GENDER, MIGRATION AND DIGITAL NETWORKS IN ASIA

20-21 FEB 2020

AS8 BUILDING, SEMINAR ROOM 04-04
10 KENT RIDGE CRESCENT
SINGAPORE 119260

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In recent years, emerging scholarship on migration and digital networks have focused on the role of digital technologies in enhancing, hindering and reshaping communication among transnational families, migrant communities and social groups. For example, there has been much interest in the role of social media in the sustenance of emotional bonds, the increasing ubiquity of smart phones and long-distance mothering.

While the growing literature has raised important questions about the relationship between grounded social practices among migrants and the development of digital networks, few has examined how the use of technologies by migrants itself is gendered. This is a significant lacuna particularly in the context of Asia where cultural and socioeconomic practices of migration and digital communities continue to hinge on gendered hierarchy and the regimes of sexuality. Digital networks have created both opportunities and challenges even as they open up innovative forms of gender performance and citizenship among migrants in Asia.

This workshop hence seeks to fill this gap by paying attention to the political economy of gender and its intersections with migrants' digital networks. It will bring together a range of empirical studies from Asian contexts to contribute towards strengthening theoretical understanding in the study of gender, migration, transnationalism and digital networks. The workshop's thematic focus will include following broadly-defined areas:

- The digital mobilisation of domestic and care workers
- Digital masculinities and performative citizenships
- The legal control of gendered bodies in a forced migration context
- The global and local circulation of gender and sexuality images and practices
- Female migrants and informal digital economies
- Intimacy in times of migration and digital networks

CONVENORS

DR SHIORI SHAKUTO
Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

PROFESSOR BRENDA S.A. YEOH
Asia Research Institute, and Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

THURSDAY, 20 FEBUARY 2020

11:00 – 11:15	REGISTRATION
11:15 – 11:30	WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS
	BRENDA S.A. YEOH | National University of Singapore **SHIORI SHAKUTO** | National University of Singapore
11:30 – 13:00	PANEL 1 | INTIMACY IN TIMES OF MIGRATION AND DIGITAL NETWORKS
CHAIRPERSON	**BITTIANDRA CHAND SOMAIAH** | National University of Singapore
11:30 *VIA SKYPE*	Digital Media and Gendered Practices of Home: Insights from Older Sinhalese and Karen Migrants in Australia **RAELENE WILDING** | La Trobe University
11:50 *VIA SKYPE*	Choosing When Distant From the Natal Home: An Examination of Gendered Youth Mobility and Matrimonial Matchers' Networks in Urban India **SIMIRAN LALVANI** | Independent Researcher
12:10	The Intimate Lives of Left-Behind Young Adults in the Philippines: Social Media, Gendered Intimacies, and Transnational Parenting **KRISTEL ANNE ACEDERA** | National University of Singapore **BRENDA S.A. YEOH** | National University of Singapore
12:30	Question & Answer
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH
14:00 – 15:00	PANEL 2 | FEMALE MIGRANTS AND INFORMAL DIGITAL ECONOMIES
CHAIRPERSON	**SYLVIA ANG** | National University of Singapore
14:00	'My Drunk Husband Doesn't Know': Informal Income, Phone-Banking and Female Migrant Workers in Kolkata, India **ATREYEE SEN** | University of Copenhagen
14:20	Digital Entrepreneurship after the Disaster: Japanese Women's Evacuation to Southeast Asia after Fukushima Nuclear Disaster **SHIORI SHAKUTO** | National University of Singapore
14:40	Question & Answer
15:00 – 15:15	BREAK
15:15 – 16:15	PANEL 3 | THE DIGITAL MOBILISATION OF DOMESTIC AND CARE WORKERS
CHAIRPERSON	**LUE FANG** | National University of Singapore
15:15 *VIA SKYPE*	New Kid on the Block: Digital Platforms for Recruitment of Migrant Domestic Workers **AMBIKA TANDON** | The Centre for Internet and Society
15:35 *VIA SKYPE*	Digital Mourning on Facebook: The Case of Filipino Migrant Worker Live-in Caregivers in Israel **DEBY BABIS** | Ariel University, and The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
15:55	Question & Answer
16:15 – 16:45	AFTERNOON TEA
16:45 – 17:45	KEYNOTE ADDRESS
CHAIRPERSON	**BRENDA S.A. YEOH** | National University of Singapore
16:45 *VIA SKYPE*	Technocolonialism: Digital Humanitarianism as Extraction **MIRCA MADIANOU** | Goldsmiths, University of London
17:30	Question & Answer
17:45	END OF DAY ONE

FRIDAY, 21 FEBUARY 2020

12:00 – 13:00	PANEL 4 | THE LEGAL CONTROL OF GENDERED BODIES IN A FORCED MIGRATION CONTEXT
CHAIRPERSON	**THEODORA LAM** | National University of Singapore
12:00 ***VIA SKYPE***	Gendered Bodies: The Politics of Biometric Identification amongst Rohingyas **SHAMNA THACHAM POYIL** | University of Delhi
12:20	Spatial and Information Privacy: A Gendered Perspective **SASKIA WITTEBORN** | Chinese University of Hong Kong
12:40	Question & Answer
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH
14:00 – 15:30	PANEL 5 | THE GLOBAL AND LOCAL CIRCULATION OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY IMAGES AND PRACTICES
CHAIRPERSON	**SHU MIN YUEN** | National University of Singapore
14:00	Virtual Connections: Regional Networks, Gender Pluralism and the Digital in Southeast Asia **BENJAMIN HEGARTY** | University of Melbourne
14:20	Digital Trans Citizenship: Travelling across Asia for Gender Reassignment **MICHELLE H.S. HO** | National University of Singapore
14:40	The Curated Life of a Filipina Bride: YouTubing Interracial Marriages in a Mobile Era **EARVIN CHARLES B. CABALQUINTO** | Deakin University
15:00	Question & Answer
15:30 – 16:00	AFTERNOON TEA
16:00 – 17:00	PANEL 6 | DIGITAL MASCULINITIES AND PERFORMATIVE CITIZENSHIPS
CHAIRPERSON	**SHIORI SHAKUTO** | National University of Singapore
16:00 ***VIA SKYPE***	Sex, Gender and Ludic Nationalism among Young Chinese People in Japan **JAMIE COATES** | University of Sheffield
16:20	Saving Hindu Girls and Women: Digital Masculinity and Performative Citizenship across the India-Pakistan Border **NATASHA RAHEJA** | Cornell University
16:40	Question & Answer
17:00 – 17:30	CLOSING REMARKS
	BRENDA S.A. YEOH | National University of Singapore **SHIORI SHAKUTO** | National University of Singapore
17:30	END OF WORKSHOP

Digital Media and Gendered Practices of Home: Insights from Older Sinhalese and Karen Migrants in Australia

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Ageing in a foreign country creates at least two important challenges for older migrants. First, informal family- and community-based networks of care and support are dispersed across distance and national borders. Second, many of the assumptions about good aged care as well as about wellbeing and selfhood as an older person lack the cultural and social foundations that would otherwise be present and available in the home country. In this paper, we explore how older migrants use digital media in ways that address those challenges. Drawing on data from ethnographic interviews conducted in Australia with older Sinhalese migrants from Sri Lanka, and older Karen migrants from Myanmar, we identify three key sets of practices that operate at different scales. First, we consider how digital media are used to help reproduce the cultural norms of ageing while living in a foreign country, a set of practices that we identify as 'digital homing'. Second, we explore how informal care and support are recreated through communication technologies in what we refer to as practices of 'digital kinning'. Finally, at the level of the individual, we consider how the social and cultural practices of digital media (ie. digital homing and digital kinning) inform the reproduction of the gendered, aged and ethnic self. We conclude by reflecting on the nuanced impact of gendered hierarchies on the digital homing and kinning practices of older migrants.

Raelene Wilding is Associate Professor, Sociology at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. Her research explores how people use new technologies to maintain their families, intimate relationships and social connections. She has conducted research with older people from Australian-born and migrant backgrounds as well as young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds in rural and urban Australia. Her most recent book is *Families, Intimacy and Globalization* (Palgrave 2018).

Loretta Baldassar is Professor in the Discipline Group of Anthropology and Sociology at The University of Western Australia. She has published extensively on migration, with a particular focus on transnational families and caregiving. Baldassar is Vice President of the International Sociological Association Migration Research Committee and a regional editor for the journal *Global Networks*. She is co-Chief Investigator on ARC Discover Projects: *Ageing and New Media* (Wilding, La Trobe) and *Youth Mobilities* (Harris, Deakin, and Robertson, Western Sydney).

Shashini Gamage is an academic, researcher and television journalist. She is currently working as a research assistant of the 'Ageing and New Media' project of La Trobe University, affiliated to the Department of Sociology. She has a PhD (Communication and Media–2016) and a Master of Global Communication (2010) from La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. Her research focuses on media cultures and the intersections between media, gender, nationalism, migration, migrants and war, post-war societies, post-colonialism and identity. Her PhD thesis (2016) is a feminist ethnography of soap opera cultures and gender identities of Sri Lankan women who migrated during the three-decade civil war of the island nation, exploring diasporic Sri Lankan soap opera clubs in Melbourne. Her PhD was funded by an Australia Awards Leadership Scholarship (2012-16) – a prestigious international scholarship of the Australian Government.

Shane Worrell is a graduate researcher in sociology whose work focuses on transnational familial communication in the context of humanitarian migrant resettlement. He has worked as a research associate on the ARC Discovery Project, Ageing and New Media, and tutors in the social sciences and humanities. Shane is also an award-winning journalist, whose writing has appeared in global, regional and national publications, including in Cambodia, where he was based for several years.

Choosing When Distant From the Natal Home: An Examination of Gendered Youth Mobility and Matrimonial Matchmakers' Networks in Urban India

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With the growing popularity of digital matrimonial matchmaking services in India in recent years, there has been much celebration of individual choice, 'love' in marriage and dating versus the traditional 'arranged marriage' system that still prevails. Economic liberalisation is understood as spurring social change due to urbanisation, cosmpolitanisation, prevalence of nuclear families, changes in employment, education and the rise of digital socialising. The combined force of these changes through the discourse of choice allow a gendered mobility of middle-class youth and gendered anxieties for their parents. Since mobility distances the youth physically from their natal homes before marriage for education or work and morally from their families. Instead of examining choices associated with gendered youth mobility directly and assuming distance, we embedded choice within networks that offer choices. We conducted qualitative fieldwork with matchmakers like matrimonial websites, community and non community-based services which use both manual as well as technologically mediated methods. We found the gendered nature of matchmakers' networks given their dual modality of cutting distance while also cutting proximity between the youth and family. The gendered nature of these networks reveals not just difference and change but also similarity and continuity and complicates assumptions around choice, social change and reveals the limits of networks.

Simiran Lalvani is an independent researcher currently working as a Consultant at Microsoft Research India on a 'Future of Work' project with Prof Joyojeet Pal studying the impact of technologically mediated matchmaking services on the practice of traditional matchmaking. Prior to this, she was a Research Fellow studying application (app) based food delivery work and workers for a 'Mapping Digital Labour in India' project at the Centre for Internet and Society. She has a Masters in Development and Labour Studies from the Centre for Informal Sector and Labour Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi.

Joyojeet Pal is a principal researcher at Microsoft Research India and holds a position as an associate professor at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. His research interests are in social media and society in the Global South, specifically in the use of social media in political outreach and elections. He also works on the impact of social media in the evolving professional practices and social capital. He has worked in accessibility and the role of accessible technology in expanding workplace opportunities in the Global South.

The Intimate Lives of Left-Behind Young Adults in the Philippines: Social Media, Gendered Intimacies, and Transnational Parenting

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Amidst the moral panics around how international labour migration has destabilised the family, many empirically-based studies have established that 'doing family' persists across space and time. Familial and intimate relationships are reconstituted in a multitude of ways, as the proliferation of social media and communication technologies afford the scaling up of privacy and publicness, also blurring the lines between presence and absence in the transnational space. Based on a longitudinal and mixed method research on the impact of migration on Filipino left-behind young adult children (n=25) and their carers (n=25), we seek to examine the mediation of transnational parenting and how it shapes the ways left-behind sons and daughters (aged 17-19 years old) navigate heteronormative ideals of marriage and familyhood. In particular, we ask, how does the absence of one or both migrant parent(s) mould young adult left-behind children's discourses and practices of their intimate gendered lives. As relationships within the transnational family are constantly and intensively mediated through communication technologies, we also seek to understand the Filipino gendered values and affordances of social media at work in enabling (or disabling) young adult children's intimate subjectivities and relationships. In doing so, we hope to explore how labour migration and the reconstitution of the transnational family influence the current and future familial and marital aspirations of young adult children in migrant families.

Kristel Acedera is a Research Associate at the Asia Research Institute. She holds an MSocSci degree in Geography from the National University of Singapore. Her current research interests explore how intimacies of transnational familyhood unravel in and through the digital spaces and temporalities of communication technologies. She has previously published on this in peer-reviewed journals like New Media and Society and Current Sociology.

Brenda S.A. Yeoh is Raffles Professor of Social Sciences at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Research Leader of the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, NUS. Her research interests include the politics of space in colonial and postcolonial cities, and she also has considerable experience working on a wide range of migration research in Asia, including key themes such as cosmopolitanism and highly skilled talent migration; gender, social reproduction and care migration; migration, national identity and citizenship issues; globalising universities and international student mobilities; and cultural politics, family dynamics and international marriage migrants. She has published widely on these topics and her recent books include *Transnational Labour Migration, Remittances and the Changing Family in Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, with Lan Anh Hoang) and *Contested Memoryscapes: The Politics of Second World War Commemoration in Singapore* (Routledge, 2016, with Hamzah Muzaini), *Asian Migrants and Religious Experience: From Missionary Journeys to Labor Mobility* (Amsterdam University Press, 2018 with Bernardo Brown) and *Handbook of Asian Migrations* (Routledge, 2018 with Gracia Liu-Farrer).

‘My Drunk Husband Doesn’t Know’: Informal Income, Phone-Banking and Female Migrant Workers in Kolkata, India

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With more than half a billion internet and digital subscribers, India is one of the fastest-growing markets for digital consumers, second only to China. Through Aadhaar, the world’s largest bio-metric identification system, the central government has driven individual citizens to link their personal data to a host of services, including mobile sim cards, bank accounts, provident fund systems, welfare schemes, public distribution systems and old age pensions. For example, mAadhaar is an official mobile application that allows Aadhaar holders to link their demographic and banking information solely to their smartphones. While some scholars have argued that Aadhar offers a channel for financial inclusion of the poor into mainstream economies, others have criticised the coercive nature of invasive bio-metric technologies. Etched in relief against the surface of this debate, the paper will analyse rural-urban migrant women workers’ multiple journeys of secrecy and solidarity with telephone and net-banking (through Aadhaar and smart phones). Using the narratives of underprivileged women employed in the informal domestic and care sector in Kolkata, I show how female migrants conspired with each other and creatively managed digital banking to scatter their wages into numerous bank accounts. This ensured that a chunk of their income did not come under the radar of exploitative in-laws, and retaining control over the undisclosed money offered poor women different/empowering visions of their financial futures. The paper is framed through the concept of women’s ‘migra-monies’. It refers to shadow networks of domestic remittances that lie at the interface of emerging digital technologies and gendered social relations within local migration landscapes.

Atreyee Sen is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Copenhagen. She is a political anthropologist of urban South Asia. She is author of *Shiv Sena Women: Violence and Communalism in a Bombay Slum* (Hurst and Co. London, Indiana University Press 2007) and co-editor (with Dr David Pratten) of *Global Vigilantes* (Columbia University Press 2008). Her recent publications include ‘Torture and laughter: Naxal insurgency, custodial violence, and inmate resistance in a women's correctional facility in 1970s Calcutta’, *Modern Asian Studies* (2018), and “Teach your girls to stab, not sing': Right-wing activism, public knife distribution and the politics of gendered self-defense in Mumbai,’ *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* (2019). She has received a research grant from the Danish National Research Fund to explore the impact of growing cashlessness and digital finance on cash economies sustained by the urban poor across global cities in Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Digital Entrepreneurship after the Disaster: Japanese Women's Evacuation to Southeast Asia after Fukushima Nuclear Disaster

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This paper examines the emergence of digital entrepreneurship following disasters and the opportunities and risks it offers for the performance of affective labour of care among migrant mothers. Reporting in particular on the experiences of young Japanese mothers who evacuated with their children to Southeast Asia after the Fukushima nuclear disaster, I discuss how the presence of social media and digital network provided opportunities to forge supportive ties among the transnational network of Japanese mothers. I argue that digital networks, including twitter and blogs, were embraced by mothers for their potential to share and express their concerns, especially in a post-disaster context where the masculinist state's policy of reconstruction has labelled these concerns as irrational and unscientific. Yet their own affective labour of care is produced within the conditions of economic precarity. They typically engage in a flexible, yet highly exploitative, gig economy to support themselves and their children abroad. The digital labour is not divorced from the terms of a gendered and class-based economy. Their lives are also illustrative of the tension between the collective and empowering potential of social media, and their contradictory enactment through individual entrepreneurship. Based on ethnographic research using social media analysis and 20 interviews with mothers who evacuated to Malaysia and Thailand, the paper attends to the opportunities and risks of digital entrepreneurship and networks as un uneven experience between middle-class and working-class mothers.

Shiori Shakuto is Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asian Migration Cluster of the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. She obtained her PhD in Anthropology from the Australian National University in 2017. Her research interests lie in the intersection across gender, environment and migration, with a geographical focus on the movement of people and things from Japan to Malaysia. Her research has been published in various journals including the most recent article 'Post-work intimacy' in *American Ethnologist* (2019).

New Kid on the Block: Digital Platforms for Recruitment of Migrant Domestic Workers

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Women's migration for seeking employment is underestimated in parts of the global south. In India, the domestic work sector has been absorbing an overwhelming proportion of women in the labour force, specifically those who migrate from rural and semi-urban spaces to cities for employment. The supply chain of workers to the city holds multiple unregulated intermediaries, which places workers at risk of exploitation. The recent entry of digital platforms into placement for domestic work has been touted has holding potential to mitigate some of these risks to workers by integrating aspects of formalisation. This paper will compare the functioning of traditional placement agencies and digital platforms, focusing particularly on recruitment pathways. In doing so, it will interrogate the potential of digital platforms to recruit migrant women workers in particular. The methodology for the study involves in-depth interviews with 50 respondents, including workers, companies, government, and unions, in two Indian cities—Delhi and Bengaluru. This primary data will be situated in the historical context of the structuring of domestic work and its intermediaries in India.

Ambika Tandon and Aayush Rathi are policy officers at the Centre for Internet and Society, India. They are interested in research at the intersection of gender and technology, such as data-driven interventions into sexual and reproductive health provision, the impact of technology on women's labour, and state-led surveillance of women's bodies. Ambika is a postgraduate from the London School of Economics and Political Science in media and development, and Aayush is a law graduate from the National University of Juridical Sciences in Kolkata, India.

Mansi Kedia is Fellow at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations. She has over 9 years of experience in economic policy. Her areas of research include telecommunication policy, trade and industrial policy. She has published papers/reports on telecom and Internet regulations, impact of information technology and Industrial policy in India. Her ongoing research includes issues related to governance of the Internet, competition issues in India's mobile handset industry, Internet shutdowns and the future of work in India. She was appointed as a member of the Task Force rewriting the Direct Tax Code for India (2017). She also has a background in management consulting and financial services with close to four years of experience in the private sector. She received her BSc in Economics from St. Xavier's, Kolkata and an MBA from the Indian School of Business, Hyderabad. Her PhD is from the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi.

Digital Mourning on Facebook: The Case of Filipino Migrant Worker Live-in Caregivers in Israel

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The practice of mourning on social media, known as *digital mourning*, has become a worldwide phenomenon. While scholarly attention has been directed at manifestations of online grief, there is a dearth of research regarding this process on immigrant communities, and even more so on migrant workers. Based on a digital ethnography on Facebook on the Filipino community in Israel, made up of migrant workers who are allowed to work only as live-in caregivers for the elderly, this study addresses the question of how migrant workers construct their mourning on digital networks. As part of their job, Filiipinos in Israel have to deal with the death of their employers, and as members of the Filipino community, they also have to cope with the death of fellow Filipino migrant workers. Analysis of the data revealed two different practices of digital mourning. When caregivers announce the loss of their employers, they share their pain on their own Facebook wall. Their grief is poignantly expressed in their posts and they receive personal condolence comments and digital support from friends and family. On the other hand, when a fellow Filipino migrant worker passes away, the pain is shared in closed community groups on Facebook. These death announcements, which are less emotional, more informative and pragmatic, are followed by thousands of condolence comments offered to the community at large. This practice creates a communal feeling that can be termed *Communal Digital Grief*, and differs from the *Personal Digital Grief* experienced by migrants resulting from their work as live-in caregivers. This study sheds light on the way contemporary forms of community building and social solidarity among migrant workers are constructed by expressing digital mourning on online networks in the information age.

Deby Babis is a sociologist and anthropologist specializing in ethnic communities and voluntary organizations. Her research covers both immigrant and indigenous groups in different countries. She has conducted fieldwork in Argentina, Israel, Bolivia, Canada, Hong Kong and the Philippines. Deby's PhD focused on the organization of the Latin American Immigrants in Israel, while her Postdoc dealt with indigenous doctors in Bolivia. Since 2013 she is primarily studying Filipino migrant workers in Israel, Canada and Hong Kong. By means of traditional and digital ethnographies, combined with quantitative methods, she explores different aspects of these communities, such as their voluntary organizations, their practices on Facebook and the emergence of mixed families. Deby is a lecturer in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Ariel University and is a fellow researcher at the Harry S. Truman Research Institute for the Advancement of Peace at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Technocolonialism: Digital Humanitarianism as Extraction

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Digital innovation, artificial intelligence and data practices are increasingly central to the humanitarian response to recent refugee and migration crises. In my talk, I introduce the concept of technocolonialism to capture how the convergence of digital developments with humanitarian structures and capitalist forces reinvigorates and reshapes colonial relationships of dependency. Technocolonialism shifts the attention to the constitutive role that data and digital innovation play in entrenching power asymmetries between refugees and aid agencies and ultimately inequalities in the global context. This occurs through a number of interconnected processes: by extracting value from refugee data and innovation practices for the benefit of various stakeholders; by materializing gender, race and social discrimination associated with colonial legacies; by contributing to the production of social orders that entrench the "coloniality of power"; and by justifying some of these practices under the context of "emergencies." By reproducing the power asymmetries of humanitarianism, data and innovation practices become constitutive of humanitarian crises themselves.

Mirca Madianou is Reader in the Department of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths, University of London where she works on the social uses of communication technologies in a transnational and comparative context. Her research focuses on migration and humanitarian emergencies and their intersection with digital technology. She has directed two ESRC grants: *Humanitarian Technologies* (www.humanitarian technologies.net) and *Migration, ICTS and transnational families* (http://www.researchcatalogue. esrc.ac.uk/grants/RES-000-22-2266/read) which have led to several publications on the social consequences of new communication technologies among marginalised and migrant populations. Her current project investigates the role of digital innovation, artificial intelligence and data practices in the humanitarian sector. She is the author of *Mediating the Nation: News, Audiences and the Politics of Identity* and *Migration and New Media: Transnational Families and Polymedia* (with D. Miller) as well as editor of *Ethics of Media* (with N. Couldry and A. Pinchevski).

Gendered Bodies: The Politics of Biometric Identification amongst Rohingyas

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Recently the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with the assistance of Bangladesh government issued biometric identity cards to nearly five lakhs of Rohingya refugees sheltered in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar refugee camps. Biometric credentials are expected to aid the authorities in processing the asylum claims of refugees apart from reducing the instances of arbitrary detention that arises due to lack of adequate documentation. Such 'datafication of bodies crossing the borders' using biometrics possibly would assist the asylum countries to enforce strict policing of territories, but simultaneously pose certain normative concerns. Contrary to the perception of a body that undergoes codification as a mere "incidental moment in the transmission of code and information" (Gilroy, 2000:36), the biometricised body, epitomizes a subjective self that can further emphasize the distinguishing variables like gender and ethnicity at borders. The racial attribute is one among the key markers that is instrumental in denoting identity of Rohingya refugees and demarcating them from the host population in their country of asylum. Internally among the Rohingya refugees, a hierarchy of gender is explicit in the way patriarchal norms and prejudices manifest within the domestic sphere and everyday practices. Due to the absence of gender-disaggregated data on refugees in camps, the nature of assistance available from the authorities and humanitarian agencies in refugee settlements are largely gender-blind. Yet women refugees given an opportunity within camps have shown strong indication in resource management (Chowdhory, 2016). The inherent power asymmetry that exists between the refugees and humanitarian organization demonstrates that the aid received more than often does not account for a targeted approach, but acknowledges the specific susceptibilities which refugee women are subjected to within the camps. Together, these factors render women as the most vulnerable amid the already deprived refugee population. By minimizing the time-lag required for authenticating identification documents and streamlining specific assistance for women, biometrics is expected to increase the overall efficacy of aid delivery on camps (Oxfam report, 2018).

In the context of converting bodies to biometrics, it is necessary to analyze the complexities associated with ways in which such technology produce and problematize inherent bodily differences. Contextualizing the intersectionality of gender identity and racial identity configures a social hierarchy of power for the ruptured communities of refugees. As the deprivation encountered by Rohingya women are a function of multiple variables, it is necessary to undertake such an intersectional analysis that throws light on how gender and race mutually constitute their social identity during displacement and exile. The paper seeks to answer the following questions: Does the biometric system validate the existence of individuals to predefined categories of identities or does it configure and authorize new categories of identities? In acting as a tool that verifies and sanctions identities, does biometric verification facilitate a more diversified nature of humanitarian assistance and policy decisions that are gender sensitive? How does this shape the gender relations in 'exile' in relation to the traditional notion of masculine and

feminine that was prevalent at 'home'? The methodology of research includes digital ethnography using online resources so as to determine the usage of digital innovations like biometrics by various agencies like UNHCR as per their reported data.

Shamna Thacham Poyil is a PhD Candidate in the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. Her research focuses on the narrative of statelessness of the Rohingyas and the politics of exclusion where denial of citizenship is used as a strategy for ethno-political nation building in Post-colonial Burma, rendering minorities like Rohingyas Stateless. Her MPhil dissertation titled "Birds of Freedom: Depiction of LTTE militant women in Tamil Cinema" explored the representation of militant women challenging the binary of agency and victimhood. Apart from holding a Bachelor's degree in Electronics and Instrumentation Engineering, she graduated summa cum laude from her Masters in Conflict studies and peace building from Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Her recent publications include, 'The idea of protection: the norms and practice of refugee management in India', *Refugee Watch* (2019) with Dr Nasreen Chowdhory and Meghna Kajla; 'Transitional justice, reconciliation and reconstruction process: the case of the former LTTE female combatants in post-war Sri Lanka' with Dr Nasreen Chowdhory in *Transitional Justice and Forced Migration*, ed. Nergis Canefe Cambridge University Press 2019 (Forthcoming December).

Nasreen Chowdhory teaches in the Department of Political Science, University of Delhi. She has done PhD in Political Science from McGill University, Canada, and Masters and MPhil from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has published several research papers in national and international peer-reviewed journals, and guest edited of a special issue on "Displacement: A 'state of exception'" in the International Journal of Migration and Border Studies, 2016. Some of her significant publications include *Refugees, Citizenship and Belonging: A Contested Terrains* (Springer 2018) and edited volume on *Deterritorialised Identities and Transborder Movement in South Asia* with Nasir Uddin with Springer 2019. She is presently working on an edited volume on Gender, Identity and Migration in India (Palgarve 2020, forthcoming) with Paula Banerjee. She is holding the position of Vice President of International Association for the Study of Forced Migration and Vice President of Mahanirban Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata.

Spatial and Information Privacy: A Gendered Perspective

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Hegemonic norms and values have long structured female mobility and conditions for privacy, with privacy being understood as a person or her information being "beyond the range of others' five senses and any devices that can enhance, reveal, trace or record human conduct, thought, belief or emotion" (Allen, 1988, p.15). Privacy is hard to maintain, especially for women and gendered Others who are displaced. Learnt norms (e.g., modesty) are challenged in different socio-political systems, such as during asylum claims processes and while adjusting to a new cultural context. Pressures on gendered privacy are compounded by the fact that the displaced are heavy social media users (e.g., Borkert et al., 2018; Gillespie, 2016; 2018; Smets & Leurs, 2018; Witteborn, 2010, 2015, 2018) but tend to have little information about privacy and data protection (Witteborn, under review).

This article discusses data privacy from a gendered migration perspective, particularly asylum seeker and refugee women from West Asia (including Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Palestine) waiting in Germany for their claims to be assessed. Data materials were collected from 2011 to 2015 through interviews and participant observations of digital practices of the displaced. The data from a period leading up to the "great migration" of refugees into Europe in 2015 illustrates that data privacy is not a new phenomenon but has been important for refugees for many years, especially in settings that upset cultural norms linked to the physical and digital mobility of women. The displaced are an important sample as they are torn from the sociocultural setting they were socialized in, and exposed to new norms, amplifying and restricting the physical and digital mobility of women in particular (e.g., living in collective shelters and using collective spaces for digital engagement). First, the article explores existing notions of gendered privacy in embodied life (Allen & Mack, 1991). Second, the article shows how gendered privacy values codified in Western liberal democracies, such as decision-making and personal sovereignty, are translated into universal digital code. Data privacy defines the person as a sovereign and autonomous subject with agentic decision-powers over her communication, which are reflected, for example, in the notion of "giving consent" to gathering, storing, and processing information produced by and about her.

The article argues that definitions of data privacy impose an already existing meaning framework onto the digital practices of women. This does not translate into women having more meaningful forms and experiences of privacy. Women in the intersection between displacement, gender, and culture are now regulated by discursive and legal privacy rules, taken as being universal. Hence, they experience multiple layers of old and new forms of marginalization. Examples are having to give digital consent, having their digital practices monitored by partners and relatives, being dependent on their husbands and children for digital literacy, and having to violate cultural norms by navigating public space physically and technologically for the first time. The article concludes that data privacy has to be understood beyond a narrow and yet universal definition of being left alone and in the intersection between space, culture, and mobilities.

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Virtual Connections: Regional Networks, Gender Pluralism and the Digital in Southeast Asia

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In the past decade, several regional networks place culturally distinct gender and sexual minorities from Southeast Asia in virtual connection with one another. These networks and the identities, often funded by large international organisations based in the West, are often framed as both very new and as an imposition of a Western liberal rights model. However, even as these networks are funded and conceptualized through a dominant Western logic of HIV organising (grouped into "key populations") that emerged in the late 1990s they also reflect longer national and regional histories of inter-connection that defy a Western-centered model of globalization. This paper addresses forms of virtual connection through regional networks related to gender, sexuality and HIV in Southeast Asia, focusing on the example of *transpuan* (transgender perempuan) in the Indonesian context. It addresses the emergence of this category as the result of distinctive forms of digital connection within specific regional (Southeast Asian) and national (Indonesian) contexts in two ways. First, the paper historicizes transpuan as a virtual form of connection against a backdrop of "gender pluralism," one that includes forms of inter-Asian referencing and connection that precede the digital era. Second, it off places this history in dialogue with new formats for digital communication and activist engagement through regional forms of connection and interaction enabled by the category transpuan. The research on which this paper is based draws on ongoing ethnographic research (2013 to present) among gender and sexual minority communities in Indonesia, including participant observation (online and in person), interviews and focus group discussions. The paper argues that virtual and digital connection must be conceptualised not as separate from but as embedded within longer histories of virtual communication and exchange in Southeast Asia.

Benjamin Hegarty is a McKenzie Postdoctoral Fellow in Anthropology and Development Studies at the University of Melbourne. His expertise combines ethnographic and historical methods with critical theory to investigate how gender and sexuality are implicated in transnational processes. His research appears in *Medicine Anthropology Theory*, *Transgender Studies Quarterly* and the *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, and his collaborative research with Indonesian critical public health scholars has been funded by a number of competitive grants. In 2018, he was awarded the Australian Anthropological Society PhD Thesis Prize and an Endeavour Postdoctoral Fellowship for research at the University of California—Irvine.

Digital Trans Citizenship: Travelling across Asia for Gender Reassignment

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This paper explores how transgender individuals employ new media to chart their travels across Asia for sex/gender reassignment surgery (SGRS) through a case study of Satsuki, a Japanese male-to-female trans-identified model, television personality, and LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) activist. In this project, "trans" refers to individuals whose configurations of gender do not align with what is assigned at birth and/or the male/female binary. Satsuki first became prominent on the internet when they blogged about their experience of undergoing SGRS in Thailand in 2013. After returning to Japan to recover, Satsuki relocated to Tokyo, debuted as a celebrity, and became a trans advocate. Examining Satsuki's blog entries spanning two years, I argue that their use of media technologies to document and share information about SGRS is important for shaping the "medical tourism" of Japanese trans people, particularly in inter-Asian contexts. This stems from Satsuki's engagement with other users about the struggles of Gender Identity Disorder (*seidōitsuseishōgai*) and their reflections after interacting with trans individuals from other parts of the world who have similarly journeyed to Bangkok for SGRS. In mapping their transnational border crossing, I further suggest that Satsuki enacts what I call "digital trans citizenship," the everyday practices of individuals who identify as trans and gender nonconforming and actively participate in society through the online world. Through digital trans citizenship, this study intervenes in present scholarship on gender, migration, and digital networks by asking how differently gendered people's online engagements surrounding SRGS can lead to social change.

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The Curated Life of a Filipina Bride: YouTubing Interracial Marriages in a Mobile Era

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The advent of smartphones and mobile social media has enabled migrants to curate and display their personal and intimate lives to diverse groups and in various contexts. As part of a broader project that seeks to examine the mediation of intimacy through online platforms among Filipino women, this paper examines how a lifestyle and beauty vlogger, Razel, utilises YouTube to broadcast and monetise her married life with her Australian partner. *Simply Rhaze* is one of the popular YouTube channels of a Filipina migrant in Australia, amassing a following of more than 450 thousand subscribers and garnered over 85 million views since 2012. Further, her YouTube channel offers over 1000 videos that set across a variety of genres, including make-up tutorials, confessional talks, travels, and so forth. By conducting a discourse analysis of the most popular videos of *Simply Rhaze*, I unravel how the paradoxes of global interracial marriages are reflected in online spaces. On the one hand, Rhaze tends to challenge the stigma surrounding the representation of a 'mail-order bride'. On the other hand, online performativity is engendered through a highly gendered and marketised frame. In a digital era, the ideal and tech-savvy wife has to perform emotional and affective labour that align with the ethos of a femininised and neoliberal labour export system. In sum, this paper invites us to further re-think the role of mobile platforms in reconstructing agentic femininity, belongingness, and social mobility in networked spaces.

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Sex, Gender and Ludic Nationalism among Young Chinese People in Japan

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Young Chinese people are travelling to Japan at an increasing rate. From students and tourists, to trainees and newly created migration visas, this entangled network of Sino-Japanese mobilities is becoming a significant part of Japan's urban landscape. Based on roughly 4 years of fieldwork and ongoing digital ethnography among networks of young Chinese people who meet in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, this paper examines the ways gender and sexuality inform efforts to build a sense of commonality both online and offline. Ikebukuro is a popular area for nightlife and adult entertainment, and is often portrayed as liminal in wider Japanese media imaginaries. Its position as a hub for outsiders and nightlife means that it has emerged as a site where young Chinese digital explorations of gender and sexuality intersect with daily life in the migration context. Informed by Japan's media image in many parts of Asia as a sexually transgressive site of play, many of the young Chinese people I worked with saw their time in Japan as an opportunity to try new things. The desire to create a common ludic vernacular ('in jokes'), particularly online, often meant that these young people would also play with questions of national identity. At times, forms of ludic nationalism emerged that re-asserted hegemonic masculine ideals in the Sino-Japanese context, and posited forms of sexual consumption in nationalistic tones. In particular, militaristic and sexually explicit memes were a common part of banter among migrant groups on social media. These modes of play also afforded new transgressive identities for some, raising questions about how we interpret the ludic nationalism of young overseas Chinese people.

Jamie Coates is an anthropologist who combines traditional, visual and digital ethnographic methods with historical and textual analysis to examine the relationship between technology, mobility and imagination in urban Northeast Asia. Building on his doctoral research on Chinese migration to Japan, he is currently investigating how forms of play, consumption, and media use among Chinese people living in Japan are changing the way interpersonal Chinese relations and Sino-Japanese relations are imagined. His recent publications include 'The Cruel Optimism of Mobility' in *positions: asia critique* 27(3), and the film 'Tokyo Pengyou', in the *Journal of Anthropological Films* see http://boap.uib.no/index.php/jaf/article/view/1538/1319

Saving Hindu Girls and Women: Digital Masculinity and Performative Citizenship across the India-Pakistan Border

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The majority of Pakistani citizens who have migrated to India within the past decade are low and non-caste Hindus who work as daily-wage laborers. They seek to offer their families improved socioeconomic opportunities in a country where they can participate in religious-national modes of belonging as "Hindus in Hindustan." Heralding them as persecuted religious minority, the Indian government enables Hindus from Pakistan to migrate to India on longterm visas and apply for Indian citizenship. Among this group of refugee-migrants, WhatsApp is a useful platform for refugee-migrants to keep in touch with family members across the border as well as to engage in forms of digital activism in ways that hinge on a gendered hierarchy and regimes of sexuality. Whereas refugee-migrant women's use of WhatsApp to keep in touch with relatives is mediated through male family members, refugee-migrant men directly engage in WhatsApp groups where they perform citizenship and stake claims to belonging in India. This paper focuses on how refugee-migrant men share, exchange, and comment on the images of young Hindu women who have reportedly been abducted and/or forcefully converted by Pakistani Muslim men. This paper argues that the production and circulation of these images are implicated in affective economies of care, fear, and outrage that shape transnational digital activism among Pakistani refugee-migrants who seek sociolegal recognition in India. Based on ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with Pakistani refugee-migrants conducted over 22 months between 2014-19, this paper offers the framework of "digital intimacies" to then conceptualize how platforms such as WhatsApp are simultaneously a space for the careful maintenance of cross-border relations and the expression of gendered claims to citizenship.

Natasha Raheja is currently Postdoctoral Associate in the Department of Anthropology at Cornell University and will join the Department as Assistant Professor in July 2020. She holds a PhD in Anthropology and a graduate Certificate in Culture and Media from New York University, where she trained in filmmaking at the Tisch School of the Arts; an MA in Asian Cultures in Languages from the University of Texas at Austin; and bachelors degrees in Biology and Asian Studies from the University of Texas at Austin. Natasha's current research focuses on mobility and belonging across the India-Pakistan border. Her research is supported by grants from the American Institute for Indian Studies, The Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the US Department of Education's Fulbright-Hays Program. She is the director of *Cast in India*, a documentary film about the making of NYC manhole covers. The film has screened at colleges and festivals nationally and internationally.

About the Chairpersons and Organisers

Bittiandra Chand Somaiah is Research Fellow in the Asian Migration cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore, and at the Centre for Global Social Policy, University of Toronto. She received her PhD in Sociology from Macquarie University. She has been working on the Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia (CHAMPSEA) Wave 2 project, with a focus on Indonesia, since 2017. Her research interests include mothering, migration, class, carework, youth and children's aspirations, multiple modernities, new cosmopolitanisms, intimate citizenship practices, circulations of care, sociologies of the body, gender and emotions.

Brenda S.A. Yeoh is Raffles Professor of Social Sciences at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Research Leader of the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, NUS. Her research interests include the politics of space in colonial and postcolonial cities, and she also has considerable experience working on a wide range of migration research in Asia, including key themes such as cosmopolitanism and highly skilled talent migration; gender, social reproduction and care migration; migration, national identity and citizenship issues; globalising universities and international student mobilities; and cultural politics, family dynamics and international marriage migrants. She has published widely on these topics and her recent books include *Transnational Labour Migration, Remittances and the Changing Family in Asia* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, with Lan Anh Hoang) and *Contested Memoryscapes: The Politics of Second World War Commemoration in Singapore* (Routledge, 2016, with Hamzah Muzaini), *Asian Migrants and Religious Experience: From Missionary Journeys to Labor Mobility* (Amsterdam University Press, 2018 with Bernardo Brown) and *Handbook of Asian Migrations* (Routledge, 2018 with Gracia Liu-Farrer).

Lue Fang is Research Fellow in the Asian Migration cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. Her research interests include acculturation and migration, youth psychological wellbeing and educational achievement. Her recent work has been focusing on psychological wellbeing of rural to urban migrant children in China and the impact of parental migration on left behind children's mental health in Southeast Asia.

Shiori Shakuto is Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asian Migration Cluster of the Asia Research Institute (ARI), National University of Singapore. She obtained her PhD in Anthropology from the Australian National University in 2017. Her research interests lie at the intersection between gender and mobilities, with a focus on how gender relations in Japan both affect, and are affected by, transnational movement to Southeast Asia. She received an inaugural ARI-FASS Manuscript Workshop Grant 2019 to develop her dissertation into a monograph, tentatively titled, 'Anxious Companionship: Japanese Silver Backpackers.' It presents a critique of patriarchy in retirement. Her research has been published in various journals including an article 'Post-work intimacy' in *American Ethnologist*. At ARI, she will be carrying out research on how the tsunami and nuclear disaster of 2011 has motivated some Japanese people to move to Southeast Asia and how such movement has been gendered.

Shu Min Yuen is a postdoctoral fellow at the Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore. Her key research interest is in gender and sexuality in contemporary Japan, with a particular focus on popular representations and the lived experiences of gender/sexual non-conforming people. She is interested in exploring the emergence and proliferation of Japanese (and more broadly, Asian) queer subjectivities with the aim of both interrogating structures of power and difference in Japan, as well as de-centering the hegemony of 'western' queer cultures/models. Her PhD dissertation, which was recently completed in 2015 at the School of Culture and Communication, the University of Melbourne, archives the cultural history of Female-to-Male transpeople in present-day Japan. As part of her continuing effort to account for trans lives in Japan, Dr Yuen will be examining the (trans)national border-crossing practices of Japanese transpeople in her post-doctoral project, which will be undertaken at the Centre for Gender Studies at the International Christian University (Tokyo).

Sylvia Ang is Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asian Migration Cluster, Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. Her research interests lie at the intersection of race and migration, including racism, co-ethnicity and Chineseness. She has published in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, Gender, Place and Culture, Journal of Intercultural Studies, Postcolonial Studies* and *Cultural Studies Review*. She is currently working on two projects: the first is a multi-sited grant project Transnational Relations, Ageing and Care Ethics (TRACE) where she investigates how older Singaporeans age and care in China; second, she is developing her PhD dissertation into a book preliminarily titled *Contesting Chineseness: new Chinese migrants and the politics of co-ethnicity.*

Theodora Lam is Research Fellow in Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (NUS). She obtained her PhD in Geography from NUS and her dissertation focused on understanding changing gender subjectivities, web of care and relationships within the family in the wake of transnational labour migration. Her research highlights the voices of return migrants as well as carers and children who have remained in the home countries. Theodora is currently involved in a longitudinal research project, Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia (CHAMPSEA): Waves 1 and 2. Her research interests cover transnational migration, children's geographies and gender studies. She has co-edited several special journal issues and has also published on themes relating to migration, citizenship and education in various journals and edited books including *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, *Environment and Planning A* and *Population, Space and Place*.