

# Understanding Asia: Transnational Care

## The Ends of Transnational Care: Aspirations of Ageing Migrant Domestic Workers

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16:00 – 18:00 c.t.

Zoom event

Since the 1970s, a significant number of migrant domestic workers from the Asian region (primarily from the Philippines, Indonesia, India, and Sri Lanka) have worked to sustain households in cities such as Singapore and Hong Kong. Amidst public debate about the ever-increasing need for migrant domestic workers to assist with eldercare in Asia, we hear little about their own futures. Based on ethnographic research, this talk traces the journeys of an older generation of migrant domestic workers who have spent much of their working lives abroad on temporary contracts. Given the restrictive long-term residence policies in the places in which they work, migrant domestic workers must return to their countries of origin upon retirement. The talk focuses on the ‘ends’ of transnational care, considering both the individual, collective and familial life projects and aspirations that long-term domestic workers have sought to cultivate in their years of work abroad; as well as the new aspirations that ageing domestic workers develop as they imagine their futures towards the end of their transnational working lives. I argue that the aspirations of migrant women, while initially stated in linear terms, rarely settle; rather, they take on novel and ambivalent forms that are often temporally at odds with the restrictive migration regimes which shape their transnational care trajectories.

**Dr. Megha Amrith** leads the ‘Ageing in a Time of Mobility’ Research Group at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity in Göttingen, Germany. The group examines the intersections between ageing and migration in diverse regions of the Global South. Her research interests are on migrant labour, care, ageing, inequalities, and belonging, with a current focus on ageing migrant domestic workers in Asia. She is author of the monograph *Caring for Strangers: Filipino Medical Workers in Asia* (NIAS Press, 2017).