cards on request and not engage in any form of criminal activity (Solinger 1985, FBIS 1994b). Temporary migrants are divided into two groups. Those in employment or other forms of economic activity are issued with what is known as a *jizhuzheng*, those visiting a family, or in hospital are issued a *zanzhuzheng* (White 1994, Mallee 1995). However, matters are complicated by the fact that the first group are, in practice, issued with *zanzhuzheng* (Mallee 1995). Many migrants found the registration card irrelevant or impractical. In 1995 it was estimated that of, 80 million migrants, 36 million or 45% had not registered (Renmin Ribao 1995).

Bao (1992) describes members of the floating population who stay for less than three days in an urban areas as *guowang renkou*, or 'comers and goers' (p. 2). They are also known as job seekers; *dagong zi* (male) and *dagong mei* (female). Boundaries between these distinctions are fluid. A family visitor may easily slip into the permanent migrant category. Since the migrants are required to self report registration procedures are problematic. There are no regulatory mechanisms to identify mobility events independent of these identified procedures. In addition,

personnel and budgets were proving insufficient in the struggle for comprehensive and up to date information on migrants.

Guiding policy behind rural and urban reforms was introduced at the Third Plenum of the Eleventh National Party Congress in 1978. These reforms, spoken of in revolution like terms (SWB 1993, Qingnian Bao 1994), were the catalyst for migration (Goldstein, Goldstein and Guo 1991, Bao 1992, Gui 1992, Woon 1992, Chen 1994, Wu 1994, Mallee 1995). Rural areas are the predominant source of the migrant population (Wu 1989, Huang 1989, Chen 1991, CNA 1991, Ma and Lin 1993, Guang 1995). Reforms created a rural population without direct access to land which together with the expansion in the population created a large pool of labour incompletely absorbed by the establishment of Town and Village Enterprises (TVEs). Theoretically these belonged to all the residents of the town or village in which they were based but were unable to give guarantees of employment (Bowles and Dong 1994). The population began to turn urban ward in the search for jobs, created by official endorsement of the private enterprises in 1983 (Solinger 1993). Other changes such as the increasing transportation and communication networks were promoting population circulation. Out-migration from provinces such as Sichuan, Anhui and Guangxi was encouraged by mismanagement of agricultural land (Woon 1992). Overall the reforms contributed to a significant spatial redistribution of rural labour (Ma and Lin 1993).

This large scale movement began to put pressure on household registration and resource allocation systems. Indication came as early as 1981. A State Council order called for strict control over urban ward migration (Solinger 1985). But the way was paved for a period of flexibility in the household registration system which Ma (1993) called the period of 'half open migration' (Ma 1993: 3) (1984 - present).

The certificate of self sufficiency

The legislative landmark at the national level took place in 1984 with a State Council ruling in October. It is significant for its relaxation of regulations on movement, for its focus on small cities and towns; smaller urban areas were and remain the emphasis of urban and demographic reform and of specific interest to this paper, the population allowed to migrate. Peasants, with their families, who requested transfer to towns, below the level of the county town for work, would be permitted to live in towns if they could demonstrate that they had a settled residence and were self supporting. They would then be granted a certificate of self sufficiency in grain and to be counted as members of the non agricultural population in their chosen destination and have equal access to facilities (Zhang 1987, Solinger 1991).

This new policy significantly granted permission for dependants to migrate with the worker. This was in direct opposition to the regulations laid down for the rest of the population, which did not permit members of the same family to migrate as a unit if one was allocated to a job in a different area. The 1984 Circular stated:

'Public security departments should grant permanent resident status to all peasants and their dependants who apply for engagement...in towns'.

(FBIS 1984: K19).

By the end of 1988, it was reported that 5 million people had taken up the opportunity (Yang 1992). The importance of this regulation should not be over-estimated as the certificate of self sufficiency did not appear to be particularly popular with the peasants (Mallee 1995) and was only applicable to towns below the county level. Neither did it make a great difference to patterns or levels of rural to urban migration (Woon 1992). It had, however, created a precedent for the migration of couples. An issue which did not help allay fears of high fertility rates in this population.

Migrants were given uniquely preferential treatment by being granted such a privilege, inaccessible to the resident population whose co-habitation in an urban area of their choice could be more a matter of chance. Joint migrations of partners was not challenged in later legislation such as national regulations on temporary residence laid down in 1985 by the Ministry of Public Security.

After 1985 a process of smaller adjustments to the household registration policy at all levels occurred. Further but limited experimentation with the registration system took place such as the introduction of Blue Seal cards in Shanghai (China Daily 1994, Laodong Bao 1994). But the impression is of reactive rather than pro-active legislation which lacked integration with overall development strategy (Zweig 1987). However, the registration system proved to be inflexible, ignored by many migrants and was most importantly immobile. Many migrants were staying well beyond a year (Goldstein 1990, Yang 1992, Kuhn and Kaye 1994, Guang 1995). In response, a system of reliance on marriage, non marriage and family planning certificates developed as a means of population control. This is discussed in the following two sections.

Marriage

Concerns expressed about marriage timing in life history and the proportion of a population marrying rather than co-habiting, reflect the function of marriage as a legitimisation of child bearing in China. The family planning system in China relies upon a stable marriage behavioural pattern. It cannot accommodate changes to union formation which would absent the participants from the initial stages in the extended process of accounting for, planning for and disseminating information about, fertility.

It is suggested an above average proportion of the migrant population is engaged in forms of 'illegal' marriage including marriage below the legal age of 20 years for women and 22 years for men and marriages which have not been formally registered (co-habitation). Co-habitation patterns are particularly highlighted. In *Xiaoshan* city in *Zhejiang* in 1988-89, 24% of in-migrants were reportedly cohabiting (Liu 1990). In *Panshi* county in *Jilin* province in 1990, 77% of married women of child bearing age in the in-migration population did not have marriage certificates and their attitude towards marriage was described as 'relatively backward' (Yu and Wang 1993: 59).

Closer examination of data shows these patterns to be a reflection of wider society - that cohabitation and early marriage are in fact common amongst the resident population and are not a function or characteristic of migration. Early marriage has been described as a problem of extreme urgency (Li and Zhang 1994).

Family Planning Regulations of the Floating Population promulgated in late 1991 required potential migrants to carry family planning cards which supplied proof of marital status (China Population Today 1992). Couples who arrived without marriage certificates could be sent back to their place of origin. Other areas required proof of 'singleness', presumably to pre-empt any attempts to disguise illegitimate births with 'absentee husband' explanations. Despite this measures provinces published their own measures on co-habitation in the migrant population. For example, Chapter 3, Article 19 of regulations on the *Jiangsu* transient population, published in 1994 stated that 'home owners are strictly forbidden to permit the co-habitation of a man and a woman without marriage' (FBIS 1994b).

It is difficult to estimate the proportion of the population who are co-habiting. However, I suggest that it is common in Chinese society and that indications of its prevalence can be inferred from the classifications of marital status outlined by the State Family Planning Association in 1990 which defined the following: unmarried (*weihun*), married (*you pei'ou*), widowed (*sang'ou*) and divorced (*lihun*). To these was added *de facto* marriages (*shishi hunyin*) which had not been registered and which were to be counted as marriages for administration purposes (Gui 1992). Under marriage registration regulations implemented in 1994 co-habiting couples were to be separated (FBIS 1994a).

To counteract this trend the People's Government and the Family Planning Commission have had to co-operate in establishing programmes which draw a closer association between pre-marital training, education and marriage registration (Li and Zhang 1994). Finally, in 1994, new marriage registration procedures were announced, replacing the previous ones of 1986. These measures reinforced the aims of the 1980 Marriage Law in ensuring freedom in marriage. It outlined clearly the role of registrations offices and registration procedures. Regarding the problems of illegal marriages Article 24 stated:

"Where Citizens who have not reached the legal marriage age but live together as husband and wife or parties who meet the requirements for marriage and live as husband and wife but have not applied for marriage registration, their marriage relations are invalid and not protected by law".

FBIS (1994a: 40)

Promulgated on February 1 these regulations reportedly allowed for the separation of couples whose marriage was not conducted in accordance with the law. Their marriages would be considered valid if they subsequently registered (FBIS 1994b). The new regulations were an attempt to counteract the still widespread incidences of illegal marriages including bigamous and arranged marriages (FBIS 1994b).

Some 5% of the population aged 15 to 19 years at the time of the 1990 Census were married (Liu 1992). The proportions marrying early have fluctuated, in 1980, 16% of marriages took place before the legal age of marriage for one or both the marriage partners, at their peak, two years later 28% of marriages were described as 'early' (Yu *et. al.* 1990).

In this context the 18% of migrant women in *Shanghai* in 1988 described as 'earlier marriers', are not a remarkable phenomenon (Gui 1992). Neither are the 2% of women reportedly married before the age of 20 years in the *Xiaoshan* migrant population (Liu 1990), or most of the other marriage patterns reported in the migrant populations.

The responsibility of the origin area to furnish its transients with marriage certificates is a constant theme (Zhuang *et. al.* 1992). Migrants marriage certificates must be examined by police prior to temporary registration cards are issued or renting accommodation (Zhuang *et. al.* 1992). Marital relationship also controlled other aspects of life. Migrant married women who did not register at an appointed hospital to receive family planning measures would, in certain areas not be permitted to remain or work (Yang 1992). In this way marriage was used to control the mobile population and in particular the women but also increased the potential burdens on migrant women in urban areas.

Migrant women and family planning

There was a temporal and geographical pattern to the introduction of management of the fertility of the floating population. The earliest measures were introduced in 1985 in areas of Ningxia, Fujian and Guizhou provinces (Gui 1992) and by 1988 nearly 40 provinces, counties and cities had devised measures for control of fertility of migrant population between different areas. These understandably reflected local conditions. Differences developed in the administration of family planning in the migrant population. For example definitions of migrants' origins and destinations varied, as did the target population for family planning, whether it was the mobile population as a whole or a highly selective group of married women of child bearing age.

The introduction of National regulations in 1991 did establish a certain element of national comparability. Responsibility for the family planning of the migrants was jointly held by origin and destination areas. The target population was those people living away from the location of their normal household registration. No distinction between the married or unmarried was made (China Population Today 1992). Family planning of the floating population was governed according to the legislation implemented in the area of permanent registration. While regulations were to be jointly administered by the people's government of origin and destination. The family planning card permitted the holder to have children as if they had they remained at origin. The origin area promoted contraception use and issued family planning cards (FBIS Dec. 1990). The in-migration area was responsible for propaganda organisation, information collation and importantly, examination of family planning cards prior to issuing residential and business licences (FBIS Dec. 1990), as well as supporting the marriage card in defining access to resources. Responsibility for

uptake of contraception and non-conformist fertility behaviour in the migrant population is carried by the local government at origin. Low proportions of migrants using contraception or high fertility levels in the migrant population were blamed on poor management in home areas.

Legislation required migrants to carry family planning cards which also provided proof of identify and marital status and therefore were an aid in policing fertility behaviour. It defined access to opportunities such as employment and accommodation. Those who could not show a card on demand would be refused accommodation or permits. As with the marriage certificate its advantage lay in its mobility - the household register is not mobile, the identification card has proved problematic and there are no birth certificates - but it required a high degree of synchronisation between out and in migration areas, sometimes beyond the capabilities or budget of both.

Figures 1 and 2 are examples of the legislation and documentation associated with the management of marriage and contraception in the floating population. Figure 1 is a translation of a poster displayed in the county town of Hanchuan in Hubei in 1994. It clearly shows the responsibility of the area as both a sending area and receiving area for migrants. Potential migrants must arrange for a card proving contraceptive practice prior to leaving. In-migrants without cards have to return to destination to arrange for the card to be issued. Those who fail to undertake these regulations face having their work permits revoked. Figure 2 is an example of a contraceptive registration card for migrants at destination. The card requires information on contraception and pregnancy.

Figure 1 Poster announcing changes to the administration of the planned fertility of the floating population of *Hanchuan County, Hubei*, 1994

Concerning the administration of family planning certificates amongst the floating population

Notice

In order to implement the "Methods for the implementation of measures for the administration of the family planning of the floating population of Hubei province", and to improve the work of our county in family planning amongst the floating population, combining the present work of ordering and rectification of the administration of family planning of the floating population of our county, the following items relating to the arrangements for the handling of the floating population's planned fertility card, examination of cards, and exchanging cards are currently being carried out:

- 1) On handling: The floating population of this county, who by the time of out-migration have not arranged for a 'Hubei province floating population planned fertility card' must go to the county office for administration of the floating population's planned fertility and arrange for a card. Members of the floating population who do not have a 'floating population planned fertility card', must return to their place of usual residence and at the planned fertility administrative department of the county or above level, arrange for a certificate to be issued.
- 2) Checking certificates: Those members of the floating population who are here, have previously arranged a 'floating population planned fertility card' and have obtained employment, should now go to the floating population planned fertility office to have their certificate checked.
- 3) Certificate exchange: The 'floating population planned fertility certificate' has a life of three years. Normally, those members of the floating population whose card is already three years old, should return to their place of usual residence and at the planned fertility administrative department at county level or above or should arrange to exchange it for a new certificate.
- 4) The work of issuing and examination of certificates, should be completed by the 20th of August, at this time, those who have not requested such work, shall be subject to a fine, and must replace their card. Those who refuse, will have their employment licence cancelled

**Hanchuan floating population planned fertility administration
reorganisation committee**

1 August 1994

Source: 1994 Fieldwork

Figure 2 Contraceptive registration card for in-floaters

In-migrants contraception registration Card			
No. 000000			
Name	Identity Card Number		
Place of registration	Temporary Address		
Current danwei and address			
Husband's migration status			
Husband's name and danwei			
Current number of	Sons	Date of birth of youngest child	
	Daughters	Year	Month
Current contraceptive status		Current pregnancy status	
If pregnant out-of-plan at arrival, expected date of birth			
Fertility quota	Date of pregnancy		
Reason	Year	Month	
Date of completion			
19	Year	Month	Day

Source: Gui 1992: 103

Despite these attempts to establish national comparability some areas found that the national regulations were insufficient and began revisions thus starting to re-create the complex situation prior to 1991.

Guangdong province has had a two card system in place since 1990, requiring migrants to prove their marital status whether married or single. By 1993 it had its own 'Measures for the administration of the floating population' (Miao and Zhang 1995). Areas within Guangdong are making their own arrangements for example building accommodation and facility centres for migrants (Renmin Ribao 1994). One county in Fujian sent its own medical and family planning personnel to Beijing to provide contraceptive services (Keji Ribao 1994). However, these are both economically wealthy provinces and these measures underline their independence from central authority they could not necessarily be repeated by remoter, poorer provinces.

Migrant women and fertility

Women in the migrant population are often called the 'excess birth guerrilla corps' (CNA 1991, Keji Ribao 1994) since mobility potentially allows for self determination of fertility. The threat of pregnancy is underlined by the continuous identification of women of childbearing age as a distinct population group.

It is their very mobility which enables them to evade the policy. One urban street in a Heilongjiang city was reported to have 276 transient households. Of these, over three quarters had 'excess' births (JPRS 1991). Some 6% of transients in-migrating to Panshi county in Jilin were women with three or more children and 11% of those pregnant at the time of the survey in 1992 were 'out-of-plan' pregnancies. In the year prior to the survey 29% of births had been 'out-of-plan' whether they were first, second or third parity births (Yu and Wang 1993). An article quoted a 1987 survey of 2000 households in the migrant population in Shiyuan in Hubei, a fifth of which had two or more children (China Daily 1989). An economic zone in Yiwu city in Zhejiang, prior to the establishment of a special family planning centre, was described as equivalent to an 'air raid shelter' (*fangkongdong*) or haven (*bifenggang*) for those wishing to evade the family planning regulations (Wang 1992).

The threat of pregnancy is underlined by the continuous identification of women of child bearing age as a distinct group within the migrant population. For example, 90% of women in the transient population in *Xiamen* were 'women of child bearing age' (Zhuang *et. al.* 1992). This relationship is not always quite so explicitly stated, commentators simply noting the latent potential for high fertility rates in the floating population in situations where hukou and family planning systems were relaxed (Liaoning Daxue 1992). The floating population is also portrayed as the most susceptible to the spread of co-habitation and pre-marital births (Liu 1990).

Comparisons between the rates of excess births in migrant and resident population are a common feature of discussions of migrant fertility. The percentage of births in the resident population is usually set at less than 1%. Excess births reportedly accounted for 10% of births to married women in the out-migrant population from a county in *Anhui* in 1987 (Bao 1992: 42), 4% in *Shanghai* in 1988 (JPRS 1991) and 14% in *Xian* in 1990 (Gui 1992: 2). In 1991 half of the excess births in *Guangdong* were to migrants, who made up 8% of the population (CNA 1991). A fifth of births to migrant in a survey in *Hubei* were reported as excess (China Daily 1989). More than three quarters of the migrant population of one urban street in a city in *Heilongjiang* were reported as having excess births (JPRS 1991).

Such comparisons can be questioned from two perspectives. Firstly, perceptions of high fertility in the migrant population reflect the unfamiliarity of urban family planning personnel with realities of rural fertility behaviour. Substantial differences in policy between origin and destination area can exist and personnel are expected to be familiar with the regulations of each origin area of migrants under their jurisdiction. Migrants are reluctant to conform with both urban quotas and urban timetables. Their subsequent fertility, while acceptable at origin, may be described as excess in urban reports.

Secondly, there is substantial underestimation of the proportions of births counted as 'excess' in the resident population. In a 1991 survey in Hubei province 7% of births to the resident population were 'out-of-plan' (Chen 1993), and peaking amongst women aged 20-24 years where 13% of births were 'out of plan'. In 1988-89, 40% of resident women in a county in Anhui had three or more children compared with 28% of out-migrant women (Bao 1992), although this pattern may reflect the age structure of migrants and non-migrants. In 1994 in *Guangdong* fertility rates of migrant women were lower than women in the resident population and their peak of child bearing was some two years older (Yancheng Wanbao 1994). Low fertility rates for the floating population were established as early as 1986 (Tian 1991). One population institute suggested that:

'migration of the rural population to urban areas is beneficial in lowering fertility... migration itself is not to be viewed as a new form of contraceptive'.

(SHKX 1988: 9)

The idea that migrant fertility may in fact be lower than previously expected or even lower than that of the resident population is only slowly emerging into public consciousness. One newspaper announced the discovery of low fertility rates in the migrant population with the words: 'Excess birth guerrilla corps? Not necessarily! Low fertility corps? Exactly!' (Yancheng Ribao 1994). But there are no indication that the government will relax its vigilance on birth issues in the migrant population.

Before discussing results from a survey of migrants this paper looks at the development of and justification for the use of micro approaches in the search for explanations of demographic phenomenon. It then discusses how migrant status in urban areas can influence geographic patterns.

Micro-demographic approaches

Micro-scale investigations are particularly suitable for examination of the experiences of sub-populations within a larger demographic phenomenon such as migration (Fulton and Randall 1988). While demographic analysis of migration will only ever capture a selection of population movement, the use of smaller scale approaches allows for a greater flexibility in identifying the distance and duration thresholds that define migration (Hugo 1988). In addition smaller scale inquiry allows investigation to be made in context (Hugo 1988).

There is always a need to be aware of the potential pitfalls inherent in any scaling up of results or expectation of macro behavioural patterns based on findings from micro data (Caldwell and Hill 1988). Micro-demographic work, will by its nature always inadequately address the other sections of the population. However, if it is to provide an adequate picture of a society, especially one so opaque as China, each study must be seen as a stage in a detailed, complex and careful analysis. Thus the role of micro-demography is as a step in the creation of theories which help to explain wider demographic processes (Caldwell *et. al.* 1988, Hugo 1988). It is invaluable in

establishing individual motives and reasoning within the larger scale processes. 'If we are going to understand population process in China, we are going to have to study the process at the individual and family level' (Harrell 1995: 2). In addition micro-demography can identify differences in what has been called 'cultural geography' (Lavelly *et. al.* 1990), which can pin point variations in society. Micro-demographic analysis has been particularly significant in analysing and re-interpreting the family forms found in China. Where society is in a state of flux and relationships are being negotiated, as between the urban and rural forums in China, macro work can easily miss small undercurrents which may become more significant further downstream.

Migrant geography

In a society such as China where fertility is high on both political and personal agendas, those with similar views or desires relating to fertility may congregate. in for example, areas where control is more lax or sympathetic towards their situation Those for whom fertility is not as vital a concern may be content to reside in areas which place a higher priority on conformity with policy

Migrants who accord with regulations effectively create an administrative sub-population of the floating population and it is this sub-population which is the focus of a survey conducted in 1994 and results from which are presented later in this paper. They will therefore not necessarily be representative of the more unregulated migrants and cannot pretend to be so. Less than half of the floating population in *Beijing* apply for temporary residents. They do however, still make up a substantial part of the population and as the household registration regulations are amended it is likely that their numbers will increase.

Registered migrants may differ from those in other areas in respect to their self selection. They are willing to accept a different degree of authoritarian control over (the inhibition of) their movement, actual and social and the degree to which they are willing to accept 'interference' in their fertility behaviour. Migrants who are unwilling to accept such interference will move away and will not be captured by this survey. We may initially conclude that those migrants who remain in these areas are one or more of several types. Firstly, those willing to be controlled by the government of the area, once the area has accepted their status as in-migrants. Secondly, those who are unwilling to accept the degree of control in the area as a long term aspect in their lives but are able to accept it temporarily and who will out migrate once the degree of control has passed through some temporal or perceived threshold. This *threshold of tolerance* is unlikely to be static but moving as circumstances and experiences of urban life change. Thirdly, those for whom the state control over fertility coincides with their own wishes and for whom the policy is of no reactive effect in their lives. This will include those who have completed their child bearing to the extent that is satisfactory to themselves. They may, prior to entrance into the area have exceeded birth policy guidelines. If such levels are in the past there is little the local government can do to affect birth parity. The government can however have an effect in restricting access to such amenities as housing or schooling.

Both women who have completed their child bearing and those for whom it is still in the future, will be subject to the influences of an urban fertility policy. The effects of which they may transmit to their children or to those with whom they come into contact.

Survey population

During the summer of 1994 400 migrants holding Beijing temporary residence permits were surveyed in two areas of Beijing; an inner suburb, Haidian and an outer suburb, Mentougou. The target population were ever married women whose household registration was based outside the Beijing city region defined by Kirkby (1985). No women originated from Beijing city itself or any of the associated suburbs or counties. The aim of the survey was to collect detailed migration histories from pre and post the inter-provincial migration event leading to estimation of the extent of population mobility as well as the impact of more significant migration events. A migration event was defined as a movement from one location to another even within an administrative unit. For example, between villages within the same township or streets within urban areas. Not all events will have been recorded.

Based on the timing of migration in relation to the life history events of marriage and birth, the survey population was divided into five sub-populations; those who migrated before marriage, those who migrated after the birth of their first child, those who migrated in the interval between marriage and the birth of their first child, those for whom marriage and migration were simultaneous events, and a final population who had anomalous experiences including early births. Those without children at the time of the survey were treated as if birth was a future event and dependent on timing of migration and marriage were distributed between all sub-population bar that containing women who migrated after the start of child bearing. This last sub-population was used as a 'standard' population as many life events will have taken place at origin. Six five-year birth cohorts were established. Each five year cohort runs from June of one year to May of the fifth year, the reference point provided by the date of the survey. The results from the survey showed that women in the younger cohorts are more likely to have migrated before marriage and those in the older cohorts after the birth of their first child.

The issues of marriage and birth are discussed in this population using mean age at marriage and mean numbers of children ever born.

Analysis procedures

Mean age at marriage and birth of first child was established for each sub population within each cohort. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in the identification of patterns since this method allows means to be compared to determine if there are any statistically significant differences between the means. It assumes samples are random and independent, normally distributed populations and equal variance of populations. Analysis of variance divides observed variability into variability about means within groups and variability between group means (Norusis 1983). Age at

marriage may not vary for individuals within the same sub-population but the means of the sub-populations may vary and it is likely that the populations are not equal.

A fixed effect model was used in the testing procedures. This means that each of the migrant sub-population were not considered to be sample populations from all possible types of migrant sub-populations. ANOVA produces an F statistic. This is an indication of the extent to which group means vary. An F statistic with a 95% probability is indication that the means of the sub populations are likely to be different. It does not provide an indication of where those differences are.

A Bonferroni test was used to compare the variability of the group means and identify where those differences lie. This is a pair wise comparison procedure. The significance level was again set at 95% (0.05). Tests were carried out for sub-population within cohorts and not between cohorts.

Marriage

Data on marriage, suggest Zarate and de Zarate (1975) are 'critical to the specification of the immediate as well as long run effects of urban migration upon fertility'(p. 48). Since the marriage birth relationship in China is so close any effects migration is shown to have on marriage will also impact on births. For over 85% there was some kind of formal celebration of the union. Some 8% of the women in this survey did not sign a marriage certificate. Using reported age at marriage 7% of women were married since 1980 were married between 16 and 19 years, below the legal age at marriage. However, using age calculated from date of birth then the percentage of 'early marriages' rises to 14%.

Table 1 shows the mean age at marriage for the migrant sub populations and cohorts in the 1994 survey. The highest mean age at marriage (24.3) years occurs in the cohort born 1960-1965 and whose first recorded migration event took place before their marriage. The lowest recorded mean age at marriage occurred in the cohort of women born 1945-50 at 19.9 years.

Statistically significant differences between means of ages at marriage in sub-populations occurred in only two cohorts. In the cohort of women born 1960-1965 and between 1965-1970. In the cohort of women born 1960-1965 the F statistic of 2.84 was significant at the 0.03 level indicating differences existed in the mean ages of marriage for sub-populations. A Bonferroni test showed that significant differences lay between mean ages of marriage for migrants who migrated prior to marriage and those who migrated after the birth of their first child. Those whose migration was delayed until later in their life history had a younger mean age at marriage.

For women born into the 1965-1970 cohort an F statistic of 3.47 at a significance level of 0.01 indicated that differences between the sub-populations existed. Bonferroni tests showed that again, women who married after a migration event had taken place married at a significantly older mean age compared with those who did not experience a migration event until after the birth of at least one child. There is

some suggestion that women whose marriage is concurrent with migration may at slightly older mean ages than post birth migrants.

Table 1 Mean age at marriage for migrant sub populations

Cohort	Sub-population				
	Migration before marriage	Migration after first birth	Migration between marriage and first birth	Simultaneous migration and marriage	Other
1945-50	-	19.9	21.5	25.0	21.8
1950-55	-	21.8	-	-	21.4
1955-60	-	22.3	26.7	-	21.3
1960-65	24.3	22.4	22.6	22.0	22.6
1965-70	23.3	21.5	22.6	22.9	21.9
1970-75	21.0	20.3	21.0	20.6	21.9

Source: 1994 Migrant Survey

There is no statistical difference between mean age at marriage of women in the post birth migration sub-population and the 'other' sub-population. Women with 'early births' are not distinguishable in terms of their later marriage behaviour when compared to other women in the whole sample. This suggests that 'early births' are accommodated by the local population and do not represent a 'deviance', away from normal behaviour. We may initially conclude that migration appears to have a significantly delaying affect on marriage when compared to a population who have spent most of their lives in their origin areas. These changes to mean age of marriage, however, are quite limited, are not of the degree recognised by other researchers and are well within the span of recorded marriage ages in China. It is likely that marriage is one of the most culturally stable events in China and highly resistant to external forces. The results agree with the work of anthropologists who argue that it is cultural norms and associated aspects of social organisation that condition marital timing over the, still non negligible, effects of economic and political aspects (Kertzer 1995).

Births

Mean number of births for each sub-population within each cohort were compared using the methodology outlined above. Table 2 below shows the mean number of births for each cohort in the sub-populations.

The smallest mean number of children born to any cohort occurs to women born between 1970-75 and who migrated between marriage and the birth of their first child (0.2 children). The largest mean for the same migrant sub-population but those born a quarter of a century earlier in 1945-1950 (3.0 children). Clearly, this is not a population characterised by high fertility.

Table 2 Mean number of children ever born by migrant population

Cohort	Population				
	Migration before marriage	Migration after first birth	Migration between marriage and first birth	Simultaneous migration and marriage	Other
1945-50	-	2.9	3.0	2.0	2.4
1950-55	-	2.6	-	-	2.4
1955-60	-	1.9	1.3	-	1.7
1960-65	1.4	1.7	1.2	2.5	1.6
1965-70	0.9	1.4	0.7	1.3	1.2
1970-75	0.5	1.0	0.2	1.2	0.9

Source: 1994 Hoy Migrant Survey

There are no significant differences between mean number of children ever born for any woman born before 1960. No significant differences existed between sub-populations in the cohort born 1960-65 but there are apparent visual differences between the mean number of children ever born to women who migrated in the interval between marriage and the birth of their first child, which is lower compared with other populations. Significant differences occurred between means of children in the cohorts of women born in 1965-1970 and 1970-1975. An F statistic of 7.93 at a significance level of 0.000 was reported for ANOVA procedures comparing sub-population means for the 1965-1970 cohort. Two pairs of means were reported as significantly different using the Bonferroni test. Women who migrated during the marriage to birth interval had a significantly lower mean number of children compared to those whose migration took place at some point after the birth of their first child and a significantly lower mean number of children than women who married concurrent with migration. For the cohort born 1970-1975 an F statistic of 6.98 at a significance level of 0.001 was produced. Three pairs of means were shown to be significantly different. Women who migrated between marriage and the birth of their first child had a significantly lower mean number of children than women in the following three sub-populations; those who migrated after the birth of their first child, those whose marriage was concurrent with migration and the 'other' sub-population.

Mean numbers of children ever born to the women who migrated in this interval are lower as the birth intervals are longer. Women who marriage at later ages, after their first migration event, prove to have shorter birth intervals than other sub-populations, suggesting that a 'catch-up' effect operates here. The subject of births intervals warrant a further, detailed analysis (Hoy in prep.). These results are a snapshot of experience of each sub-population. The mean number of children can be expected to rise as more women in each cohort have children, especially women in the younger cohorts where there are more recently married women yet to reach first parity. The overall effect is to depress fertility in this population

Conclusion

I have suggested and shown how migrants control is being established through the use of mobile documentation such as the marriage certificate. Publicity ensures that the issue of high fertility rates in the migrant population is kept to the forefront of public awareness despite evidence that fertility rates are low. However, many migrants choose to ignore the requirements of registration and marriage and time their own births. In this they are perhaps not unusual in the population of China as a whole. Comparisons between the analysis of mean age at marriage and mean number of children shows that differences are weighted towards the younger cohorts. Comparisons are stronger in sub-populations in the younger cohorts. As migration opportunities have expanded in the recent past and expectations of society expanded with it younger women have been able to take advantage of a broader range of situations. Women, in the older cohorts who might have been pre-disposed to migrate earlier in life had the household registration system been at an equivalent level of relaxation can only register a post-birth or post migration experience. From this date we can see that where migration takes place in a less structured environment such as current exists in China it is likely to have an impact on fertility levels represented by mean number of children ever born, acting to depress fertility levels.

Even in this specialised survey group I would suggest that despite the best intentions of the family planning offices it is the migrants who control their fertility and any successes in family planning are due to changing expectations of the women and not the work of the family planning office. The impacts of the family planning office would be greatest in stable populations of migrant women - for example the wives of miners in the *Mentougou* district of *Beijing* who will be resident for several years as their husbands work under contract to the mining companies.

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