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Translocal subjectivities within households 'in flux' in Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper draws upon fieldwork conducted in the migrant-sending area of Ponorogo, Indonesia between 2014 and 2016. It incorporates the concept of 'global householding' (Douglass 2014, 314) while also using a translocal perspective to recognise both the mobilities and immobilities associated with migration. A translocal approach as explicated by Brickell and Datta (2011, 10) rejects the privileging of transnational mobility, and is equally as interested in local-local connections. In places such as Ponorogo, where migration and remittances are especially critical to the socioeconomic fabric of the community, immobile actors are often beholden to the same translocal subjectivities experienced by their mobile counterparts. Hence this paper focuses upon the issue of translocality as a means to reconceptualise notions of 'movers' and 'stayers' as a more fluid continuum that is inherently linked to the 'in flux' nature of households in migrant-sending areas such as Ponorogo. Using three cases studies of husband/wife dyads, we contemplate how a translocal perspective elucidates the ways in which men and women's migration trajectories – both real and imagined, local and overseas – are constantly renegotiated.

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Executive Summary

Drawing upon fieldwork conducted in the migrant-sending area of Ponorogo, Indonesia between 2014 and 2016, this paper adopts a translocal perspective which recognizes both the mobilities and immobilities associated with migration. To the translocal approach, we incorporate the concept of 'global householding' (Douglass 2014, 314) to 'capture the formation and continuity of the household as an ongoing, always unfolding process involving interconnected relationships and actions within and beyond the household as a social institution and physical space'. In places such as Ponorogo, where migration and remittances are especially critical to the socioeconomic fabric of the community, immobile actors are often beholden to the same translocal subjectivities experienced by their mobile counterparts. Hence this paper focuses upon the issue of translocality as a means to reconceptualise notions of 'movers' and 'stayers' as a more fluid continuum that is inherently linked to the 'in flux' nature of households in migrant-sending areas such as Ponorogo.

Using three cases studies of husband/wife dyads, we contemplate how a translocal perspective elucidates the ways in which politics of mobility are animated in households, where men and women's migration trajectories – both real and imagined, local and overseas – are constantly renegotiated. We have paid closer attention to the transnational mobility of individuals, local-local journeys, and translocal imaginaries that underpin individuals' hopes and expectations for the future, as well as their current realities. We show that international migration regimes not only work to exclude and immobilise migrants and would-be-migrants; rather migrants can also be active in these politics and leverage these 'embodied politics of identity and difference' (Blunt 2007, 685) into forms of capital that can then be converted in other forms of capital (Van Hear 2014; Kaufmann et al. 2004).

The 'in flux' nature of migrant households is predicated on negotiated forms of motility that are at once influenced by responsibilities within the immediate family, costs of migration and predicated by migration regimes. In particular, we look at gendered capital – where women typically face lower financial barriers to overseas labour migration compared to men due to the migration infrastructure and international labour markets which favour women's mobility – and how it intersects with the translocal subjectivities and relative (im)mobility of household members. Through this multi-layered lens, we shift away from the narrow focus on individual household members' migratory journeys, to show how migrants' journeys – both near and far – involve a complex balance of what is 'best for the family' while working within the possibilities and constraints migration creates for households in Indonesia.

Introduction

> 'There are many people working in Korea nowadays, but those are the ones that are already economically well off. They studied for a long time and waited for at least a year, or even longer [before departing]. It costs at least Rp. 35 million [around US$3000]. So rich people will become richer by going to work there. If I wanted to go to Korea, I cannot afford the school fee, waiting time and the airplane ticket. It's difficult for people who don't have money like that…' (Sumin)

Sumin, in his early forties, from East Java's Ponorogo region lamented his lot as a man, who unlike some of his more economically successful neighbours, cannot afford to migrate to South Korea. Indonesian male migrants in Korea command a monthly wage of around Rp. 15 to 20 million (approximately US$1,320 to US$1,760). Not surprisingly, Korea is among a range of lucrative migrant destinations for those who can afford the upfront payment for language training and placement fees.

Research regarding international labour migration has revealed gendered pathways for financing migration that are intricately linked to global demands for labour (Lindquist 2010; Hoang and Yeoh 2015). The high demand for domestic workers and caregivers in more affluent nations in Asia and the Middle East, in part acts as an impetus for the high outflows of female labour from Indonesia, and neighbouring countries such as the Philippines. As such, in the Indonesian context, women's overseas migration typically requires little, if no, upfront fees (Lindquist 2010). Instead, women's migration costs are usually recouped through a series of salary deductions once they are employed in the destination country (Platt et al. 2013). In contrast, men's migration often requires significant amounts of upfront payment, which as Sumin demonstrated, can work to prevent men, especially those with limited access to capital, from migrating.

Drawing upon fieldwork conducted in the migrant-sending area of Ponorogo, Indonesia between 2014 and 2016, this paper adopts a translocal perspective which recognizes both the mobilities and immobilities associated with migration. In places such as Ponorogo, where migration and remittances are especially critical to the socioeconomic fabric of the community, immobile actors are often beholden to the same translocal subjectivities experienced by their mobile counterparts. Many of these actors are closely related to migrants, dependent upon their income, or have assumed their household responsibilities in order that they may migrate. As such, immobile translocal subjects may also be individuals who 'talk, speculate, and fantasize about certain places,' or otherwise 'remember experiences of familiar places' (Sun 2006, 240). Perspectives such as these 'remind us that translocal spaces are constantly co-produced by mobile and immobile populations' (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013, 375). This conception is reinforced through our fieldwork in Ponorogo, which examines and illustrates how the varied translocal sites experienced by 'mobile' and 'immobile' (albeit often aspiring migrants) actors alike are influenced by factors of class and gender (Brickell and Datta 2011) that in turn intersect with the demands of global migration regimes.

A translocal approach as explicated by Brickell and Datta (2011, 10) rejects the privileging of transnational mobility, and is equally as interested in local-local connections. This includes the decisions that go on around moving and takes into account 'a continuum of spaces and places related to migration', encompassing those spaces and places that are real and imagined. Hence, examining household dynamics in the context of migration is particularly important given the emphasis placed upon the household as a cooperative unit through the lens of new economics of labour migration (Carling 2002). Rejecting this idea of households as bound in place and as a 'natural steady state' (Hannam et al. 2006, 3), we expand upon Huijsmans' (2014) notion of 'in flux' households to study how intra-household dynamics are constantly changing in relation to individuals' and households' mobility and translocal subjectivities.

This working paper first outlines literature relating to mobilities, particularly as it intersects with the politics of human mobility. Next it focuses upon the issue of translocality as a means to reconceptualise notions of 'movers' and 'stayers' as a more fluid continuum that is inherently linked to the 'in flux' nature of households in migrant-sending areas such as Ponorogo. The paper then describes the methods adopted, the field site and social context before delving into three cases studies of husband/wife dyads to further explicate how roles as 'movers' and 'stayers' are renegotiated in relation to the households' needs and the broader institutional politics of mobility. Finally, we contemplate how a translocal perspective elucidates the ways in which politics of mobility are animated in households, where men and women's migration trajectories – both real and imagined, local and overseas – are constantly renegotiated. Such a perspective, we argue, offers a more nuanced understanding of migration through its attention to both the local and transnational scale. It allows us to grasp the real consequences of the global politics of mobility for individuals' and households' capacity to utilise migration as a livelihood strategy and fulfil their present and future plans.

Labour Migration and the Politics of Mobility

Mobility is not just about corporeal travel (Sheller 2014) although in the context of labour migration, it is often the idea of persons traversing national/international borders that resonates most strongly. Human mobility is clearly linked to broader discourses of power and has been recognised as an uneven and differentiated resource 'to which not everyone has an equal relationship' (Skeggs 2004, 45).

Low-skilled labour migrants are subject to these politics of mobility (and immobility). As Blunt (2007, 686) notes differentiated mobility is associated with the legal infrastructures that underpin migrants' (im)mobility – infrastructures which are 'inseparably bound up with the embodied politics of difference'. These legal regimes and 'embedded politics of difference', are, of course, not just operational at national borders. There is ample evidence to highlight that once mobilised many labour migrants may then be subsequently immobilised by: labour migration regimes that explicitly restrict their movements at destination (Mahdavi 2016; Rigg 2015); the power asymmetry between employers and employees (see Yeoh and Huang 2010);

and life events such as giving birth 'out of place' which bring issues of citizenship and the right to mobility to the fore (Mahdavi 2016; Constable 2014).

Attention to the politics of mobility has yielded important insights, particularly with regards to how migrant labour from the Global South is appropriated within broader demands for global labour, including gendered streams of labour such as domestic work, and construction work (Platt et al. 2016; Lindquist 2010). Yet, these insights do not reveal how the potential for movement occurs for migrants and other movers. To address this issue Kaufmann et al. (2004) proposes the concept of motility. Motility is a helpful analytic for moving beyond dichotomous conceptions of mobile and immobile populations, while allowing for an exploration of the social and geopolitical factors that affect people's ability to move. Kaufmann et al. (2004, 750) see motility as underpinned by three aspects: 'access to different forms and degrees of mobility' (including options and conditions for movement); 'competence to recognize and make use of access' (including an individual's physical capability and skills); and importantly 'appropriation of a particular choice, including the option of non-action'. These three elements show the link between individuals' own capacity for movement and the broader structural factors that shape mobility. Therefore, motility is deeply linked 'to social, cultural, economic and political processes and structures within which mobility is embedded and enacted' yet it also sees mobility as occurring within 'vertical and horizontal dimensions of social positions' (Kaufmann et al. 2004, 750). In short, motility – a form of movement capital – explains the link between spatial and social mobility –.

An important notion related to motility as movement capital is van Hear's (2014) idea that movement is reliant upon a broad range of capital in the Bourdieusian sense of the word. He (2014, 111) notes that based on increasingly stringent and securitised transnational borders:

> 'It follows that access to more prosperous and desirable destinations is limited to better resourced migrants. International migration therefore requires the accumulation or possession of amounts of economic, social, cultural, and other forms of capital in various combinations.'

Bearing this in mind, we can see how factors such as gender, age and class all influence an individual's capacity for movement, particularly across international borders. Hence this paper adopts an intersectional approach that is cognisant of the politics of mobility, particularly as institutional migration rules and regulations are informed by 'embodied politics of difference' which run along lines of '"race", ethnicity, class, sexuality, age and difference' (Blunt 2007, 685). For instance, a woman who has no access to economic capital, can benefit from her gender as a distinct form of capital. Demands for feminised labour in various migrant destinations allow women to defer costs of migration until they begin working in the destination country.

As we show in this paper, this 'gendered capital' that an individual possesses can then be converted into other forms of capital in the forms of social and economic remittances and so on. Importantly, an individual's motility can have 'flow-on' benefits working to mobilise other members of the household. Extending the discussions of capital by Van Hear (2014) and Kaufmann et al. (2004), we highlight that the conversion of capital over time and beyond an individual's motility is illustrative of how migrants may work to fulfil broader household plans

– plans that are constantly evolving due to the dynamic internal and external forces that affect households (Huijsmans 2014).

Translocality: Reconceptualising 'movers' and 'stayers' within 'in flux' households

The emphasis on human mobility and immobility 'as forms of [unevenly] distributed power' (Sheller 2014, 2) has been a valuable contribution to understanding people's differentiated capacity for movement (or motility), particularly within the context of highly regulated migration regimes. However, examining conditions under which transnational migration can be enabled (and thwarted) means it is easy to categorise people as either a 'mover' or 'stayer'. As such the emphasis on the mobile/immobile dichotomy in the transnational sphere leads us to overlook mobility which occurs on a more local scale (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013; Brickell and Datta 2011).

The notion of translocality is a useful analytic which departs from framing individuals along a relatively binary depiction of human mobility. Appadurai (1991; 1996) was among the first to draw attention to the notion of translocality. In doing so, Appadurai challenged traditional understandings of globalisation as mediated by the nation-state. Instead, Appadurai argued that localities, which are not bound by space and place, give rise to 'a whole myriad of connections to the global through marriage ties, work, businesses, leisure, the media and the circulation of people' (Tan and Yeoh 2011, 41). In outlining these connections, Appadurai (1995, 216) noted how such localities 'belong in one sense to particular nation-states but are, from another point of view, what we might call translocalities'.

Translocality has since been understood to encompass a range of definitions, including relations that 'extend beyond the village community' (Tenhunen 2011, 416), spaces 'in which new forms of (post)national identity are constituted' (Mandaville 2002, 204), and the experience of 'being identified with more than one location' (Oakes and Schein 2006, xiii). However, common to these conceptualizations is Appadurai's acknowledgement that translocality challenges the limitations and boundaries often implicit in area studies through capturing 'complex social-spatial interactions in a holistic, actor-oriented and multi-dimensional understanding' (Greiner and Sakdapolrak 2013, 376). Indeed, individuals' trajectories and the movement and flows that these entail, often involves 'multiple locations, positions and belongings, in a situated and contextual way' (Anthias 2008, 6).

Keeping these descriptions in mind, translocality is perhaps most succinctly synthesized by Brickell and Datta (2011, 4) as 'groundedness during movement'. They go on to note how these movements can include those that are not transnational and argue that focusing on local-local movements allows us to bring 'into view the movements of those supposedly "immobile" groups who do not fall under the rubric of a transnational migrant' (ibid). Importantly, according to Brickell and Datta, this exploration of transnational, as well as more localised movements, not only includes actual journeys, but can also involve imagined travels.

Translocality therefore 'enables a more transnational as well as more local-based lens' through which to examine individuals' lives as they play out 'across multiple but also fractured and interrelated social spaces of different types' (Anthias 2013, 131). Linking to Brickell and Datta's (2011) definition, we can see that the 'fractured and interrelated social spaces' Anthias describes can also constitute both real and imagined journeys.

The translocal approach focuses on not only the transnational migrant but also those deemed relatively immobile. To the translocal approach, we incorporate the concept of 'global householding' (Douglass 2014, 314) to 'capture the formation and continuity of the household as an ongoing, always unfolding process involving interconnected relationships and actions within and beyond the household as a social institution and physical space'. Viewing households as in flux (Huijsmans 2014) allows us to consider the translocality of people while considering how their movement intersects with politics of mobility/immobility. The idea of households as inherently cooperative units driven by a collective strategy for livelihood has been challenged by more recent accounts which show that motivations for migration are not always altruistic, and that migration may strain or dissolve relationships within the household (Brickell 2014; Brickell and Platt 2015; Locke, Thi Thanh Tam, and Thi Ngan Hoa 2014).

Taking up this notion of translocality we aim to provide a more nuanced view of 'movers' and 'stayers' by exploring the migration trajectories of husband/wife dyads in Ponorogo, a key migrant-sending area of Indonesia. As a result of the feminisation of labour migration in Southeast Asia, there has been a tendency to construct 'left-behind' family members, particularly spouses, as immobile in relation to their transnationally mobile partner (Parreñas 2005; Chang 2016). As Sumin's quote demonstrated, the politics of mobility do place constraints upon aspiring mobile actors, and as we show in this paper, these constraints often intersect with class, gender, and age. Yet, by taking a translocal approach to households' migration trajectories, we can explore the dynamic shifts in inter-dependencies as men and women constantly renegotiate their roles as 'movers' and 'stayers' in relation to a broader institutional politics of mobility (Whitehead and Kabeer 2001).

Methods

This paper is based upon a qualitative study in 2015 which drew upon a 2013 quantitative household survey and a previous round of qualitative interviews conducted in early 2014. The household survey involved 1,203 households in Ponorogo's Sampung sub-district, which included 903 migrant and 300 non-migrant households. Migrants were defined as anyone who used to live in the household and left to go away from the village/town/city in the past 10 years, and with duration of absence, or intended absence, of at least 3 months. It is important to note that following our qualitative studies conducted in 2014, and 2015, it became clear that many people categorised as 'non-migrant' in the survey had actually migrated elsewhere over ten years ago (and thus fell outside the criteria adopted by the study). This point underscores the high degree of mobility experienced by people in Ponorogo more generally and the culture of *merantau* (literally to wander about) which refers to

common practices of circular migration (Lindquist 2009; Khoo et al. 2015). Being cognisant of the relative mobility of 'non-migrants' is consistent with a translocal approach, which recognises that even the 'immobile' navigate local-local journeys (Brickell and Datta 2011).

From the original survey sample, we conducted 24 paired interviews (N=48) with both responsible adults and youths in order to gain a clearer sense of household dynamics and the intersection with migration. Up to three follow up visits were conducted with selected households from this sample frame of 24 households over the subsequent year. These interviews were conducted with a household representative who was in a position to discuss the household's strategies with regards to migration and/or livelihoods. We conducted parallel interviews with both responsible adults and young people (aged 15-24) in order to gain deeper insights into the ways in which social categories such as gender, class and age coalesce in the migration process. The following variables were taken into consideration when selecting the respondents: (1) Gender (gender mix of both responsible adults and youth aspirants); (2) Migration status of parent(s) (non-migrant, current migrant, returned migrant); and (3) Socio-economic status (low, middle and high).

Gendered access to migration

The Indonesian regency of Ponorogo is located in East Java province (Figure 1). In 2011 and 2012, more than 16,000 people from Ponorogo (3 per cent of the population aged 15-64) went overseas for work (BPS Kabupaten Ponorogo 2013). From the household survey we observed that households had slightly more female than male migrants, and female migrants tended to go to international destinations (Table 1). The higher representation of females in international migration is unsurprising as their mobility is facilitated by the debt-financed migration model where fees for their migration are typically only deducted once they start working at destination (Khoo et al. 2015). In this survey 63 per cent of female international migrants reported not paying any money prior to migration. In contrast, only 4 per cent of male migrants avoided upfront costs to access international destinations. Otherwise, as Sumin revealed at the beginning of this paper, men had to accumulate sufficient capital to migrate overseas. Men relied mainly on savings (43 per cent), sale of assets (16 per cent) and borrowing from family member (12 per cent) to finance their migration, with only 18 per cent obtaining an advance from their employers or agents to access international destinations.

Figure 1: Relative Position of Ponorogo in Java Island

Table 1: Migration Destination by Gender

Sex	Migration Status		
	Internal	International	Total
Male	295 (25%)	279 (24%)	574 (49%)
Female	251 (22%)	337 (29%)	588 (51%)
Total	415 (47%)	382 (53%)	1,162 (100%)

Source: Migrating out of Poverty RPC Indonesian household survey dataset

Table 2: International Migrant Destination by Country

International Destination by Country	International Migrants (%)	
	Male	Female
Hong Kong	<1	22
Malaysia	75	10
Saudi Arabia	<1	14
Singapore	<1	15
Taiwan	6	29
South Korea	10	<1
Others	8	10

Source: Migrating out of Poverty RPC Indonesian household survey dataset

Given the high costs of men's migration to select destinations, the majority of men who work outside Indonesia's borders tend to go to Malaysia where the average costs of migration (Rp.4.7m or US$360) are significantly lower due to its proximity to Indonesia. In contrast, Taiwan and South Korea promise higher salaries but average migration costs are exorbitant in comparison (Rp.19m or US$1,460 and Rp.26m US$1,980 respectively). The demand for women in filling the care gap in households in Asia and the Middle East (Table 2) helps explain why 90 per cent of female international migrants in our survey worked as domestic workers. As noted earlier, women entering into domestic workers pay little or no upfront fees, although they can undergo extensive salary deductions once they start working in the destination country (Platt et al. 2013).

Household Dynamics

To anchor our analysis of labour migration within the politics of mobility, three aspects of household dynamics within Ponorogo are noteworthy.

First, the state's gender ideology which was adopted at the beginning of the New Order period (1966-1998) depicted men and women as playing different and complementary roles. Under the 1974 Marriage Law, men have been designated as heads of household where they are expected to be breadwinners while women are confined to be housekeepers playing the roles

of wives and mothers in the household (Suryakusuma 2012). The institutionalised state ideology not only ignored the fact that women have long been contributing economically to the households, but also reinforced the subordinate role of women in households. Consequently, Lindquist (2009) observes that women's labour migration is contingent on their husbands and/or parents' approval, and women's mobility has been commonly associated with fears of 'abuse' while working overseas (see Jakarta Globe 2015). Yet the feminisation of labour migration over the last three decades in Indonesia – where women are as likely as men to migrate for work as seen in the household survey (Table 1) – has highlighted how state gender ideology does not adequately reflect the household gender dynamics in places such as Ponorogo. From the household survey, 54 per cent of self-identified household heads were female (although the female representation among household heads may be partly influenced by men's absence due to migration).

Second, the average household size is fairly small. Based on our household survey, non-migrant households had an average size of 3.6 while migrant households averaged 4.6. As highlighted by Khoo et al. (2014, 17), household size and dependency ratios have direct implications on the mobility/immobility of household members, 'as households grapple with the practical consequences of the absence of one or more of its members'.

Third, given the small household sizes, living as a nuclear family (or with an additional member such as a grandparent) is common. Therefore, while couples may continue to live with their extended family after marriage, the cultural ideal is to have one's own house to symbolise a couple's independence. Given this desire for independence, labour migration is often an economic strategy to build one's own house for the nuclear family. Hence it is unsurprising that 8 per cent of households in our survey reportedly directed remittances towards building houses and renovations.

We now turn to three distinct cases studies of husband-wife dyads with the view to explore how the politics of mobility work to create dynamic households, whereby roles as 'movers' and 'stayers' are 'in flux' and negotiated over time. Each case study investigates how husband and wife navigate gendered migration regimes to produce translocal imaginaries that animate the household and its members across time.

Gendered Capital and the Politics of Mobility

Fifty-year-old Mahi's family consists of his 46-year-old wife Hasna, and his two children, a 20-year-old son and a 14-year-old daughter. In 1998 Mahi left Ponorogo for South Korea where he worked in a fertilizer factory. The fees for his migration at that time were Rp. 2.4 million (US$212) which covered his transport and a further Rp. 200,000 (US$18) was required to obtain the necessary supporting documents. Mahi then underwent a 30 per cent salary deduction for the first eight months in Korea to repay the remaining migration costs.

After a two-year stint in South Korea, Mahi thought he had raised enough capital to build a new house. Yet when he returned to Indonesia in 2000 he found a different economic landscape – the Asian economic crisis of 1997 and the fall of President Suharto in 1998 had led to high degree of inflation – and hence he was only able to build a basic house. The inflationary pressure, along with the failure of his cow husbandry business meant that by 2004, Mahi and Hasna were in a position where migration again seemed the only viable option to get ahead. With two young children in their care, and based on Mahi's previous experience overseas, Mahi decided that he should be the one to migrate again. In this sense, Mahi's gendered capital as the male breadwinner predicated who should migrate. However, unlike when he migrated 6 years previously, Mahi no longer met the age criteria for South Korea. This constraint underscores how an individuals' motility is highly contingent upon access to a particular location and the labour market's willingness to appropriate specific aged and gendered bodies (Kaufmann et al. 2004). With little other option to earn a decent wage at home, he left for Malaysia where the barriers for Indonesians wishing to migrate are relatively few (Ananta and Arifin 2004, 15). Mahi subsequently worked on a palm oil plantation for a further two years, returning to Ponorogo in 2006.

While they were able to build their house and set up a few small agricultural ventures, the family again found themselves in financial difficulties in 2007 after Hasna's mother fell ill and needed to be hospitalized. With debt mounting due to medical costs, migration again became a way in which the family aimed to alleviate their financial strain. Mahi, again attempted to go overseas, this time seeking out Taiwan, which offered higher wages than his previous migration to Malaysia. However, he found that he again no longer met the age criteria. With his motility somewhat thwarted, and the need to repay the medical costs, the couple decided that Hasna would have to migrate. Hasna's migration in terms of finances was relatively easier on the family as she did not have to afford upfront costs before leaving Indonesia. Instead she paid back the migration costs via several months of salary deductions. Therefore, this time around, it was Hasna's gendered capital that was appropriated by the global labour market, and she subsequently migrated to Taiwan where there is a high demand for foreign domestic workers.

Hasna was reluctant to leave, especially with her mother in ill-health, but she felt there was little other option. Hasna's reluctance underscores an important point about the depiction of 'movers' and 'stayers', with the former typically celebrated as part of the new mobilities turn. Yet, as Huijsmans (2014, 294) points out, staying can indeed constitute its own 'form of agency'. However, for Hasna and her husband, her capacity for movement and ability to convert this into economic capital for the family shaped their decision that she should depart for Taiwan.

Shortly after Hasna left, her mother's health took a turn for the worse and she was hospitalised for an extended period. At this time Mahi navigated multiple roles inasmuch as he cared for the children, managed the farm and the households, and also spent time with Hasna's mother in the hospital. Just one month after Hasna departed, her mother passed away. Rather than tell Hasna about her mother's death while she was in Taiwan, Mahi decided to only reveal the news when she returned to the family home, reasoning that as she was still

under the debt deduction period of her work contract, Hasna was unable to take leave from her job. Mahi also worried about the news impacting on Hasna's capacity to work, reckoning it would make her miserable until she was able to seek leave. Therefore, in this sense, Hasna's gendered capital, as demanded by the global labour market which effectively allowed her to migrate to Taiwan, was also a source of her immobility at this point in her migration trajectory.

Upon her return, Hasna not only had to deal with the emotional difficulties and grief brought about by the loss of her mother in her absence, she also told us at a later date how it was difficult to adjust to feeling financially dependent upon Mahi again. In Taiwan she had earned her own money and had savings, whereas now she had to either request money or sell one of her chickens to access cash. Meanwhile, based on Mahi's account of financial management he highlighted that even though he managed the money in Hasna's absence, he would 'usually call her in Taiwan to ask for her permission to buy things'. He explained why he did so laughing that 'because I would be blamed if all the money is used up'. Yet, since returning home, she has been doing unpaid household work while Mahi has resumed the role of being the main breadwinner as the household mainly relies on income from agriculture. Hasna and Mahi's accounts of shifts in their own sense of financial autonomy and accountability illustrate how household and gender dynamics are constantly being remade throughout the course of migration and its wake.

The interchangeable role between Mahi and Hasna as a 'mover' or 'stayer' underscores how the politics of mobility intersects with the ways in which households become 'fully animated' (Douglass 2014, 313) both via migration, and in the migrant's absence. The family's situation also reflects how both internal and external household dynamics inform decisions about who migrates and when, and also how information can be withheld from other household members with the view of 'keeping them in place'.

These subtle, yet somewhat hidden changes to Mahi and Hasna's post-migration realities emphasise a transformation where migration has irrevocably altered their family dynamics and changed especially Hasna's perception of her role within the household. Thus as McKay (2006, 265) notes 'migration and mobility produce new subject positions…[to]…create both new subjective experiences of place and new subjectivities'. Yet it is important to note that despite at times differing interests, migration and the shift in household dynamics and roles it has entailed, have not ruptured the household or lead to the emergence of radically different goals on Mahi and Hasna's parts.

Translocal Aspirations and Actualised Mobilities

Eka was a 36-year-old woman with three children aged from one to 15 years old when we first met her in 2015. Over the past 15 years, Eka has migrated as a domestic worker on four separate occasions to three different destinations, including Malaysia, Saudi Arabia (two times) and Taiwan.

After her first husband left her when she was pregnant Eka embarked upon her first migration to Malaysia around 1999/2000. At that time she said her sole focus was on her immediate economic situation. She felt responsible for her child, but when she got to Malaysia she realised that the economic gains would be minimal:

> … the economy there is, how [to say]… Not good for earning… I wanted my child to have a good future later …[Ultimately I was] unpaid. Not even a single cent was I paid there [Malaysia]. So, I came back without bringing any money.

The notion of households as being cooperative or harmonious units (Douglass 2014; Brickell and Chant 2010) is immediately brought into question by Eka's case, where it was actually the rupturing of the household before giving birth to her son that necessitated her migration to Malaysia. Yet, her migration was what also led her to meet her future husband Adim, an Indonesian also working in Malaysia, with whom she ultimately formed a new household. In Malaysia without any money or means to support her journey back home, Adim paid for her ticket. Soon after they returned to Ponorogo, Adim's hometown, they married and Eka became pregnant with her second child, a girl. When their daughter was one and a half years old, Eka and her husband made the decision that she should migrate again, this time to Saudi Arabia. Unlike her first migration which was born distinctly out of the need for economic survival, her migration to Saudi was prompted by the desire to build a house and gain security. Even though her husband had paid work as a casual labourer, she noted how her migration was embedded in their aspirations for something more:

> We saw other people, our neighbours or whoever, they already had their own houses. I wanted a better [household] economy.

Eka's aspirations reflect the way lives and livelihoods are embedded in conditions of translocality: as people become more mobile, the 'symbolic and material quality of places are transformed' (Brickell and Datta 2011, 6; McKay 2006). While both Eka and Adim harboured these translocally inflected aspirations, ultimately their motility, was affected by politics of mobility. This was evident through Eka's recollection of the couple's attempt to migrate together. Upon Eka's return from Saudi Arabia, she and Adim, along with another married couple, went to the recruitment company with the aim to go Saudi Arabia. She said all four of them passed the medical checks, but later were told by the training centre (PT) that they had all tested positive for 'dirty blood'. Eka described being baffled and called the process 'weird'. Upon reflection Eka said she suspected that it was part of a strategy to ensure that married couples did not migrate together as that would make it 'more complicated'. So her husband backed out from going abroad and it was decided that Eka would go ahead, given that for Eka there were few financial barriers and that she had migrated there previously. Thus, the appropriation of her gendered labour played a part in her remobilisation and heightened her motility (on a transnational scale) (Kauffman et al 2004).

Adim has since attempted to migrate overseas again, although he has been unsuccessful due to financial and bureaucratic barriers. However, Adim was hardly rendered immobile in Eka's absence. During this time, he undertook short-term work in Jakarta, while Eka's mother-in-law cared for the children. Also since Eka has returned from overseas, Adim's local journeys have become an important source of income for the family. When we visited Eka in early

2016, their house, which to date had remained half-finished was being renovated by Adim based on his income he earned from his work on construction projects in Jakarta. Adim has also since advised Eka against going overseas again, after Eka's fourth (and thus far) final migration to Taiwan.

Through a translocal lens we can see that there is ostensibly an asymmetry in Adim and Eka's motility. Adim's case in particular shows how the gendered politics of mobility can indeed work to limit the destinations available to male migrants, especially those that involve transcending international borders. Yet is it important to underscore these gendered politics of mobility are not absolute and does not render actors totally immobile, instead their motility is reworked within a different set of parameters – parameters that seem to be workable for Eka and Adim as they aim to finish building their house.

On Eka's part, she expressed ambivalence about leaving her youngest daughter, her third child, in someone else's care, especially now as her mother-in-law is older and has less capacity to care for an active toddler. Therefore, the internal dynamics of Eka's household and the lack of alternative care arrangements have also worked to impact upon her motility. Yet it is important to note that for Eka being a 'stayer' entails a degree of agency as she expressed her satisfaction at being able to stay with her youngest child, after all she was absent for much of her other two children's early childhood. Yet, in the interim, Eka maintains regular contact with her Taiwanese employer via Line (a mobile messaging platform), and still entertains the idea of returning to Taiwan, encouraged by her former boss who would like Eka to work for her again. While she is now relatively immobile compared to her stints as a transnational migrant, Eka is at once content being 'at home' while still entertaining thoughts of returning to Taiwan – thoughts which reveal a translocal imaginary where new journeys remain possible.

Global Householding and Translocal Subjectivities: To be 'home' and 'away'

Zaitun is in her mid-forties, and is married with four sons. Their household is relatively poor, earning less than Rp.1,300,000 (US$97) per month from their home-based brick-making venture and odd jobs. Zaitun revealed to us that she previously thought of migrating for work to gain extra income but felt constrained by the gendered realities of the household, where as the only female, she felt that no one in the family could replace her role. This reflects the gendered politics of mobility where women's mobility is often contingent on being able to find someone – usually a female kin – to take over their household responsibilities (Parreñas 2005; Hoang 2009).

Despite her own inability to move transnationally, the next generation of her household has been more successful in doing so. Zaitun shared with us the migration trajectories of her second son, Rahmad and her two daughters-in-law. 25-year-old Rahmad migrated to work as an electrician in Hong Kong after his family took a loan from the extended family to pay the agent fee of Rp. 21 million (US$1,851). However, he halted his migration journey after his

employer's business folded five months later. During his short stint in Hong Kong, he met Arisanti, who was working as a domestic worker. The couple married as soon as Arisanti could gain leave, where she returned home to Ponorogo for a week before leaving for Hong Kong again. Thus from the outset, Rahmad and Arisanti's household has been constituted 'across multiple but also fractured and interrelated social spaces' (Anthias 2013, 131) as they negotiate their marriage across international boundaries.

Yet, despite the translocal arrangement of their marriage, it appears that the couple have no immediate plans to 'settle down' to a space where they will be located together. Instead, six months after the marriage, Rahmad registered his interest in migrating for work in Taiwan. According to Zaitun, Rahmad needed to pay a large sum of Rp. 34 million (US$2,997) at the point of departure to the migration agent. When we probed Zaitun on how this sum of money would be raised, she mentioned two sources: income from her brick-making home business, and remittances from her daughter-in-law, Arisanti since she has finished her salary deductions after six months, and has been receiving her full salary for half a year.

In this sense we can see how hopes hinge upon the conversion of Arisanti's gendered capital into a form of economic capital to fund Rahmad's subsequent migration (van Hear 2014). Counter-factually, it is highly improbable for Rahmad to consider labour migration to Taiwan as a viable option without incurring considerable debts. Rahmad and Arisanti's planned trajectories, as told by Zaitun, show how households can leverage the constraints posed by politics of mobility to work in their advantage. Therefore the portrayal of Rahmad's motility as a product of his wife's transnational migration and remittances illustrates how his current immobility – his status as a 'stayer' – is imagined as temporary and a form of delayed mobility.

While Arisanti's migration helps facilitate Rahmad's mobility, Zaitun expects that once Rahmad assumes the role of the primary breadwinner, Arisanti will then contribute to the household in a different way by engaging in her responsibilities as a daughter and mother. However, Zaitun harbours contrasting expectations of her other daughter-in-law, Mila. Married to her third son, Dani when both were still in high school due to a pre-marital pregnancy, Mila was able to migrate to Singapore for work as a domestic worker because Zaitun assumed the primary caregiver role for her two-year-old child.

We understand from Zaitun that Mila had returned from Singapore recently and has been making plans to work in Hong Kong where salaries are higher. Arisanti has been assisting Mila's migration process and in fact managed to match Mila to an employer in Hong Kong. Mila's wish to work in Hong Kong was spoken of positively by Zaitun in terms of her desire to perform her role as a filial daughter and caring mother as Mila planned to renovate her natal home and to save money for her son's education.

Thus, we can also read Zaitun's desires for her daughters-in-law's futures as a projection of her own translocal aspirations and imaginaries where the two young women straddle the gendered expectations of marriage and motherhood, as well as (co)breadwinners – expectations that Zaitun herself was unable to straddle, thus resulting in her negotiation of 'different kinds of local-local journeys' (Brickell and Datta 2011, 4). Hence the contrast in Zaitun's expectations for both Arisanti and Mila demonstrate how gendered migration

regimes intersect with Zaitun's translocal subjectivities to produce different interpretations of what it means for her for each of her daughter-in-law to be 'at home' or 'away'.

Conclusion

Throughout this working paper we have highlighted how the politics of mobility inform households in different ways to produce dynamic arrangements that are always 'in flux' (Huijsmans 2014). Using a translocal perspective, we have paid closer attention to the transnational mobility of individuals, local-local journeys, and translocal imaginaries that underpin individuals' hopes and expectations for the future, as well as their current realities. Using this approach, we show how these aspects of international migration regimes not only work to exclude and immobilise migrants and would-be-migrants; rather we also demonstrate how migrants can be active in these politics and leverage these 'embodied politics of identity and difference' (Blunt 2007, 685) into forms of capital that can then be converted in other forms of capital (Van Hear 2014; Kaufmann et al. 2004).

By drawing awareness to these translocal subjectivities, we have shown, as Brickell and Datta (2011) have compellingly argued, that individuals (and in this case household members) cannot be neatly categorised as 'movers' and 'stayers'. While factors such as age, class, gender and the likes influence the politics of mobility (and hence who can move and where, especially on a transnational scale), people's motility is never fully thwarted. Indeed, as this paper shows, migrant household members are often able to leverage the factors that underpin various migration regulations as they negotiate various members' relative mobility and immobility. In line with van Hear's observation, by taking a translocal approach, we show how key factors influencing transnational migration are not determinants of mobility per se, but instead may lead to divertedor delayed mobility where mobility opportunities may be transferred to others at a later date (Van Hear 2014). This paper demonstrates how the politics of mobility, particularly as it relates to class and gender, can be operationalised by households across transnational fields, resulting in dynamic households and fluidity with regards to the roles of 'movers' and 'stayers'.

In doing so, we show how the politics of mobility can indeed be leveraged by households such as that of Zaitun whereby gendered capital can be converted to economic capital to fund someone else's migration. For Mahi and Hasna, the migration regimes played a critical role in restricting Mahi's motility but allowed Hasna to move for work easily, while Eka and Adim are taking turns to migrate for work to support the household. In each of these households, we see how factors such as gender, age and class, play a vital role in shaping the motility of individuals, yet actors are never fully rendered immobile.

This working paper has contemplated the negotiations of individuals' and subsequently couples' movement at a broader level. Participants' recollections of these negotiations occurred several years earlier, and were often depicted as collective strategic decisions. Moreover, in the case of Zaitun's extended family, their migration trajectories were told from

her perspective. Nonetheless, the working paper has shown how the opportunities and constraints on households to enhance their economic and social status and well-being are intimately tied to migrants' class, age and gender. Yet, by examining individuals' and couples' mobility through the lens of translocality we can see that the position as 'mover' or 'stayer' is not static. Consequently, the 'in flux' nature of migrant households is predicated on negotiated forms of motility that are at once influenced by responsibilities within the immediate family, costs of migration and predicated by migration regimes. Through this multi-layered lens, we have shifted away from the narrow focus on individual household members' migratory journeys. Instead we show how migrants' journeys, both near and far, involve a complex balance of what is 'best for the family' while working within the possibilities and constraints migration creates for households in Indonesia.

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About the Migrating out of Poverty Research Programme Consortium

Migrating out of Poverty is a research programme consortium (RPC) funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID). It focuses on the relationship between migration and poverty – especially migration within countries and regions - and is located in five regions across Asia and Africa. The main goal of *Migrating out of Poverty* is to provide robust evidence on the drivers and impacts of migration in order to contribute to improving policies affecting the lives and well-being of impoverished migrants, their communities and countries, through a programme of innovative research, capacity building and policy engagement. The RPC will also conduct analysis in order to understand the migration policy process in developing regions and will supplement the world-renowned migration databases at the University of Sussex with data on internal migration.

The *Migrating out of Poverty* consortium is coordinated by the University of Sussex, and led by CEO Professor L. Alan Winters with Dr Priya Deshingkar as the Research Director. Core partners are: the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) in Bangladesh; the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) at the University of Ghana; the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore; the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa; and the African Migration and Development Policy Centre (AMADPOC) in Kenya.

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