

Gender and Reproductive Labor Migration in Asia, 1960-2000

Abstract

Studies on gender and migration have focused on how and why men and women migrate. Women who migrate often do so as part of families or for family reunification, but increasingly migrate for their own work and economic opportunities. Studies on women's migration flows are rare; those that exist neglect increasingly prominent migration dynamics to and within Global South. Addressing this gap, we map understudied women's migration flows within Asian sub-regions from 1960-2000. Building on qualitative studies, we consider what these quantitative flows suggest about women's migration, and their involvement in reproductive labor – care and domestic work, marriage migration, entertainment work – in the context of bilateral migration policies. We find high volume flows, even if not always feminized, are directed primarily from countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia to countries in West Asia, East Asia, and Southeast Asia. We find strong evidence that within Asia, transnational migration has become increasingly feminized and diversified since the 1960s. Variations in women's migration flows, both among countries and over time, suggest a growing demand for women migrants. Mapping these flows in this region provides us with a more comprehensive understanding of women's migration within the Global South. More specifically, our findings reaffirm, complicate and deepen accounts about state labor exportation and migration policies that support a transnational reproductive labor economy in Asia.

INTRODUCTION

Transnational migration has become increasingly feminized since the 1960s (Bakker and Gill 2003; Chang 2000; Cheng 1996; Cheng 2006; Cheng and Choo 2015; Constable 1997; Donato et al. 2011; Gamburd 2000; Heyzer et al. 1994; Hoang et al. 2012; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999; Kofman and Raghuram 2012; Lan 2008; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005; Özden et al. 2011; Parreñas 2001a, 2001b). With women no longer migrating primarily as dependents,¹ but also pursuing economic opportunities of their own, migration patterns reflect gender in new ways. While most research on gender and migration concentrates on North-South movements, migration within the Global South is widespread and deserves greater attention (Donato et al. 2011; Kofman and Raghuram 2012, 2015; Oishi 2005; Özden et al. 2011).² We focus specifically on intra-regional migratory movements within Asia during 1960-2000; these movements point to both intensified demand and supply of women's migrant labor.

The feminization of migration reflects the increasing involvement of migrant women in reproductive labor, including domestic work, carework, and entertainment work.³ It also reflects women's migration for marriage (Constable 1997, 2003; Choo 2013; Cheng and Choo 2015; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Kim 2010; Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Lan 2008; Lutz 2011; Oishi 2005; Parreñas 2010b; Piper and Roces 2003; Yang and Lu 2010). These forms of migration can also overlap; women who migrate as workers may end up marrying foreign husbands, and marriage migrants may also engage in paid labor (Constable 2006; Kim 2010; Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Lan 2008; Parreñas 2010b).

Cheng and Choo (2015) note that, in fact, domestic work and cross-border marriages are the two largest forms of women's migration in Asia. However, debates exist about how to categorize these different forms of migration. Some scholars distinguish between domestic work (i.e. cleaning and cooking) and carework (caring for sick, disabled, children or the elderly) (Ochiai 2009; Kofman and Raghuram 2012, 2015). Others note domestic work is often combined with care (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2003; Parreñas 2001a). Domestic and carework (including nursing) have also been conceptualized as intimate or reproductive labor, in combination with entertainment work (including sex work) and marriage migration (Constable 2006, 2009; Cheng and Choo 2015; Lan 2008; Kofman and Raghuram 2015). Analyzing reproductive labor, Lan (2008) and Constable (2009) show that foreign brides are also recruited to provide care, especially for low-income men;⁴ however this is not usually paid labor. While important legal distinctions exist between these different forms of work (Cheng and Choo 2015; Ochai 2009), we are interested in the broad category of reproductive labor. For simplicity, we use "care" and "reproductive labor" interchangeably in this paper.

Feminized migration streams may be direct responses to growing “care deficits,” or the need for care in receiving countries, as well as “bride deficits” (Hochschild 2000; Parreñas 2005a; Constable 2009; Cheng and Choo 2015). The demand for care reflects overlapping needs: women’s increased labor force participation, lack of state or market-based care, aging populations, and even conspicuous consumption, as in the Gulf where domestic workers identify higher status households (Cheng 2006; Cheng and Choo 2015; Lan, 2008; Oishi 2005). Care supply may reflect limited economic stability, and abuse or violence, which many migrating women encounter (Espiritu 2003; Gamburd 2000; Nawyn 2010; Oishi 2005; Parreñas 2001a). Economic opportunities, including providing support to families at home, are common migration motivations (Bakker and Gill 2003; Chang 2000; Constable 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005; Parreñas 2005; Yu and Lang 2010).

While studies suggest women’s migration has been changing, comprehensive analyses on these patterns are lacking particularly in the Global South (Donato et al. 2011; Kofman and Raghuram 2012, 2015). Therefore, we map feminized migration within Asia from 1960-2000. We ask how women’s migration within different regions of Asia has changed over time, and whether mapping these changes in women’s migration illuminate shifts in migration for reproductive labor.⁵ We use a new quantitative data set that allows us to report gender-disaggregated trends in migration from 1960-2000 (Abel and Sander 2014; Abel 2013; Özden et al. 2011). These data do not pertain specifically to reproductive labor migration; therefore we cannot firmly connect the two. Yet we analyze what gendered and feminized migration might tell us about reproductive labor migration flows. We emphasize where women predominate in migration (Donato and Gabaccia 2015), discussing what these migration flows suggest about

who is providing care for whom, directly or indirectly, in the global care economy (Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Lutz 2011).

Focusing on intra-regional movements within Asia, we consider migration from South, Southeast, and East Asia to West Asia and wealthier parts of Southeast Asia and East Asia. Sub-regions like South Asia are major senders of migrant women but the volume of women migrating varies even within this sub-region. The same is the case for Southeast Asia, with the Philippines and Indonesia identified as major sending countries, but Singapore and Malaysia as receiving countries. In East Asia, we also consider receiving countries like Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, and Japan, as well as sending countries, such as China. Unsurprisingly, we also find West Asia to be a major receiving region. Analyzing these intra-regional flows, we map women's migration within Asia, also considering how migration policies may help support the transnational care economy in the Global South (Bakker and Gill 2003; Lutz 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gendered Migration

Scholarship on gender and transnational migration has been growing (Bakker and Gill 2003; Chang 2000; Cheng 2006; Donato et al. 2011; Gamburd 2000; Heyzer et al. 1994; Hoang et al. 2012; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999; Lan 2008; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005; Parreñas 2001b; Kofman and Raghuram 2012, 2015). Gender studies have primarily focused on qualitative migrant experiences, characteristics, and the re-configuration of family relations (Gamburd 2000, Hoang et al. 2012; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Parreñas 2001a). Less attention has been paid to the dynamics shaping migration flows; studies that adopt this lens either exclude gender from their analysis or focus exclusively on migration to the global north (Donato et al. 2011; Özden et al. 2011; but see Kofman and Raghuram 2012, 2015; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005).

Despite the growing importance of migration within the Global South, little attention has been given to understanding these dynamics (Kofman and Raghuram 2012, 2015; Ratha and Shaw 2007; Oishi 2005).

While migration can facilitate gender transformations, it also generates and reinforces inequalities that often disproportionately disadvantage women (Constable 1997; Cheng 2004; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). Although much research assumed men dominated 20th century migration streams, worldwide migration has in fact been gender balanced for decades, particularly where families migrated together (Donato et al. 2011; Donato and Gabbacia 2015). Yet, gendered migration has changed; women have grown to dominate particular migration streams, often providing reproductive labor.

Donato and Gabbacia (2015:9) conceptualize gendered migration in terms of settings that are gendered balanced (47-53% women migrants), male-predominant (25-47% women migrants), heavily male-predominant (0-25% women migrants), female-predominant (53-75% women migrants), and heavily female-predominant (75-100% women migrants). Reproductive labor migration most likely occurs where the absolute number of migrants is relatively large, and women are predominant or heavily predominant. Using feminized flows to examine this form of migration leads to conservative estimates, since women migrating for reproductive labor may be less visible where men also migrate (i.e. for construction work).

Much research on gender and migration emphasizes the role played by family structures in shaping women's migration experiences (Gamburd 2004; Gu 2012; Hoang et al. 2012; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Nawyn 2010; Parreñas 2001a, 2005). Some scholarship considers the interplay between family, women's work, and migration patterns (Constable 1997; Espiritu 2003; Ghosh 2009; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila 1997; Kanaiapuni 2000; Lutz 2010).

Migration is not only gendered in terms of the unequal distribution of power and access amongst women and men within households; it is equally gendered at the level of state and market-based policy (Bakker and Gill 2003; Castles et al. 2014; Constable 1997; Chang 2000; Espiritu 2003; Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005; Kofman and Raghuram 2015). Economic liberalization and globalization has coincided with rising unemployment amongst men in many parts of the Global South (Constable 1997; Oishi 2005). This has helped propel women to migrate for work and marriage (Parreñas 2010; Piper and Roces 2003; Constable 1997, 2003; Kim 2010; Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Yang and Lu 2010).⁶ While financial security (including rising divorce rates in sending countries) primarily motivates feminized migration, research also points to the demand for “cheaper” labor and bride deficits in receiving countries (Cheng and Choo 2015; Constable 2003; Donato et al. 2011; Oishi 2005). These trends have led to a growing acceptance of women’s migration for service work and marriage (Cheng and Choo 2015; Choo 2013; Constable 2003; Donato et al. 2011; Parreñas 2005; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1999; Oishi 2005).

This shift has also likely been shaped by gendered bilateral migration policies, which may reflect preferences for certain workers. For instance, policies in the U.S., Canada, and Japan attract nurses and are gendered in outcome, even if not explicitly recruiting women (Ghosh 2009). To meet the growing demand for reproductive labor some governments have actively recruited or exported migrant women’s labor, while others have restricted it (Choo 2013; Constable 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994 4; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). For instance, governments have stimulated or deterred women marriage migrants (e.g. South Korea; Singapore) and domestic workers (Choo 2013; Oishi 2005; Yeoh and Lin 2012). These policies – often racialized and sexualized – are driven by assumptions about the relative desirability of different women (Constable 1997; Constable 2009; Heyzer et al. 1994; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005).

Bilateral agreements encourage, limit or ban women's migration within Asia (Bakker and Gill 2003; Castles et al. 2014; Constable 1997; Chang 2000; Cheng 2004; Cheng 2006; Espiritu 2003; Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005; Lan 2008; Momsen 2003). During the latter part of the 20th century, women's migration within Asia grew (Cheng 2004; Heyzer et al. 1994; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005; Shah 2004). While women migrants continue to migrate as dependents, for study, or for work in professional or manufacturing jobs, by the end of the 20th century, a significant number migrated for reproductive labor (Constable 1997; Cheng 2004; Heyzer et al. 1994; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). According to Castles et al. (2014:9) "...this feminization of migration primarily reflects the increasing flows of Asian women working as care workers and domestic servants." Choo and Cheng (2015) note, in addition to this, marriage migration has been particularly prominent in Asia.

Women migrating from poorer parts of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia to wealthier countries in East, Southeast, and West Asia typically meet reproductive needs not covered by nationals, whether through employment or marriage. Although internal migrants are not captured by our data, they play a role in this work (Choo 2013; Constable 1997; Hoang et al. 2012; Momsen 2003; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005). The experiences of migrant reproductive workers underscore the unequal distribution of care by class (Hoang et al. 2012; Parreñas 2005). These migration patterns also reflect power inequities amongst nation-states within the Global South (Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Oishi 2005; Yamanaka and Piper 2005). Some Asian countries have emerged as major sources of feminized reproductive labor, others have adopted labor importation policies, and a few are both sending and receiving poles (Castles et al. 2004; Cheng 1996; Constable 1997; Espiritu 2003; Heyzer et al. 1994; Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). Because receiving countries typically control migration quotas, sending

countries have limited bargaining power with host governments. These power dynamics can manifest through abuses to migrant domestic workers and marriage migrants (Choo 2013; Cheng 2004; Oishi 2005). To mitigate these effects - particularly in the case of domestic work - some sending countries have restricted who migrates and under what terms (Constable 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005).

West Asian Gulf States like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar and the UAE have been major destination countries for domestic workers (Castles et al. 2014; Cheng 1996; Oishi 2005), as have been Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea (Cheng 1996; Lan 2008; Hoang et al. 2012; Oishi 2005). Japan has been a more mixed case, as a restricted receiving country that has loosened its migration policy over time (Oishi 2005; Heyzer et al. 1994; Cheng 1996; Cheng 2004). Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan have also been destination countries for marriage migrants (Choo 2013; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005). Many more countries within Southeast and South Asia have exported women's reproductive labor. For instance, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka have been major sending countries (Gamburd 2000; Hoang et al. 2012; Lan 2008; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). Both Malaysia and Thailand have been destination and sending countries (Cheng 2004; Espiritu 2003; Heyzer et al. 1994; Kofman and Raghuram 2012; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). We briefly summarize these trends below.

Migration to West Asia

West Asian oil-rich countries have been major destination countries for men and women from South and Southeast Asia (Constable 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005; Shah 2004). Following the 1970s oil-boom, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) encouraged migration by "low-skilled" construction workers and "high-skilled" workers in energy and finance, typically men (Malit and Youha 2013; Momsen 2003; Castles and Miller

2009; Oishi 2005). Growing wealth and a new culture of conspicuous consumption simultaneously generated a demand for migrant domestic workers (Oishi 2005), unusually co-existing with low native women's labor force participation (Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005). While during the 1970s, immigrants were typically from poorer countries in West Asia, oil-rich West Asian nations started encouraging migration from South and Southeast Asia (Lan 2008; Oishi 2005). By the 1980s and 1990s, migrants were primarily from the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh (Gamburd 2000; Oishi 2005). While India and Pakistan also sent migrants, to protect domestic workers from vulnerabilities, South Asian governments restricted women's independent migration through arguably paternalistic gender-specific migration bans (Heyzer et al. 1994; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005; Shah 2004).⁷

West Asian countries have actively encouraged migration from Southeast Asia, where governments placed fewer restrictions on women's migration. In fact, faced with high domestic unemployment, the Philippine government established a labor export policy in 1974 to encourage overseas employment and respond to the demand for "cheap" care labor in the Gulf (Asis 2006; Chang 2000; Constable 1997; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005; Opiniano 2004). Despite brief bans on migration for domestic work in the 1980s, the Philippines has been the primary source of migrant domestic labor to West Asia (Constable 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). Indonesia has also promoted overseas employment, though requiring women migrants to be at least 22 (Cheng 2004; Oishi 2005; Shah 2004).

Migration to East and Southeast Asia

Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea have been major destination countries for domestic workers, entertainment workers, and marriage migrants in the latter part of the 20th century (Constable 1997; Cheng 2004; Choo 2013; Kim 2010; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005). Filipina

domestic workers were particularly sought after in Hong Kong and Taiwan due to native women's increased labor force participation (Constable 1997; Cheng 2004). Racialized assumptions about the undesirability of local Chinese domestic workers made Filipinas particularly popular through the 1980s, with growing focus on Thai and Indonesian domestic workers in the 1990s (Constable 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005). Yet, Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi women were restricted from entering Hong Kong because of negative racialized stereotypes (Constable 1997; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005).

Despite having historically restricted the inflow of migrants from Southeast Asia, in 1992 Taiwan encouraged domestic worker migration and by 1998 was the second most popular receiving country after Saudi Arabia (Cheng 2006; Heyzer et al. 1994; Lan 2008, Oishi 2005). Women emigrants to Taiwan were primarily from the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam and typically migrated for domestic service or marriage (Cheng 2004, 2006; Lan 2008; Heyzer et al. 1994). While the number of Vietnamese women migrating to Taiwan increased notably in the 1990s, migration flows remained largely men-dominated (Hoang et al. 2012).

Singapore has attracted migrants from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Sri Lanka (Heyzer et al. 1994; Hoang 2012; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). In the 1960s, Singapore only recruited domestic workers from Malaysia but by 1978 had established a foreign domestic worker scheme; women from the Philippines, Sri Lanka and India could migrate as domestic workers (Yeoh and Khoo 1998). As the demand for care increased in the 1990s, women from Indonesia, Myanmar and Thailand also migrated to Singapore as domestic workers (Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). More recently Singapore has also permitted marriage migration albeit with

restrictions (Yeoh and Lin 2012). These trends coincided with the Indonesian government's labor export strategy (Hoang et al. 2012; Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005).

Within Southeast Asia, Malaysia has been a particularly prominent destination country (Hoang 2012; Heyzer et al. 1994; Kofman and Raghuram 2012; Momsen 2003). In the 1980s it signed agreements with Indonesia and the Philippines, selectively permitting domestic worker migration (Chin 1998, 2013; Oishi 2005). However, Bangladeshi, Thai and Vietnamese women also migrated to Malaysia, often for domestic workers (Hoang 2012; Oishi 2005).

Having been a major sending country until the 1980s, South Korea has emerged as an important destination for marriage migrants and domestic workers from East and South East Asia (Cheng and Choo 2015; Choo 2013; Lan 2008; Kim 2010; Oishi 2005). Cheng (2010) and Choo (2013) also highlight Filipina migrant streams to South Korea for entertainment work. Despite labor shortages, the Japanese government historically prohibited "unskilled" migrants from entering the country (Oishi 2005). Even after relaxing migration regulations in 1990, Japan encouraged only Peruvians and Brazilians of Japanese descent to migrate to meet 'unskilled' labor demands – (Oishi 2005). However, in 1997 the government established an agreement with the Philippines allowing migrant domestic workers to enter Japan (Oishi 2005). Japan has also accepted migrant entertainers and marriage migrants (Lan 2008; Kim 2010; Oishi 2005; Parreñas 2010b).

METHODS

We draw our data from the 2011 World Bank *Global Bilateral Migrant Stock Database*. This database contains gender-disaggregated migrant stock data, presented in country-by-country matrices. It reports how many people from a given country of origin are residing in corresponding destination countries, excluding refugees.⁸ Spanning the period 1960-2000 for

233 countries, this is the first ever database of its kind to provide a complete and comparable global picture of the migrant stock population over the second half of the 20th century (Özden et al. 2011).

Using this bilateral stock data, we calculated gender-disaggregated migration flows between sending and receiving countries in the Asian Subcontinent. We used the flows-from-stock methodology (Abel 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Abel and Sander 2014) to estimate dyadic migration flows using the sequential migrant stock tables produced by the World Bank. To accurately generate migration flows, we combined World Bank stock data with United Nations data on births, deaths and total population for countries in West Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia.⁹ We also accounted for the costs of migration, typically determined by distance, efficiency of transportation, and economic and social capital/structures like migrant networks (Palloni et al. 2001; Massey and García-España, 1987). Drawing upon existing studies of migration flows, we used geographic distance between country capitals as a proxy for migration costs (Abel 201b).¹⁰ After harmonizing these data sources, we calculated migration flows using the *migest* R package (Abel 2013a). We combined dyadic migrant stock data, with demographic and distance data, to estimate the minimum number of migrant transitions (i.e. flows) needed to meet the changes reflected in two subsequent 10-year stock tables. Testing for methodological accuracy, before producing our flows we successfully replicated Abel's (2013b) estimations of total (i.e. men and women combined) migration flows for each decade. The few minor discrepancies between the two sets of estimates are likely due to differences in demographic data coupled with slight differences in our dataset.¹¹

Having replicated Abel's estimations, we focused on the subset of Asian countries most involved in migration during this period. We produced four different gender-disaggregated

country-by-country migration flow sociomatrices for 1960-2000. These weighted matrices contain cells that reflect the volume of migration flows between a given origin-destination country dyad. In choosing sub-regional categories within Asia, we drew upon Abel and Sander (2014). We coded countries into sub-regions based on a combination of World Bank and UN country classifications,¹² as well as our own discretion. We produced four circular plots, or *circos* (Zhang, Meltzer, and Davis, 2013) visual representations of our migration flows matrices. We use the sociomatrices to identify key receiving countries, next presenting the key sources of women's migration to those countries over time. We are particularly interested in showing where migration has been feminized, as this may help signal where care migration is strongest.

A key strength of our data is that it allows us to consider migration within Asia, which other migration data does not represent as effectively. Our models however reflect a conservative bias – we are likely undercounting temporary migrants, and undercounting naturalized migrants who are reported as citizens. Yet comparative flow data tends to include only wealthy countries, and we believe a more global perspective on women's migration is crucial. We therefore map over time: a) women's absolute migration flows; and b) women's migration numbers relative to men's for select countries.

FINDINGS

Women's Migration Flows within Asia: A Descriptive Overview

Our *circos* plots [Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4] map women's migration flows in absolute numbers, over time, focused on key sending and receiving countries. They visually represent gendered migration dynamics, indicating where most women are migrating from and to, and how these migration trends have changed from 1960-2000.¹³ The width of the flows indicates the volume of movement between the beginning and end year (i.e. 1960-1970). For example one of

the largest bands in Figure 1 is between India and Pakistan. The gap between the country name and the flow for India represents flows from Pakistan to India. If we look at India, we see most outflows were going to Sri Lanka and Bangladesh; most inflows were coming from Pakistan and Nepal. These figures show women's migration flows in absolute terms.

Figure 1, which plots migration flows from 1960 to 1970, shows that the major flows of women migrants during this period were between nearby countries, and may reflect family migration – Pakistan and India, Hong Kong and China, India and Bangladesh, Hong Kong and Malaysia, and India and Sri Lanka.¹⁴ During this period, women's migration appears fairly confined to particular flows of neighboring countries. Figure 2 plots migration flows from 1970 to 1980, showing that when East (Bangladesh) and West Pakistan split, the majority of women's migration in Asia was dominated by migration between India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, although China also sent many women to Hong Kong. While women's migration occurs primarily between neighboring countries, we begin to see larger flows of women migrants from the wider region to Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

[Figures One and Two About Here]

Figure 3, which plots migration flows from 1980 to 1990, indicates much greater diversification in women's migration flows. While there are still large flows within particular sub-regions, (i.e. across Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan), women's flows across sub-regions increase significantly. For example, we see notable flows from India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka to Saudi Arabia. There are also growing migrant flows within Southeast Asia, as from Indonesia to Malaysia, and Malaysia to Singapore. Finally, Figure 4 plots migration flows from 1990 to 2000, which shows even more diverse patterns. Here, the largest flows are from Indonesia to Malaysia, from Malaysia to Singapore, from Nepal to India, from the Philippines to

Taiwan, Japan, and Saudi Arabia, and from China to Hong Kong and Japan. Over time, Figures 1-4 show that women's migration has changed, becoming increasingly diversified.

[Figures Three and Four About Here]

Within West Asia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE are particularly critical receiving countries. In East and Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, and Japan are central destination countries for migrant women at varied points. While we cannot directly link this diversification in migration to reproductive labor, studies on these countries suggest that these trends reflect increased demand for women's reproductive labor, as domestic workers and care migrants, marriage migrants, and entertainers, including sex workers (Choo 2013; Cheng and Choo 2015; Kim 2010; Kofman and Raghuram 2015; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005; Piper and Roces 2003).

Figures 1-4 reveal that emigrants to Saudi Arabia are primarily Filipina, Indonesian, and Sri Lankan. Migration from the Philippines and Indonesia has dramatically increased over time. Major sending countries to the UAE include the Philippines, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Oman, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. However until the 1990s flows from India were by far the greatest. Within East Asia, Figures 1-4 show us that Hong Kong became a magnet for women emigrants from Malaysia, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand.¹⁵ Although women's migration flows dropped in the 1980s, they increased steadily in other decades. Taiwan attracted migration most visibly from the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia and China. Figures 1-4 indicate that most women immigrants to Singapore come from Bangladesh, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka and India. Most women migrate to Malaysia from Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore

and Thailand. Women's migration flows to Japan have most noticeably been from South Korea, China, the Philippines, and Indonesia.

We next look at selected receiving countries that receive large numbers of women migrants, to focus on feminized flows to those countries. These figures show the percent of women among all migrants from a sending location to the receiving country, to explore whether and how migration has been feminized in those contexts over time. We use Donato and Gabbacia's (2015:9) conceptualization of gendered migration – examining gendered balanced (47-53% women migrants), male-predominant (25-47% women migrants), heavily male-predominant (0-25% women migrants), female-predominant (53-75% women migrants), and heavily female-predominant (75-100% women migrants) flows. While reproductive labor migration might be obscured where both men and women migrate for different types of work (e.g., construction for men, domestic work for women), these feminized flows still provide us with another perspective into women's changing migration flows beyond the absolute numbers represented in Figures 1-4.

Women's Migration to West Asia

Consistent with Figures 1-4, Figure 5 shows migration flows to Saudi Arabia from the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka were largely dominated by women – or feminized – during 1960-2000 (see also Appendix Table A1 for absolute numbers). Given that women in these countries typically migrate for reproductive labor, these findings – broadly consistent with existing studies – point to a growing demand for reproductive labor. For the Philippines, these trends mirror the dramatic increase in absolute women flows to Saudi depicted in Figures 1-4. This likely reflects the impact of the 1974 Philippines Overseas Employment Program. Despite the ban on Filipino migration to Saudi from 1982-1987 after the beheading of Filipino workers,

women's migration flows did not decrease until the 1990s. While flows became more feminized in the 1990s (i.e. heavily women predominant), women's absolute migration flows decreased, which suggests an overall decrease in the number of Filipinas migrating to Saudi, rather than a decline in the demand for reproductive labor. Women's migration flows from Indonesia to Saudi were also heavily feminized from 1970-2000, despite having been men predominant in the 1960s (see Figure 5). These flows were almost completely feminized by the 1990s, despite corresponding declines in absolute flows. Although some Indonesian women migrated to Saudi in the 1970s (Hoang et al. 2012), the heavily women predominant flows prior to the government's labor export strategy (1989-1993) suggests that the strategy responded to existing flows of care migration.

[Figure Five About Here]

As Figure 4 reveals, women's flows to Saudi Arabia from India and Bangladesh increased from 1980 to 2000. In neither case were flows feminized; likely a reflection of the effects of the Indian and Bangladeshi government's restrictions on women's migration, particularly for domestic work, as well as large numbers of Indian and Bangladeshi male migrants. However, by the 1990s, despite the decrease in absolute women's flows (Table A1), women became more dominant as a proportion of total migration flows, suggesting that despite migration bans, women migrated to West Asia to work as nurses and domestic workers (Oishi 2005). In the case of Pakistan, the slight increase in women's flows between 1980 and 2000 (Table A1) coincided with a shift towards feminization. The latter likely represents the lifting of the ban on women's independent migration in the early 1990s, increased family migration for "high skilled" workers, decreases in men's migration, or a combination of these factors. Except from 1970 to 1980, migration flows from Sri Lanka have been consistently heavily women

predominant or women predominant. As shown in Figures 1-4 women's flows increased steadily (see also Table A1). This is unsurprising given the government's relatively open position on overseas migration, and indicates a growing demand for Sri Lankan careworkers (Gamburd 2000; 2004).

Figure 6 demonstrates that gendered migration flows to the United Arab Emirates are different from those to Saudi, despite the regional proximity of these two Gulf States (see also Table A2 for absolute numbers). Migration flows to the UAE from the Philippines and India were consistently heavily men predominant throughout the period, despite the large flows of women from India apparent in Figures 1-4. Migrant flows to the UAE from Oman, Bangladesh and Indonesia –also not feminized – oscillate between heavily men predominant and men predominant. This is likely due to the overwhelming demand for migrant construction and professional workers, typically men, to the UAE. Yet, women may also be migrating for care; Bangladesh and Indonesia have been major sources of care labor (Heyzer et al. 1994; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). Women's migration flows for these countries were greatest in the 1970s, with decreased flows linked to governmental migration bans (Table A2). Contrary to existing literature (Gamburd 2000), women's migration flows from Sri Lanka were heavily men predominant in the 1960s. While they became men predominant, and gender balanced in subsequent periods, the flows of Sri Lankan women migrating to the UAE decreased after the 1970s. The demand for construction work may obscure the extent to which women may be migrating, often in large numbers, to provide care to wealthier families in other countries. Pakistani migration flows in the 1970s and 1980s included more women than men, an unexpected trend given the governments' prohibition of migration for domestic work, and may signal family migration.

[Figure Six About Here]

Women's Migration to East and Southeast Asia

Figure 7 shows Hong Kong draws migrant women from several South East Asian countries; we know from the literature these flows reflect a demand for reproductive labor (also see Table A3). However, contrary to what studies suggest, Philippine-Hong Kong migration flows were not feminized in the 1960s and 1970s. Although Filipina migration flows were heaviest in the 1970s, Filipino men were also migrating. Migration flows became women predominant and heavy women predominant only in the 1980s and 1990s. Migration flows from Indonesia to Hong Kong were women predominant in the 1990s, suggesting a demand for Indonesian reproductive labor. (Hoang 2001; Kim 2010; Lan 2008; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). The men predominant flows in the 1960s and 1970s are unsurprising given Indonesia's labor export strategy began in the 1980s. Following this, Indonesia-Hong Kong flows increased in the 1990s (Table A3); they became women predominant/heavy women predominant, underscoring the demand for care and the promotion of care labor migration by the Indonesia government. Thai emigration flows, which had been either heavily men predominant or men predominant, became heavily women predominant in the 1990s. While consistent with accounts about newfound preferences for Thai domestic workers at this time (Oishi 2005), the decrease in Thai women's absolute migration flows to Hong Kong in the same period is surprising (see Table A3). Despite the disillusionment with Chinese migrant domestic workers (Constable 1997; Heyzer et al. 1994), most migration flows from China were women predominant, with the exception of gender-balanced flows in the 1970s. However, these may capture women migrating for a variety of reasons.

[Figure Seven About Here]

Figure 8, containing data for Taiwan in the 1980s and 1990s only, shows that consistent with existing literature, migration flows from the Philippines became feminized (women predominant) in the 1990s. Not only were women's absolute flows to Taiwan high (see also Table A4), but as Figure Eight shows, there was a notable increase in women's proportional flows between the 1980s and 1990s. We know most Filipina women migrated to Taiwan to meet growing demands for care, particularly in the 1990s (Cheng 2004; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005). Migrant women flows from Indonesia were also high (Table A4) and feminized in the 1990s, becoming heavily women predominant after having been gender balanced. We also find that Vietnam-Taiwan flows, while not as high as others (Table A4) were intensely feminized (heavily women predominant) in the 1990s. These migration flows reflect a demand for domestic workers and wives, which Vietnamese women met during this period (Hoang et al. 2012; Kim 2010; Oishi 2005). Interestingly, while Hoang et al. (2012) note that Vietnamese migration was heavily dominated by men, we find that even prior to the 1990s migration flows were gender balanced. Taiwanese migration flows may also reflect strategies of importing marriage migrants (Lan 2008).

[Figure Eight About Here]

As Figure 9 indicates, Singapore has been a magnet for women migrants from several countries between 1960-2000 (see also Table A5). Migration flows from Malaysia, women predominant for the total period under review, are unsurprising, since Singapore has been recruiting Malaysian domestic workers since the 1960s (Cheng 2006; Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). In the case of Indonesia, migration flows were high throughout the period reviewed and heavily women predominant in the 1960s and 1970s. While consistent with research on Indonesian migrant care-workers in Singapore (Lan 2008), it is surprising that the most

feminized migration flows predated the government's 1989 labor export strategy. After 1980, flows were women predominant but not heavily so.

[Figure Nine About Here]

Studies suggest women's migration from Thailand to Singapore began only in the 1990s and was motivated by the demand for carework (Oishi 2005). We find, however, that migration flows had been borderline women predominant/heavily women predominant since the 1970s, and women's absolute migration flows were lower when most feminized (see also Table A5). Conversely, while Heyzer et al. (1994) and Oishi (2005) note that Filipina migration for domestic work began in the 1980s we find migration flows to Singapore became women predominant only in the 1990s. Migration flows to Singapore from China and Hong Kong – particularly understudied– were high and women predominant for several decades. While these flows were historically for care, they may have been for other purposes as well (Oishi 2005). The Bangladeshi case is interesting; not typically associated with the export of women's labor, migration to Singapore was fully feminized in the 1990s (i.e. 100 percent women flows as per Figure 9). This is particularly notable given there was only a four year window in the 1990s when Bangladeshi migration for domestic work was not banned. Yet, Indian migration to Singapore is men predominant throughout the period.

Women's migration flows to Malaysia (Figure 10) come most visibly from Pakistan, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India,¹⁶ and Indonesia (Table A6). Most of these flows, however, are not feminized, despite absolute increases at different points during 1960-2000 (Table A6). By the 1990s, Pakistani and Bangladeshi migration are men predominant, due to the demand for service and factory workers (Chin 2013; Rudnick 2009, Sultana 2008). While flows from Pakistan, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand are

feminized for some of the period reviewed, with the exception of Thailand, even these flows are more commonly men predominant. Given we know Thai women were emigrating to Malaysia for domestic work, this is unsurprising. However, with bilateral agreements promoting emigration for domestic work between Malaysia, and Indonesia and the Philippines, non-feminized Indonesian and Filipina flows suggest Indonesian and Filipino men are also migrating at high rates. Given the explicit promotion of women's migration by the Philippine and Indonesian governments, it is interesting that men from these countries are also emigrating in large numbers, perhaps due to rising wages in Malaysia (Kofman and Raghuram 2015).

[Figure Ten About Here]

Women's migration flows to South Korea are more complex, and appear to be very variable over time; this reflects the relatively small numbers of migrants (Table A7). South Korea may be less likely to import domestic workers and care workers, like Japan (Cheng and Choo 2015). Research suggests marriage migrants may come from China (including Korean Chinese), Vietnam, Japan, and the Philippines (Choo 2013; Seol 2006). Our data does suggest a relatively high proportion of women migrants from Japan in the 1980s that may include ethnic Korean marriage migrants. Filipino migration vacillates over this period. While we do not see *women predominant* migration from China or Vietnam, this may suggest that men from these nations are migrating for other types of work during the same period, or that women are migrating as dependents. While Indonesian migration was relatively high in the 1960s and 1980s, it was lower during the 1980s, and is men predominant by the 1990s.

[Figure Eleven About Here]

Despite having restricted migration, we find Japan has received women migrants from South Korea, China, Brazil, and Indonesia throughout this period, although South Korean

migration has become masculinized (Figure 12; Table A8). Relatively gender balanced migration may signal family migration. However, the heavily women predominant emigration flows from the Philippines between 1980-2000 contrast with earlier men predominant and gender balanced flows. These heavy women predominant flows might suggest that even before the 1997 bilateral Japan-Philippine agreement there was a demand for Filipina domestic workers, as well as Filipina entertainment workers. Given that this agreement led only to a small increase in Filipina domestic worker migrants, these flows may be explained by Filipina migration for entertainment work. Migration from the Philippines, in addition to streams from China and South Korea might also be for marriage (Oishi 2005). Conversely, it appears that the majority of ethnic Japanese returning from South America were not women. Peruvian and Brazilian migration flows were either gender balanced or men predominant, suggesting many women were migrating with families, rather than alone for domestic work.

[Figure Eleven About Here]

DISCUSSION

Our findings support, complicate and deepen existing knowledge about reproductive labor migration within Asia. Women's absolute migration flows can be high even when these flows are not feminized, and Figures 1-4 allow us to examine how these absolute flows within Asia have changed over time. At the same time, analyzing feminized flows of migrants to key Asian countries through Figures 5-11 help us develop a more nuanced understanding of changes in gendered migration over time. Both measures of gendered migration give us insight into the relative supply and demand for women migrants, who may migrate for a variety of reasons. Yet taken together, they also support findings from more fine-grained and qualitative studies of the growth of migrant reproductive labor in this region.

Our data suggest that intra-regional migration flows are shaped both by proximity, and by state-to-state bilateral agreements and policies that help sustain the transnational care economy in Asia. While our data does not allow for causal analysis, we find that state efforts to regulate, ban or encourage women's migration – often with direct implications for reproductive labor migrants – have helped to shape and sustain a political economy of care within the region. While these bilateral policies have influenced the demand and supply of migrant reproductive labor, they have also been limited in their efforts to regulate and promote these movements.

Within West Asia, we see this dynamic play out in the very different patterns in women's migration to Saudi and the UAE. In the case of Saudi, our findings support what we would expect from the literature – that migration flows from the Philippines and Indonesia are high and feminized. Yet, this remains the case even irrespective of state migration policies. For instance, even after the bans on migration to Saudi in the 1990s, the volume of Filipina emigrant flows remained high and feminized. Many studies have emphasized these bans, but perhaps overstate their efficacy. In Indonesia, we see high and intensely feminized women migration flows between 1970-2000, prior to the implementation of the Indonesian government's labor export strategy. Most studies suggest that the latter was the marker of notable levels of women's migration. However our findings suggest that for some of the period under review, Indonesian flows to Saudi were more feminized than those from the Philippines (Figure 5). These findings support studies acknowledging that Indonesia might surpass the Philippines as the world's largest exporter of reproductive labor (Hoang et al. 2012). They may further suggest that Indonesia's labor export strategy followed, rather than led, women's migration flows. In contrast to Saudi, migration flows to the UAE from countries like the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia were not feminized. This was true despite labor export strategies adopted by sending

countries. This does not necessarily imply the absence of a demand for care, but more likely, the predominance of men's migration for other types of work.

We find that migration flows to Hong Kong from the Philippines were not feminized as early as we would expect, Thai-Hong Kong flows decreased surprisingly, and Chinese-Hong Kong flows remain feminized despite accounts about the declining demand for ethnic Chinese care workers (Constable 1997). Also of interest is that that flows from Indonesia to Hong Kong in the 1990s were women predominant, consistent with existing studies (Oishi 2005). However, comparing Figures 5 and 7, we find these flows to be less intensely feminized than the equivalent flows to Saudi for the same time period. This suggests that there was greater demand for Indonesia men's migrant labor in Hong Kong than Saudi; unpacking how men and women migrants are differently drawn to specific receiving contexts deserves more attention.

Migration patterns to Taiwan on the other hand mirrored accounts about the increasing demand for care and domestic work, as well as marriage migrants (Lan 2008). The absolute flow of women migrants increased from all sending countries; flows were also increasingly feminized for all cases except Thailand. Interestingly, however, as shown in Figure 8, Indonesian flows were heavy women predominant when those from the Philippines were not. Although absolute flows of women (Table A4) reveal there were more Filipina than Indonesian women migrating to Taiwan in both the 1980s and 1990s, these numbers are comparable. As Indonesia is much larger than the Philippines, this suggests that Filipina migrants are in particularly high demand.

The case of Singapore highlights the limitations of bilateral migration agreements, as seen in the slow feminization of migration flows from the Philippines, and the higher volumes of migrant women from Bangladesh despite Bangladeshi labor migration bans. Similarly, Japan's encouragement of domestic worker migration in the 1990s had limited effects. While bilateral

migration policies encourage and discourage migrant flows – at times effectively stopping the flow of women migrants – they are not all powerful.

CONCLUSION

Using data that allows us to report gender-disaggregated trends in migration from 1960-2000 (Abel and Sander 2014; Abel 2013b; Özden et al. 2011), we have considered how women's migration within Asia changed over time, and whether mapping these changes gives us new insights into reproductive labor migration. Focusing on intra-regional movements within Asia, we found interesting variations in women's migration flows both among countries and over time, which suggest a growing demand for women's reproductive labor. Mapping these intra-regional flows deepens our comprehension of women's migration within the Global South.

The political economy of reproductive labor migration complicates our understanding of the most important motivators of these movements. While poverty is often identified as the primary motivator of feminized migration, women's migration is not necessarily strongest from the poorest countries, and indeed in some poor countries women's migration has been limited. As the Filipino and Bangladeshi cases suggest, financial need alone does not motivate women's migration. Bangladesh, for example, is a much poorer nation, but has restricted women's migration and not relied on remittances (Donato et al. 2011; Oishi 2005). Similarly, while native women's employment is often considered the reason for the rising demand for domestic workers, Saudi Arabia's demand reflects the fact that amongst the upper class domestic and other care-workers are status symbols (Oishi 2005). Migration is then shaped by state and social control, as well as cultural gendered assumptions.

Our approach, focusing on comprehensive quantitative data over four decades, allows us to map women's migration in the Global South to address gaps in our understanding of these

movements previously identified in the literature (Donato et al. 2011; Kofman and Raghuram 2012). Our key limitation, however, is that our data does not include “reason for migration” or occupation, and we recognize that without direct measures, understanding reproductive labor migration is uncertain and “messy” (Parreñas 2010). We cannot directly analyze marriage migration or migration to engage in paid reproductive labor – or compare these migrants to women migrating for other reasons. The data also likely underestimate short-term or undocumented migrants, making our estimates of feminized migration conservative. While recognizing the challenges associated with data collection of this kind, and the fact that different methodologies may yield disparate conclusions (Hoang et al. 2012), our work builds on existing ethnographic research that provides richer understandings of particular migrant flows. By highlighting the remarkable diversification of women’s migration over the last fifty years, we hope to further encourage both qualitative and quantitative researchers to explore under-studied gendered migration flows more closely.

While much of the literature on migration – including for care – focuses on migration to wealthy countries in the Global North, we argue that focusing on the Global South provides new perspectives. We find strong evidence that within Asia, transnational migration has become increasingly feminized and diversified since the 1960s. Our analyses allow us to capture the complexity and tremendous variety in feminized migration, from a larger set of Global South countries than has previously been considered, suggesting that reproductive labor migration has become deeply embedded in many Asian nations’ migration regimes.

Endnotes

¹ Marriage migrants also migrate as dependents of foreign husbands.

² Globalization has reordered countries, making “Global South” or “North” less meaningful (Kofman and Raghuram 2015); we focus on Asian countries of varied income levels, including middle-income countries like Malaysia (Kofman and Raghuram 2012).

³ Migrant men also carry out reproductive labor, including domestic work, sex work, and care, but are “far less involved in paid reproductive labour” (Kofman and Raghuram 2015, p. 6).

⁴ Kofman and Raghuram (2015) note highly educated women may also migrate for marriage to gain legal and employment status.

⁵ We use a reproductive labor framework, which includes migration for entertainment work, sex work, domestic or care work, nursing and marriage (Lan 2008; Kofman and Raghuram 2015). This builds upon Parreñas’ (2001) “international division of reproductive labor” frame.

⁶ Factors beyond financial security also motivate marriage migration (Kim 2010).

⁷ Bangladesh, India and Pakistan imposed minimum ages on domestic worker migration to the Gulf with varied success (Momsen 2003; Oishi 2005). Pakistan banned women’s migration in 1988, permitting it in the 1990s. India imposed bans to Kuwait during 1991-2001. Bangladesh imposed a variety of bans from 1976-1991, reinstating bans in 1995 and lifting them only in about 2003 for domestic workers and nurses (Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005). Sri Lanka did not authorize migration bans (Heyzer et al. 1994; Oishi 2005; Shah 2004).

⁸ Refugees, and those who are stateless, and born at sea formed a separate category in the World Bank Dataset. Given our focus, we did not include this category in our dataset.

⁹ These identify net migration flows based on demographic data (considering population, deaths and births). We used U.N. 2012 demographic data available at:

<http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/index.htm>. Taiwan data (unavailable from UN) was obtained at <http://www.ris.gov.tw/en/web/ris3-english/home>.

¹⁰ Data was obtained from a *Centre d’Etudes Prospective et d’Informations Internationales* (CEPII) database. It contains a country-by-country socio-matrix with distance in kilometers between all capital cities. Available at http://www.cepii.fr/PDF_PUB/wp/2011/wp2011-25.pdf

¹¹ While Abel uses 2010 UN Population data, we use 2012 UN population data (UNPA2013). We also include two countries Abel excludes (Kiribati and Antigua and Barbuda); Abel includes Netherlands Antilles, which we exclude.

¹² Data available from: <http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-and-lending-groups>; and <http://esa.un.org/wpp/excel-Data/country-Classification.pdf>

¹³ We used the actual country name in Figures 1-4, as possible. The remaining countries are indicated as follows: BANGLAD.=Bangladesh, UAE=United Arab Emirates, SAU=Saudi Arabia, QA=Qatar, OM=Oman, KW=Kuwait, VIET.=Vietnam, THAI.=Thailand, SINGAP.=Singapore, PHILIPP.=Philippines, INDON.=Indonesia, TWN=Taiwan, and JAP.=Japan.

¹⁴ Our dataset excludes refugees, but Figures 1 and 2 suggest refugee populations may still be included.

¹⁵ Singapore appears to, in the 1990s, send women to Hong Kong. We would expect that these women are primarily skilled migrants.

¹⁶ We expect increased women’s flows post-2000 given the recent intensification of nurse migration from India (Kofman and Raghuram 2012).

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