

Filipinos Come to Korea

Modern Korean Society

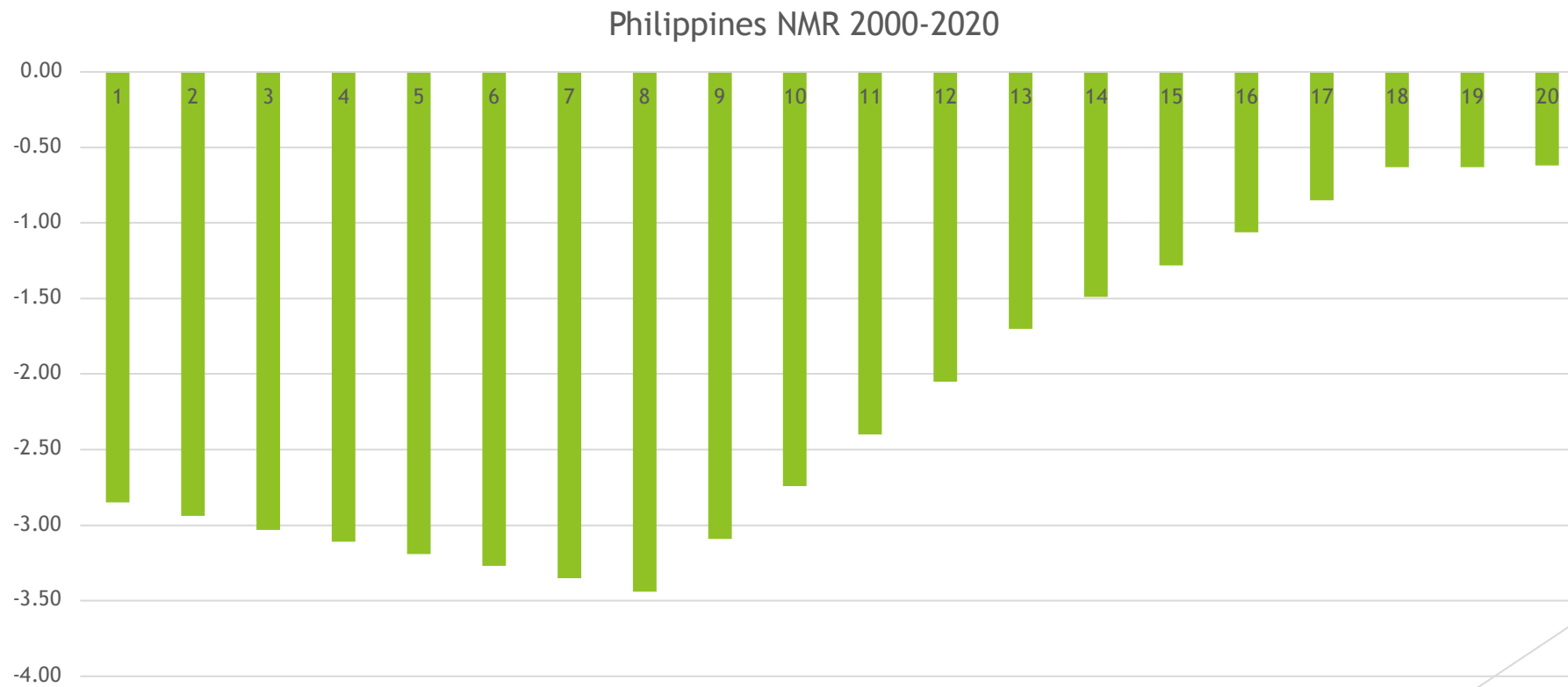
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Why Filipinos Migrate

- ▶ During the Marcos regime 1961-1986 (martial law 1972-1981) the Philippines' economy stagnated
 - ▶ Good English language education
 - ▶ While there was economic growth at times, it was unequally distributed and during the 1980s the Philippines began to stagnate
 - ▶ Much corruption (Marco regime often called a “kleptocracy” and “crony capitalism”)
 - ▶ Per capita income no more than a tenth of the rapidly industrializing East Asian countries like Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore
- ▶ By the 1970s the Philippines had developed a “culture of migration” through which migrants support their families in the Philippines through remittances

Philippines Net Migration Rate 2000-2020 (in-migration minus out-migration)



Filipinos Abroad

- ▶ 1. USA (immigrants) 4 million (including mixed heritage)
- ▶ 2. Saudi Arabia 1 mil (labor migrants, both skilled and semiskilled)
- ▶ 3. United Arab Emirates 700,000 (labor migrants)
- ▶ 4. Japan 325,000 (72% women who came as entertainers, and about half have permanent residence because they married Japanese)
- ▶ 9. Singapore 200,000 (60% professional and skilled workers, the rest domestic workers)
- ▶ 11. Hong Kong 186,000 (mostly female domestic workers)
- ▶ 15. Taiwan 80,000 (mostly factory workers, with some female marriage migrants)
- ▶ 16. South Korea 50,000 (mostly factory workers, many illegal, with some female marriage migrants)

Things to Notice

- ▶ Filipino migration to different countries is not the same
- ▶ Questions to ask:
 - ▶ Can Filipino migrants establish permanent residence in their country of migration?
 - ▶ Can Filipino migrants bring their families with them?
 - ▶ Is there gender balance in the migration to these countries?
 - ▶ What kinds of jobs are available in which countries, and who takes them?
 - ▶ Professional jobs (US, Saudi Arabia, Singapore)
 - ▶ Construction (Saudi Arabia, UAE)
 - ▶ Factory jobs (US, Taiwan, South Korea)
 - ▶ Domestic Labor (UAE, Singapore, Hong Kong)

A Study in Contrasts

▶ United States

- ▶ Filipinos can enter as immigrants eligible for permanent residence (Green Card), and can acquire citizenship (many Filipinos have citizenship)
- ▶ Visas are limited and difficult to get, so that it tends to be the better off and better educated Filipinos who can do this
- ▶ Some Filipinas marry US soldiers and can immigrate that way, and later bring family members through “family unification” visas (limited by President Trump)
- ▶ (Canada has a “live-in caregiver program”)

▶ Hong Kong

- ▶ Most migrants are Filipinas migrating as domestic help (cooking, cleaning, childcare), and they often live with their employers
 - ▶ Filipina domestic helpers are prized because they are well-educated and speak English
- ▶ Domestic help migrants cannot bring family members, and can only stay in Hong Kong during their labor contract
- ▶ While marriage to a Hong Kong man would allow them to stay, this is rare as Hong Kong men prefer to marry Hong Kong or mainland Chinese women

Japan

- ▶ Japanese visa system was tweaked so that Filipinas could come to Japan on entertainer visas (kōgyō biza 興行ビザ)
 - ▶ Recruited women often had little choice where they were assigned
 - ▶ Even when they worked in bars the girls had to demonstrate training as performers
 - ▶ Professional Filipino folk dancers were instructors, promoters, and licensing examiners
 - ▶ Girls from poor rural and urban communities in the Philippines who were recruited and trained as entertainers were almost local celebrities
 - ▶ Promoters often gave them cash to shop for clothes and makeup before going to Japan
- ▶ A significant number of Filipina entertainers met and married Japanese men
- ▶ Crackdown on visas in 2005 because of concern about Filipinas overstaying their visas (and/or marrying Japanese?)

Loyda Del Rosario

- ▶ Loyda Del Rosario had experience elsewhere before coming to Korea
 - ▶ Her initial work seems to have been domestic labor in Singapore (à la Hong Kong) and with her husband left in the Philippines her marriage broke down
- ▶ She opted to leave “legal servitude” (short-term contractual domestic labor) for “free illegality” (Choo page 21)
 - ▶ Met her new husband, Victor, working in a factory in Taiwan
 - ▶ Victor followed cousins working in Korea and overstayed a tourist visa while Loyda joined him to work in the factory
 - ▶ They have been together there for 10 years working without a permit
 - ▶ Live within a vibrant ethnic community
- ▶ She has weak ties left with the Philippines
 - ▶ Contrast between long-term migrants in US (about which there is more research) with short-term “circular migrants” in Asia

Filipina Migration Mental Figurations

- ▶ Triangular imaginary of Philippines, America, and developed Asian countries shows migration not simply “home and abroad”
- ▶ Philippines Story
 - ▶ Grow up in poverty, see examples of successful migrants building houses etc., develops a “dream of migration” as a dutiful and responsible daughter
- ▶ America Dream
 - ▶ US where Filipino elites go for education, and celebrities visit
 - ▶ Many have relatives in the US
 - ▶ “colonial mentality” where example of US labor migration of the middle classes are models of upward mobility through migration that can be emulated
- ▶ No “Japan Dream” or “Korea Dream”
 - ▶ Naturalization, while possible in Japan and Korea, is difficult and less accepted than in US
 - ▶ While some see Korea as a “god-given opportunity” Japan or Korea tend to be “alternative Americas” where Filipinos get stuck along the way with their ultimate dream partially, but not wholly, fulfilled

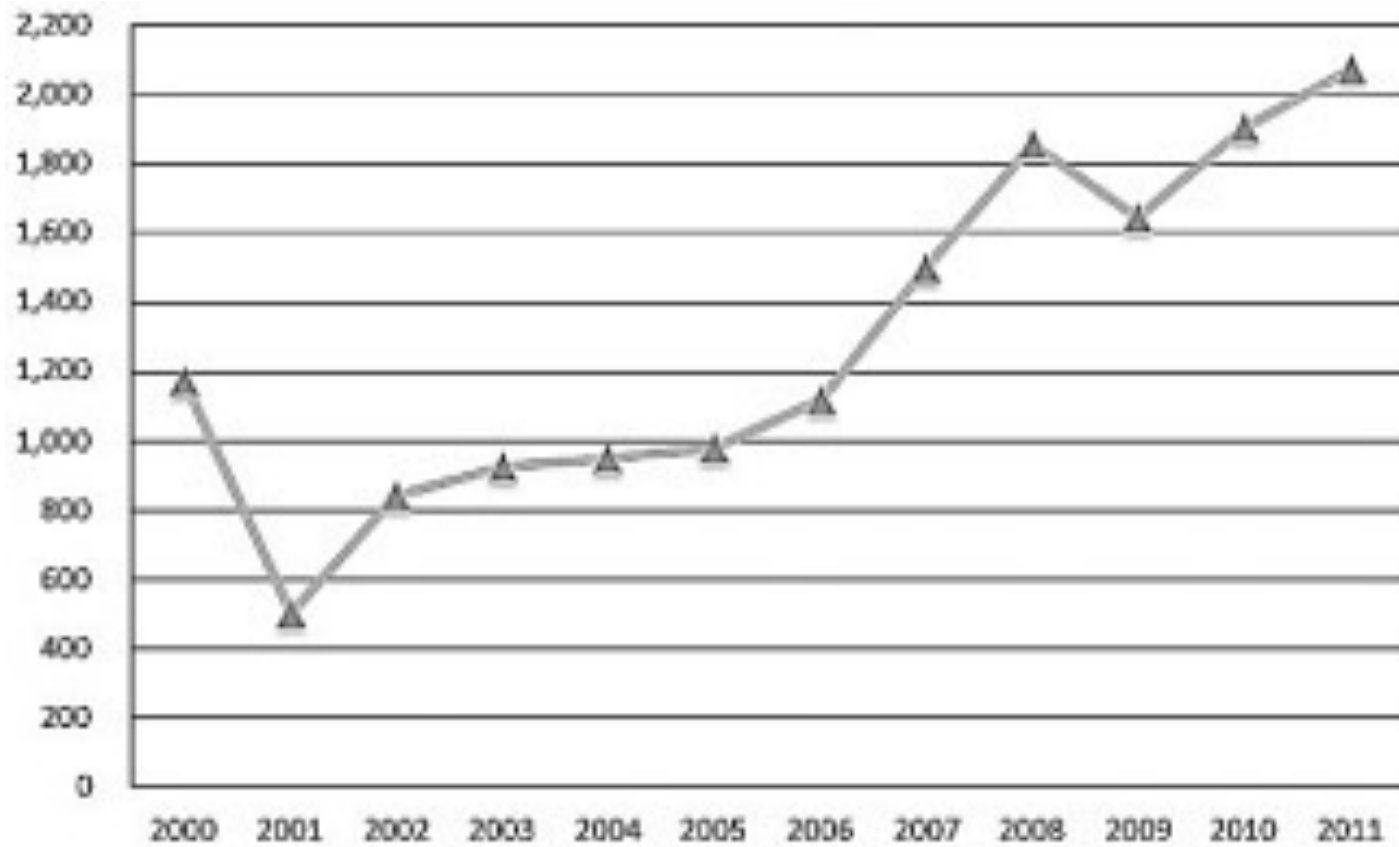
Migrant Labor in Korea

- ▶ Before 1994 most migrant laborers were “illegals” who overstayed tourist visas
- ▶ 1994 “Industrial Trainee System” (研修生)
 - ▶ Came under short-term contracts
 - ▶ As “trainees” not subject to Korean minimum wage
 - ▶ Many left this system to work “illegally” and by the late 1990s 2/3 of the migrant work force were undocumented
- ▶ 2004 “Employment Permit System”
 - ▶ Minimal labor rights (workers’ compensation, severance pay, minimum wage), but still short-term contracts (3 years with possible 2-year renewal) unaccompanied by spouses or children, and no freedom to change employer
 - ▶ Undocumented workers still came in through pre-existing contacts

Filipina Marriage Migration to Korea

- ▶ Unification Church
 - ▶ Church believe in world peace through intermarriage
 - ▶ It arranges “international marriages” between Koreans and Japanese as well as Koreans and Filipinas and other nationalities
 - ▶ Korean men make a short marriage tour to the Philippines, they meet and decide
- ▶ Spousal visa
 - ▶ Need two years of annual renewal in which proof of cohabitation is required
 - ▶ After that naturalization is possible
- ▶ Korean men who seek wives in poorer countries are often the least marriageable (older, widowers, divorcees, poorly educated, or rural), but not always
 - ▶ Korean gendered division of labor

Filipina Marriage Migrants to Korea



Multicultural Families

- ▶ 2006 marriage migrants and their families constituted as a distinct cultural category in South Korea's "multicultural families" (tamunhwa kajok)
 - ▶ Concern that the children of migrant spouses would not be "Korean" enough
 - ▶ Educational programs from migrant wives (Korean language and cooking as well as job training)
 - ▶ South Korean students taught to value the cultural diversity of migrants (with limited effect)
- ▶ Hierarchy of nations and languages
 - ▶ English and Chinese-speaking mothers often preserve use of their native language with their children
 - ▶ Those who speak less prestigious languages (like Tagalog) tend to avoid using it with their children
- ▶ Note, however, that Choo argues that Filipinas married to Koreans are not necessarily that different from others (p34)

Filipino Entertainment Culture

- ▶ Filipino folk dance began in the early 20th century Philippines as a cultural awareness movement based at universities
- ▶ Beginning in the 1960s these dance troupes began to entertain US troops in the Philippines, Saigon, Okinawa, Guam, Hawaii and the Japanese mainland
 - ▶ By the 1970s some were hired by cruise ships and hotels

Japanese Hostess Bars

- ▶ Filipinos seeking to go abroad because of deteriorating economy coincided with Japanese shortage of women willing to work in hostess bars
 - ▶ Hostess bars combine stigmatized work in the sex industry with glamorous and elite performance traditions linked to *showbiz*
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Hostess Bar Duties

- ▶ Manual duties of cleaning and serving
- ▶ Drink-back system (girls often had quotas)
 - ▶ Woman received ¥100 for each drink a customer bought
- ▶ Request system (men could ask certain women to sit with them)
- ▶ Hostesses and customers might talk during the day on the phone
- ▶ Dōhan 同伴 (accompanying a customer on a date and coming back to the bar-sometimes with quotas)
 - ▶ Women avoid sukebei (rakes) and favor majime (serious) men
 - ▶ Shopping could introduce girls to a world of glamour and brand name consumption
- ▶ Combination of financial pressure, but also intimate and caretaking relationship with male customers→in some cases leading to dating, romance, and love

Emotional Labor

- ▶ Process of managing feelings and expressions to fulfill the emotional requirements of a job or role
 - ▶ Usually face-to-face interaction (as in hospitality industry)
 - ▶ Worker needs to produce a certain emotional states in customer or role partner (happiness, relaxation, respect, feeling of success, feeling of masculinity or femininity)
 - ▶ Employer (or other powerful person like mother-in-law) exercises a degree of control through training and supervision
- ▶ Stereotyped female jobs and roles that require friendliness, deference, empathy, etc. are jobs that require emotional labor
- ▶ Women in Japanese hostess clubs must make men feel welcome, successful, masculine, and desirable (partly by acting feminine and deferential)—this would be considered emotional labor
- ▶ (if they marry in Japan or Korea) wives and daughters-in-law must manage the emotions of their husbands and mothers-in-law, so this, too, would be considered emotional labor

Cecile—Second-best Choice

- ▶ Experience working in hostess bars in Japan when young
- ▶ Since “over thirty” brokers would not send her to Japan, but assigned her to a camp town club in Korea
 - ▶ Compared to Japan she was more isolated from Korean society since camp towns are shunned by most Koreans as “zones of exception” (Aihwa Ong *Neoliberalism as Exception*)
 - ▶ Some of the girls marry US GI’s but Cecile didn’t want to
 - ▶ Clubs usually segregate clientele by ethnicity to minimize fights
 - ▶ Note page 41 assessment of Gis

Koreans' Encounters with Migrants

- ▶ South Koreans work with migrants
 - ▶ Advocacy, education, and integration activities that shape what migrant encounter means for everyday South Koreans
 - ▶ Help shape migrants' rights and citizenship
- ▶ Key question to focus on:
 - ▶ How do encounters with “the foreigner” solve distinctive problems for various groups of South Koreans, and shape their own citizenship projects
 - ▶ For example, Lieba Faier, in writing about rural Japanese encounters with Filipinas, argues that these encounters provide for them an experience of “cosmopolitanism” that is now an important element of Japanese self-definitions of their modernity. Does something similar happen in Korea?

Men of the Developmental Generation who work with migrants

- ▶ Do Hansuk
 - ▶ Came out of the democratization movement and sympathized with the *minjung* (the downtrodden)
 - ▶ In the seventies this was the farmers, in the 1980s it was the workers, after the Asian financial crisis it became irregular workers and migrants
 - ▶ These groups need to be supported “for development and progress”
 - ▶ Pastor Choi similar—when the most vulnerable do well all do well
- ▶ “Vicious cycle of migration”
 - ▶ Make money abroad, but when go back home there is no work so they remigrate
- ▶ Many want to avoid the social problems of migration that they see in the US and Europe
 - ▶ Will anti-Korea sentiment arise?
- ▶ The desire for Korea to take a high place in the “hierarchy of nations” underlies much of this discourse

Women of the Developmental Generation who Work with Migrants

- ▶ **Acutely aware of gender limitations**
 - ▶ Sacrificed themselves for brothers by going straight to factories (rather than furthering their education)
 - ▶ Upon marriage “militarized modernity” relegated women to being “rational, modern household managers” and reproducers of the next generation
- ▶ **In later life volunteered to escape domesticity**
 - ▶ Middle-class women “ideal national subjects” as wives of “salarymen”, but lose sense of purpose once children are grown (or become bored and isolated by domesticity)
 - ▶ For example, Myounghwa sympathized with the displacement of patrilocal marriage p57, and others sympathized with arranged marriages
 - ▶ By volunteering they became **material guardians** able to empathize with migrants as women, and teach them how to become Korean mothers
 - ▶ Control “people below” (ignorant husbands and mothers-in-law) by showing them middle-class ways
 - ▶ Protect migrants from official upper-class meddlers
 - ▶ 사랑하면 알게 되고, 알면 보이나니, 그때 보이는 것은 전과 같지 않으리라
 - ▶ Maternal guardians challenge their own gender-based subordination while upholding racial and class hierarchies and heteronormative family by teaching how to properly (and in a modern fashion) raise the next generation

Cosmopolitan Desires

- ▶ Older Koreans were not able to travel abroad for leisure (you needed to get an exit permit in the 1970s and 1980s), so migration was understood as a tough decision
 - ▶ Top graduate students allowed to go abroad for study, and other government-condoned travel included travel to the Middle East on construction projects, or migration to South America as an immigrant
- ▶ After the 1990s globalization (seggyehwa) was prioritized, including travel and education in foreign languages to allow Korea to take its place in the world as a cosmopolitan trading nation
 - ▶ Elites were able to go abroad to study English and acquire qualifications for top-level jobs
 - ▶ Less advantaged young people also longed for this upper-class cosmopolitanism
 - ▶ (cf. spoon theory, teacher saying “you want to be someone who eats with a fork and a knife”)
- ▶ This generation often rejected the “conservative” culture of social movements
 - ▶ Hierarchical structure, regulation of women’s bodies and sexuality, demand for “serious” devotion
 - ▶ They sought *jaemi* (fun)—Jesook Song (*On Your Own*) has theorized this as “jouissance” and an alternative to the standard, narrow path to success
 - ▶ good grades, prestigious university, corporate job, marriage, buying a house and raising children—many don’t want to marry