Chapter 4
Enriching Journeys: Transnational Temporary Migration Between the Philippines and Europe

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This chapter examines the bidirectional migration flows between the Philippines and Europe and probes the sociocultural, economic and political aspects of the experiences of transnational temporary migrants in this migration corridor. The analysis draws on interviews with 80 individuals, including 33 Filipino returnees and visitors from Europe, 38 European migrants in the Philippines and 9 Filipino nonmigrants with family members who are temporary migrants in Europe. Temporary migration patterns between the Philippines and European countries derive from different triggering and maintenance factors. Temporary migration from the Philippines to Europe is largely fuelled by labour migration supplemented by smaller flows of student migration. Although admission requirements to Europe are stringent, policies concerning residence and family reunification provide a pathway to long-term residence and citizenship. Temporary migration from Europe to the Philippines is smaller in scale, comprising of migrants coming to the country as part of capital flows and development assistance. Except for retirees, many Europeans are in the Philippines temporarily, mostly in connection with their work. Both Filipino and European migrants view migration as enriching and expanding their worldview. Many of them participate as economic actors in the destination countries; they are less engaged as political actors. Migrants' views and experiences offer insights to improving migration policies in the Philippines and Europe.

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4.1   Introduction

In 2015, the number of international migrants worldwide reached an all-time high at 244 million (UN DESA, Population Division 2016), a 41% increase compared to 2000. While the population of international migrants has increased in absolute terms since 1960, its share to the world's population remains at around 3.3%. Yet, more adults would actually like to migrate if it were possible to do so. Gallup migration surveys between 2007 and 2010 show that some 700 million adults or 15% of the world's adult population 'would like to move to another country permanently if the opportunity arose' (Esipova et al. 2010–2011: 2). An earlier round of the survey found that more adults would like to migrate temporarily for work (26%) compared with those wanting to migrate to another country permanently (14%) (Esipova et al. 2011: 12).

Against this backdrop of global migration, this chapter focuses on the migration linkages between the Philippines and Europe and their sociocultural, economic and politico-legal dimensions. We employed the migration systems as an analytical lens in guiding our analysis of temporary migration between these two spaces. Initially used by A. L. Mabogunje to analyse rural-urban migration in the 1970s, it was later applied to international migration by Kritz et al. (1992) and was somehow over-taken by other developments in theoretical thinking about migration. The basic ideas of the migration systems approach in international migration remain relevant: (1) migration flows are to be considered in relation to other flows of capital, goods ideas and technology; (2) any one of these flows between origin and destination countries trigger and sustain other flows; and (3) over time, these flows contribute to the formation of systems. It is valuable because it 'forces researchers to consider both origin and destination contexts and the relationship between them' (Bakewell 2013: 314). On the other hand, it does not take account how systems are formed and is noncommittal on the role of human agency in creating, sustaining and transform-ing these flows. These gaps are addressed by transnationalism, particularly the aspect of human agency, and are acknowledged: within and across these spaces, migrants and nonmigrants create and sustain transnational connections and pro-cesses through cross-border social ties and practices (Faist 2014). We took from the migration systems approach the bidirectional perspective and drew from the litera-ture on transnationalism the centrality of human agency to examine transnational temporary migration flows between the Philippines and Europe. Based on inter-views conducted with international migrants in the Philippines-Europe migration corridor and several nonmigrants in the Philippines who have family members in Europe, this chapter probes three key questions: (1) What is the place of transna-tional migration in the lives of migrants, and how does it figure into their world-view? (2) Given the bordered context of transnational migration, how do migrants navigate the social, cultural, economic and political institutions in their transna-tional crossings? (3) How do migrants view the impact of transnational migration in their personal life, families and communities?

Following this introduction, Sect. 4.2 reviews data on transnational migration in the Philippines, both generally and in relation to Europe in particular. Section 4.3 presents the context by discussing previous studies and related literature on the

Philippines-Europe migration system and outlining our data sources and methodology. Section 4.4 presents key findings from the study. The final section closes the chapter with some indications of new insights and potential contributions to the literature.

4.1.1 The Philippines as Origin and Destination

Large numbers of Filipinos have been migrating internationally since the 1970s. By 2013, the stock of overseas Filipinos stood at 10.2 million, comprising of 4.9 million permanent migrants, 4.2 million temporary migrants (mostly migrant workers) and 1.2 million migrants in an irregular situation (Commission on Filipinos Overseas 2016). The Filipino diaspora accounts for 10% of the country's population. The economic impact of international migration is mostly felt through remittances (Asis and Roma 2010), a financial lifeline for many Filipino families and for the country as a whole. In 2015, remittance inflows to the Philippines were estimated at USD28.48 billion, up from 27.27 billion in 2014 (World Bank 2016). Despite an improving economy in recent years, overseas labour migration continues as the lack of decent jobs persists back home. Moreover, decades of large-scale international migration have created a society that is at home with transnational migration.

Two key external events in the 1970s accelerated contemporary migration from the Philippines. The first was the dismantling of immigration policies which used to favour immigration from Europe in traditional countries of settlement. The reforms started in the USA in 1965 and in the 1970s in Canada, Australia and New Zealand and signalled new immigration from other regions. Mostly through family reunification schemes, the Philippines became a major source country of immigrants to these settlement countries. Between 1981 and 2013, some two million Filipinos left the country to settle overseas, with yearly departures averaging 61,161 (CFO 2016). Most emigrants moved to the USA. Several countries in Europe, namely, Italy, Germany, the UK and Spain, are the major destination countries of Filipino emigrants to the continent (Asis and Battistella 2015; Battistella and Asis 2014; International Organization for Migration and Scalabrini Migration Center 2013).

The second key event was the huge demand for workers by the oil-rich Gulf countries, which triggered temporary labour migration. In 1975, some 36,035 Filipino workers (12,501 land-based workers, mostly to the Middle East, and 25,534 sea-based workers) left the country to work overseas (IOM and SMC 2013). Although intended to be temporary, overseas employment opportunities expanded to other regions (while also acknowledging the fragile state of the Philippine economy), and labour migration increased and expanded to the rest of the world's regions. The role of the institutionalisation of labour migration in the Philippines has also been advanced as an important factor in sustaining the phenomenon.[1] In

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[1] For details on the institutional and legal framework of international migration in the Philippines, see IOM and SMC (2013).

Table 4.1 Annual deployment of land-based Filipino workers by region, 2010–2014

Region	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Middle East	684,060	764,586	852,042	863,152	885,541
Asia	280,808	415,224	476,021	471,422	420,106
Europe	48,179	57,880	47,070	38,204	29,950
Italy	*25,595*	*31,704*	*25,261*	*19,556*	*14,786*
UK	*5,249*	*5621*	*3913*	*4255*	*3335*
Ireland[a]	*3,317*	*2874*	*1763*	*884*	*540*
Spain	*3,262*	*3477*	*3255*	*2542*	*1610*
Cyprus	*3,000*	*3797*	*3484*	*2182*	*2339*
Americas	25,613	27,679	29,553	29,191	27,615
Africa	25,207	28,531	25,194	26,294	22,240
Oceania	12,341	19,492	27,391	31,237	21,311
Trust territories	3,196	4236	3682	4317	3867
Not elsewhere classified	42,272	1099	853	362	20,212
Total	1,123,676	1,318,727	1,431,566	1,469,179	1,430,842

Source: POEA (n.d.)

[a]The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration records data separately for the UK and Ireland

2014 alone, 1.8 million Filipino workers—1.4 million land-based workers and close to 402,000 sea-based workers—were deployed overseas (Philippine Overseas Employment Administration n.d). Note that the share of rehires (i.e. workers returning to the same employer) is larger than new hires among the deployed workers.

Table 4.1 shows that the Middle East continues to be the primary destination of land-based Filipino migrant workers, seconded by Asia and Europe, a far third. The number of Filipino workers going to Europe has been on a decline since 2011 brought about by policy changes in destination countries (e.g. the UK has halted the recruitment of health workers from the Philippines). More than half of the Filipino workers migrating to Europe go to Italy.

By comparison, international migration to the Philippines has been much smaller compared to outflows, and data on this are not as widely available.[2] The 2010 census of population listed 12 European countries with at least 100 of their citizens present in the Philippines, of which the top five countries are the following: UK (3604), Germany (3184), Italy (1460), Spain (1099) and France (1014) (PSA-NSO 2012). These countries are also the major destinations of Filipinos in Europe.[3]

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[2] Interviews with officials/key staff of several European embassies in the Philippines indicated that they also had difficulty in estimating the number of their nationals in the country. In general, they were of the view that the number of their nationals present in the Philippines is growing.

[3] Based on *stock* estimates of overseas Filipinos, Germany and France rank among the major destinations of Filipinos in Europe (CFO 2016; see also ww.cfo.gov.ph/downloads/statistics/stock-estimates.html). These two countries do not figure in Table 4.1, which are *flow* statistics of overseas Filipino workers who were deployed to foreign countries for the years 2010–2014.

Foreigners coming to the Philippines may be admitted under three major categories: non-immigrant, immigrant and special resident visas.[4] Overall, the legal and policy framework for admitting foreigners to the Philippines is still anchored on the Philippine Immigration Act of 1940. In recent years, there had been calls to amend and update the immigration law.[5] In the meantime, some moves have been taken to relax visa restrictions to boost tourism and investments. Among the major changes in this regard is the granting of visa-free entry to nationals of 157 countries (as of 15 April 2014) for a length of stay of 7, 14, 30 and 59 days. Nationals of European countries do not need a visa for an initial stay of 30 days, which may be extended. Eligible *balikbayans* (Filipino returnees) and their immediate family members (spouse and children) can be admitted for an initial stay of 1 year, beyond which they may apply for an extension.

4.1.2 Filipino Migration to Europe and European Migration to the Philippines

As a destination for Filipino migrants, Europe falls between the strictly temporary labour migration regime in Asia (including the Gulf countries) on the one hand and the permanent or settlement migration in the USA and Canada in North America, on the other hand (Asis and Roma 2010). The migration of Filipinos, mostly women, to Italy, Spain and Greece in the 1970s started out as temporary migration, but shifted to long-term migration by the 1990s. The transformation has been helped by legalisation programmes which enabled the migrants to access residence and to avail of family reunification. A constant feature of Filipino migration to Europe is the predominance of care workers (mostly domestic workers, nurses and other health-care workers and au pairs). In Italy and Spain, the concentration of Filipinos (including men) in domestic work has had a double-edged impact on their occupational profile: on the one hand, they easily find employment in this sector due to a high demand for such work; on the other hand, they had been 'trapped' in this sector (Zanfrini and Sarli 2010; Villaroya Soler 2010), unable to venture into other occupations. In Spain, some Filipinos have found jobs in restaurants and hotels, where their knowledge of English has proved useful in dealing with tourists. Very few Filipinos go into self-employment or entrepreneurship (Maas 2005, 2011; Fresnoza-Flot and Pecoud 2007); for the great majority, including those who had been in Europe for a long time, paid employment is the preferred option.

An edited volume on the history and development of Filipino migration to Europe, authored by Filipino migrants themselves (Hoegsholm 2007), provides an

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[4] For details, *see* 'Visas and Visa Inquiry' in FAQs in http://www.immigration.gov.ph.

[5] During the 16th Congress, Senate Bill 2204 (Philippine Immigration Act of 2014) was filed for the purpose of reorganising the Bureau of Immigration and to support national security and economic development concerns (Republic of the Philippines 2014). It was targeted for approval before the end of the regular session in June 2015 (Monzon 2015), but it did not prosper.

overview of the different types of migrants, destination countries and organisations and communities formed by Filipinos to address their manifold needs. More recent research in Italy and Spain have uncovered the active transnational activities of Filipinos and the potential role of migrants' associations in linking Filipinos to institutions in the destination countries and to institutions in the home country (Zanfrini and Sarli 2010; Villaroya Soler 2010; Asis and Roma 2010; Baggio and Asis 2008). The turn to settlement in Europe has also cast attention to the young generation. This is a diverse group which includes those 'left behind' in the Philippines (Zanfrini and Asis 2006; Asis 2008a; Fresnoza-Flot 2009), the 1.5 generation (i.e. those born in the Philippines and immigrate as children/youth to Europe (Zanfrini and Asis 2006; Nagasaka and Fresnoza-Flot 2015) and the second generation (Zanfrini and Sarli 2010; Zanfrini and Asis 2006; Llangco 2013). These changes suggest that concerns about temporary labour migration (e.g. protection and welfare) are giving way to questions about transnational links and integration.

Research on contemporary European migration to the Philippines has been very sparse. One of the few studies pertains to the Dutch in the Philippines (Van den Muijzenberg 2003). Although small in number, Dutch volunteers played a key role in cementing links between the Philippines and the Netherlands, particularly in supporting development projects and disseminating information about the Philippines during the martial law period.

Thus, the existing literature on temporary migration between the Philippines and Europe is far from comprehensive and is notably uneven. Some indications that Filipino migration may be reaching a plateau in some destinations (e.g. Italy, Spain and the UK) may imply emerging and new issues and trajectories that will need research attention. The ageing of older waves of migrants, identity and integration issues of the younger generation and the transnational connections of different generations to the home country are among the trends to watch out for. Meanwhile, very little is known about European migration to the Philippines. Understanding the basics of this counterflow (the who, what, why and how) will contribute to a fuller picture of international migration in the Philippine context. Indeed, while the Philippines is mainly an origin country, in our globalised and migratory context, clear-cut distinctions between origin, transit and destination countries are no longer fixed.

4.2 Data Collection

Data for the study were collected through interviews with 80 individuals comprising 71 former or current international migrants and 9 Filipino nonmigrants who had family members in Europe. The interviews were conducted in the Philippines between September 2014 and September 2015. The definition of temporary migrants in the EURA-NET project, i.e. persons residing in another country for at least 3 months to at most 5 years, guided the screening and selection of interviewees. Some interviewees whose length of stay did not strictly meet the time criterion were still included nevertheless, as their experiences yielded interesting insights on

Table 4.2 Profiles of interviewees in the Philippines

Temporary migrants from the Philippines to Europe	Country of destination	Gender	Total
Returnee migrants	UK (7), Germany (4), Italy (5), Netherlands (4), Spain (4), Norway (3), Switzerland (2), Denmark (1), Finland (1), France (1), Scotland (1)	M (10), F (23)	33
Temporary migrants from Europe to the Philippines	**Nationality**	**Gender**	**Total**
Family-based movers	Germany (2), Finland (2), Belgium (1), France (1), Netherlands (1), Switzerland (1)	M (5), F (3)	8
Highly skilled workers	Germany (6), Spain (5), France (1), Netherlands (1), Belgium (2), Finland (1), Italy (1)	M (11), F (6)	17
Lifestyle seekers	Germany (2), Italy (1), Switzerland (1), UK (1)	M (5), F (0)	5
Students	Germany (3), Poland (1), Switzerland (1)	M (0), F (5)	5
Others	France (1), Belgium (2)	M (1), F (2)	3
Nonmigrants (Philippines)	**Previous migration experience**	**Gender**	**Total**
Family members	Yes (4), No (5)	M (2), F (7)	9

transnational migration and the shifts from temporary to permanent migration or vice versa.

In the absence of data that can be used to identify and select eligible interviewees, the recruitment of interviewees relied largely on referrals and snowball sampling. Interviews were conducted in nine sites in the Philippines: Metro Manila, Laguna, Ilocos Norte, Cagayan, Cebu, Bohol, Iloilo, Capiz and Davao del Sur. Half of the interviews were conducted in Metro Manila, and the rest were distributed in provinces across the three major island groupings of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. Except for three interviews which were conducted via Skype, the rest were face-to-face interviews.

Table 4.2 presents the profile of the interviewees. Three types of interviewees participated in the study: 33 Filipinos who have returned from Europe within the last 5 years or were visiting, 38 European migrants in the Philippines, and 9 nonmigrants, i.e. Filipinos with family members who are temporary migrants in Europe. Of the 80 interviewees, 46 were women and 34 were men and their ages ranged from 22 to 77 years old. Filipino returnees and visitors from Europe included students (including one trainee) who pursued postgraduate programmes, domestic workers, a few professionals (including missionaries), tourists and workers who left the Philippines using a student visa. Professionals employed by international organisations and non-government organisations (NGOs) formed the largest group of Europeans in the Philippines, while the rest were visiting researchers, students and volunteers. Eight Europeans who have acquired permanent residence in the

Philippines were included in the study. They started out as temporary migrants who later applied for permanent residence, mostly because of marriage to Filipino nationals. The inclusion of nonmigrants in the sample provides insights about transnational migration from the perspective of family members based in the Philippines.

4.3 Migration Processes

Migration was a common experience for most of the interviewees. However, in comparing their experiences, carrying a European or a Filipino passport makes a significant difference in the ease with which they cross borders and shaping to some extent migrant trajectories.

4.3.1 Europeans Coming to the Philippines

Most of the European interviewees began travelling to other countries as children when their families would spend vacations in other countries. They started migrating independently during their student days, travelling mostly as backpackers. Later in their adult life, migration became part of their work, particularly for those involved in the development and humanitarian fields. For the highly skilled migrants, coming to the Philippines was not a conscious decision, but was dictated more by job opportunities. Once they were in the Philippines and had gradually settled, some of them learned to appreciate life in the country. One interviewee had this to say about his discoveries and his reasons for staying:

> [I like] The people, of course. That's number one. If you don't like the people, you leave. Number two, the professional perspectives. There is future in the Philippines at least for people of my academic and professional background. Apart from people and work, the third reason for which I want to stay in the Philippines, is that it has unlimited options for tourism. (Aldo, 1986, male, highly skilled, Spain)

Interviewees with children also appreciated the available school options in the Philippines, which were an added incentive to accepting their job posts. They hoped to stay in the country until their children completed their studies. For most, moving again to work in another country was a goal for career development and other reasons. Only a few mentioned returning to their home countries in the future, suggesting a strong transnational orientation:

> I'm still young. I want to go to other places. Next, maybe in Africa or another Southeast Asian country. I don't really want to go back. So, for me, it's clear that I'm probably going to leave. Where I'm going to go, how fast I'm going to go, will depend on my personal situation. If I would have an offer, I would stay here... You wouldn't want to move to South Sudan or Syria if you have little kids. I wouldn't do that... Which also means that the earlier I go to these places, the better for me. (Johann, 1985, male, highly skilled, Germany)

4.3.2 Filipinos Returning from Europe

The Filipino interviewees had varying levels of international travels before migrating to their respective destination countries in the region. As a group, student returnees were well travelled: 14 of them had travelled or migrated to other countries before they pursued graduate studies or training in Europe. None of them encountered problems with their visa application; many were provided assistance by their universities in this regard. Whether they were in Finland, France, Italy, the Netherlands or the UK, none of them reported having experienced discrimination. The scholarship programme of six interviewees required them to render service to their home institution; thus, their return to the Philippines was given. All were happy to return to the Philippines, although none of them could categorically say that they were back for good. Plans for further studies and marriage or relationship with European nationals were common reasons for thinking about returning to Europe. For this particular group of returnees, returning to the Philippines was not necessarily the end of migration. For quite a number of them, their return was temporary to pursue other life goals mentioned earlier. Except for one interviewee who imagined herself growing old in Europe, the rest planned on returning to the Philippines at some point.

Among the migrant workers, five women had been employed as domestic workers in Italy and Spain. Two had travelled or worked overseas before going to Europe. Nora (female, 1938, low-skilled worker, Philippines) previously worked as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia and later in Brunei. She was 54 years old when she migrated to Italy in 1992 to work in the same occupation. Her transnational search for employment has kept her away from the Philippines for an extended period of time, but with the intent to return to the Philippines someday. Four migrated to Europe through legal channels; they were either petitioned by family members or their family members found employers who hired them and provided the necessary papers. Two entered Italy as irregular migrants in the 1990s, paying an agent to arrange their entry to Italy from the former Yugoslavia. The regularisation programme in Italy allowed them to legalise their stay. None of them applied for citizenship because they did not plan to stay in Europe permanently. In fact, five of the six had already returned to the Philippines for good: three were in their 70s (including Nora), while the two younger women returned to take care of ageing parents or to be present at home to guide their children. The return of elderly migrants who had worked for many years in Europe is primarily retirement-related, while for the relatively younger returnees, familial responsibilities compelled their return to the Philippines.

Lay missionaries Raquel (female, highly skilled, 1948, Philippines) and Ellen (female, highly skilled, 1949, Philippines) had different trajectories in their European sojourn.[6] Raquel was based mostly in the Philippines but had been to Europe several times. She was assigned to Spain in 1970–1976 to teach English and

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[6] In the Catholic church, a lay association refers to an organisation of laypeople (i.e. those who are not members of the clergy) who promote the Gospel in their ordinary life. They work in schools and universities, mass media, health care and research.

was sent anew to Italy from 2006 to 2012 as a member of their association's general council. Her last assignment included travelling to Africa to support the association's communities and projects in the continent. She returned to the Philippines in 2012 and had since been visiting Europe several times for short vacations. Ellen, on the other hand, spent a total of 42 years in Europe (2 years in Italy and 40 years as a teacher in the UK), gaining UK citizenship in the process (while retaining her Philippine citizenship). Her long stay in the UK was unplanned; it turned out that way because she was given one assignment after another. She returned to the Philippines in 2014. Ellen had lived in the UK longer than she had lived in the Philippines, her country of birth, but for her, her decades of living in the UK were 'just' temporary. Both have retired from teaching, but they continue to support the work of the association. They help in translating materials from English to Spanish and vice versa. One of them established an educational foundation providing assistance to support the schooling of children from poor families.

Carol (female, highly skilled, 1958, Philippines) went to Europe to study in the UK temporarily, but stayed thereafter because of her marriage to a Swiss national. She had been living and working in Switzerland and other parts of Europe for 20 years, retaining her Philippine citizenship all along. She and her family returned to the Philippines in 2013 after many years of planning for their return. It is possible, however, that they may live elsewhere at some point, because the children are Swiss citizens. Every year, they return to Switzerland to visit her parents-in-law and for the children to maintain their links to their country of birth.

Like European migration to the Philippines, migration from the Philippines to Europe is also economic-driven, particularly motivated by finding employment and higher incomes. Educational and scholarship opportunities offered another window to migrate temporarily to Europe, with some being required to return to render service to the home country upon completion of their studies.

The study also captured reluctant returnees, as in the case of five migrant workers who used a student visa to gain admission to Norway and the UK. They dealt with an agent or consultant to help them with the visa application, shelling out a large amount to fund their migration. According to three of the interviewees, they spent between EUR 13,460 and EUR 38,460[7] to migrate to Norway and the UK. Funding the migration project was provided by family members pooling resources, including loans. Failing to obtain a work permit, they had to return to the Philippines. Three out of the five returnees expressed plans of remigrating elsewhere, hoping to realise their plans to work overseas in other destinations.

Interestingly, some of the nonmigrants had also experienced transnational mobility for different purposes, ranging from leisure travel or tourism to staying overseas for work or further studies. Some of them also had plans of visiting their family members in Europe. The term 'nonmigrants' thus only indicates that they are based in the Philippines; it does not adequately capture their previous migration history, their comings and goings and their future migration plans.

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[7] The interviewees spent between Php 700,000 and Php 2,000,000, a very substantial amount in the Philippine context. As of this writing, the exchange rate is about Php 52.00 to a Euro.

4.4 Navigating the Transnational Life

4.4.1 Politico-legal Aspects

Transnational migrants encounter the politico-legal aspects of migration through admission and integration policies. The admission policies of the Philippines and Europe impose different requirements for transnational migrants traversing the Philippines-Europe migration corridor. They present the first hurdle for migrants. Having gained entry, daily living, employment and interaction with the local population and local institutions pose subsequent challenges for transnational migrants as they carve a life in countries in which they are not nationals.

For most of the Europeans coming to the Philippines, their entry to the country was described as easy, particularly for those working for international organisations that provided assistance in dealing with immigration-related matters. However, dealing with the extension of stay was either confusing because of arbitrary or changing requirements and the bureaucratic maze. Those based outside of Metro Manila had to wait longer for decisions on their cases because regional offices had to consult with the Manila headquarters. Interviewees also mentioned the fees (i.e. emigration clearance certificate and travel tax) they had to pay each time they travelled outside the Philippines.

Visa issues presented a problem to some interviewees, with a number of them relying on the extension of their tourist visas to remain in country longer. For example, those not legally married to their Filipino partners cannot apply for permanent residence, which was a problem for Norbert (male, highly skilled, 1982, Germany), who followed his Filipino partner to the Philippines. In his 4 years of residing and working in the Philippines (broken by yearly visits to his parents in Germany), he just kept on extending his tourist visa. In legal terms, he violated the terms of his tourist visa and was an irregular migrant worker in the Philippines. His workplace had yet to comply with some requirements so that it could properly apply for work permits for the foreign personnel in its employ. Norbert did not indicate that the constant extension was troublesome. Jeni (female, highly skilled, 1984, Germany) was supposed to take on a university appointment in the Philippines; it did not materialise because she was not able to get a working visa. Because visa processing took a long time, she ended up not pursuing the post. Meanwhile, interns found it easier to enter the country on a tourist visa and to apply for an extension of their stay later.

The visa issues faced by the European migrants in the Philippines arise from bureaucratic limitations rather than other issues such as discrimination. However, though European interviewees reported that they did not experience discrimination in the Philippines, many commented on receiving undue attention because of being visibly foreign. Michelle (female, highly skilled, n.d., Finland) said locals would often comment about her white skin and blue eyes. She also felt that she was getting special treatment (e.g. being served first in parties) because she was a foreigner; she would prefer to be treated like everybody else. Several interviewees mentioned their

discomfort with the perception that they were rich. Outside of Metro Manila, the scrutiny can be more intense because of fewer foreigners. European women with Filipino spouses or partners received a lot of attention because this partnership is less common than that which involves a European man and a Filipino woman.

For the Filipinos who went to Europe, the visa application process required many documents but was otherwise straightforward. However, those who intended to work in Europe but had no work permit had to use intermediaries or informal networks and invested an enormous amount of money to gain a foothold in Europe. The use of mediators is a tricky issue, as some migrants who go through irregular channels may be at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking (Asis 2008b). According to the Filipino interviewees, they did not experience discrimination in Europe. Interestingly, their adjustment and sense of being at home in the countries of destination were aided by the network of Filipinos and/or membership in Filipino organisations. Those in Italy and Spain had many family members living in these countries, and their days off were typically spent with other family members.

Social networks were conduits of information about employment which enabled migrants to land a job easily. The downside of network-mediated employment is getting the same occupation as co-ethnics, thereby creating an occupational niche associated with the group. One event that brought Filipinos beyond their family circle is the celebration of Philippine Independence Day every June 12, an event spearheaded by the Philippine Embassy. For most Filipinos, the church serves as an important gathering place.[8] The Catholic church in Italy, for instance, has long provided a social space for Filipinos and has developed a variety of pastoral programmes providing them support (Cominelli, as cited in Osteria et al. 2013: 423).

In terms of participation in political groups or labour unions, both Filipino and European interviewees did not have much engagement with such organisations during their stay overseas. For Filipinos in Europe, family, ethnic and church networks were the main organisations that they were part of. Several European interviewees specifically mentioned steering clear of political involvement in the Philippines, particularly for those working for international organisations, which probably need to maintain a neutral political stance. The exceptions were Norman (male, highly skilled, 1955, Germany) and Christine (female, highly skilled, 1985, France) whose work involves engagement with local institutions. As an activist, Norman has been involved in political activities in the Philippines for many years, while Christine's work with an NGO requires her to deal with local officials. For the majority, the Bureau of Immigration was the only government agency they had dealt with.

Europeans in the Philippines were not inclined to form or to be part of associations with co-nationals. None of the European interviewees were members of national or expatriate clubs. Some interviewees commented that they could not relate with such clubs whose members typically include well-placed old timers and/or big businesspeople. The interviewees viewed these clubs as exclusive social spaces for privileged co-nationals whose realities were removed from their own.

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[8] Most Filipinos are Roman Catholic. Some of the Filipino interviewees also attended other Christian churches when they were in Europe.

4.4.2 Socio-economic Aspects

The interviewees had various reasons for their migration, but the search for employment was the primary driver for the migration of Filipinos and Europeans alike. The two groups, however, differed in terms of the number of migrants involved, their profiles and occupations and the socio-economic impacts of their mobility.

For European migrants who sought employment in the Philippines, living in the country has given them benefits and privileges that come with their positions as 'expats' or international staff. Many live in condominium units, while those with spouses and children live in houses, some within a gated subdivision. They can afford to hire a chauffeur or personal driver for their families and a domestic worker or a nanny to help them with chores that they would normally do on their own if they lived in Europe. Many of the respondents recognised the stark difference between their lifestyle in the Philippines compared to how they lived in previous destination countries.

A number of Europeans who had been in the Philippines for some time were considered as local hires by their companies, and, thus, they did not fetch the same salary as those who were hired from the outside. While the local hires earned enough to live comfortably in the Philippines, they cannot afford yearly travels to Europe to visit their families. They also expressed concern (or their parents did) that since they are working outside Europe (and outside the fold of international organisations), they will not be covered by the pension system. An interviewee from France who had spent some time living overseas said that his generation will not be able to enjoy the pension system that provided protective cover for earlier generations. This was less of a concern for those connected with international organisations which not only offer a compensation package and incentives but also assure them of continuing membership in their national pension systems.

Several European retirees or long-term residents started an enterprise in the Philippines in partnership with their spouses or partners. Two of them started a school, one put up a family bar, while one opened a coffee shop and another one is operating an inn. All of these businesses are based outside Metro Manila. Meanwhile, those who did not engage in any income-generating activity were living off their pension. For most, their pension was sufficient to maintain their life in the Philippines; however, some expressed concern whether their pension would be sufficient in the long run especially for medical bills or covering the expenses of their families. In general, almost all European migrants did not send remittances to their families. Some interviewees, in observing the remitting behaviour of Filipinos, said that sending remittances to their families is not part of their practice.

After almost four decades of migration to Europe, the occupations of Filipinos are mostly in domestic work in countries such as Italy and Spain and, recently, in the health-care sector in the UK. Only one of the long-term residents in Europe went into business. On the whole, Filipinos across the different occupations experienced decent work conditions. Occasionally, domestic workers encountered demanding or difficult employers, but none reported having experienced exploitative conditions.

Most of them considered themselves fortunate for having employers who treated them like family members. Their employers showed concern not only for them but also for their family members. For example, Nelia (female, low-skilled worker, 1943, Philippines) shared how her employer tried to comfort her when her husband died. Her employer sponsored all her three children so that they can come and work in Italy. When Nelia visits her children in Italy, she does not fail to visit her employer and her employer's now grown-up children who remain close to her. Those who pursued graduate studies or training in Europe acknowledged that their international experience had been helpful, and the expertise they brought back with them is appreciated in their workplace.

Most Filipino interviewees reported sending remittances to their families in the Philippines. Even students reported either saving money or sending financial support back home, given the substantial funding they received from their study grants or scholarships. Several migrants sent remittances to support projects in their home communities—feeding programmes for children and donations to improve school facilities are some initiatives supported by migrants. Philanthropic practices of Filipino migrants are not uncommon (e.g. Baggio and Asis 2006). Apart from individual migrant giving, examples of collective donations to support for projects in the Philippines have been documented (Asis et al. 2010).

Due to their different occupations and incomes, European and Filipino interviewees have contrasting lifestyles. Many of the European professionals have the means to afford middle- to upper-class living; in the case of retirees, their pension is sufficient to live comfortably in the Philippines. Meanwhile, the Filipino migrant workers in Europe live in modest accommodation and focused their energies to earning a living, including taking on part-time jobs, to maximise their incomes.

4.4.3   Sociocultural Aspects

For most Filipino and European migrants, their migration experiences have been enriching, exposing them and opening their minds to different cultures. Several interviewees considered migration as promoting a sense of global citizenship. For Filipinos, particularly the younger ones, living apart from their families taught them to become independent. Overall, migrants adjusted to the conditions in their destination countries. When asked how their migration experience has changed them, some of the European migrants with extensive migration backgrounds said the following:

> I think definitely it opens your mind and makes you see things differently. I think it has made me less rigid... And yeah, also seeing different cultures. It really helps to [relativise] everything. But the negative part is that you tend to get lost. When you ask where is your home, you don't know anymore. (Leslie, 1970, female, highly skilled, Belgium)
>
>   It certainly enriches. If you immerse yourself in the place where you are—if you don't do that ... then you miss out... I don't think it changes your technical skills per se, but your sensitivity to the local context where you work. Whether it's political, social or cultural. If

you don't have an antenna for that, then in my opinion—you can be the best technical expert in the world, but you will always fail. If you are unable to communicate, if you are unable to negotiate, in the place where you work, then... that's when language becomes important. (Hubert, 1968, male, highly skilled, Netherlands)

In comparing their experiences of living in the Philippines and other destination countries, most of the European migrants appreciated the tropical climate, the friendliness and ease of talking to Filipinos (many speak English well) and access to cheap services. Those who were based in Metro Manila commented on its Americanised culture, pollution, traffic problems, the notable gap between the rich and the poor, the absence or lack of public space and the proliferation of malls, which some of them did not like. Adjusting to life in the Philippines was easy for most Europeans, especially compared to other places they had been to. For leisure, many of them would travel outside Metro Manila or engage in outdoor sports. Travelling to other places in the country is very affordable since airfares are cheap. Some were enthused with the Philippines' beautiful natural environment.

Christine (1985, female, highly skilled, France) has adjusted to living in the country, except for one thing:

The only thing I don't get used to is to see old, white disgusting people with young, beautiful Filipinas [laughs]. I guess this is something that I will… and I don't want to get used to. . . . I guess sometimes, you know, they're in love and good for them, but…I'm not sure it's always the case.

Her discomfort may come from stereotypes about moneyed Caucasian men taking advantage of young women from an economically disadvantaged background. The phenomenon of mail-order brides in the 1980s (which has morphed into commercially arranged marriages) has fed this stereotype both in the Philippines and in Europe (Asis and Battistella 2015: 21).

Most European interviewees said it was easy to interact with Filipinos; the wide use of English in the Philippines helps in communicating with the locals. Also, the presence of many foreigners, especially in big cities, also reduces the feeling of being an outsider. Many of them have both foreign and Filipino friends. However, some interviewees said that while Filipinos are generally friendly, establishing deep friendships is another matter. Some interviewees said they had to learn in interacting with Filipinos, particularly the local staff they work with. Diana (female, highly skilled, 1984, Spain), for instance, observed that some Filipinos can be sensitive and that one must be tactful in dealing with them.

Filipino interviewees commented on differences in food, climate and culture between the Philippines and the European countries they lived in. The efficiency of the public system in European countries impressed many, and the contrast with the inefficient system in the Philippines was a common lament. Most said they were able to adjust in their respective destination countries; for the migrant workers, the most challenging adjustment was learning the language. Those in domestic work learned the local language from their employers, but since they did not have other co-workers and they did not have much interaction with others, their language skills were basic. Students were enrolled in English programmes; hence, many did not

have the opportunity to learn the local language. In general, the role of religion or faith life is more important for Filipinos than for European migrants. It is interesting to note, though, that there might be generational or class differences. Almost all the Filipino worker retirees considered religion as very important in their life, citing their faith in God as their anchor. In contrast, this was less salient among the student group.

Most of the Filipino returnees said they did not really experience major adjustments when they came back, although they had to get re-accustomed to some conditions, such as the noise and the climate:

> It was not difficult for me to re-adjust or re-adapt to people. Because, well, I was talking to them on the phone a lot of the time when I was in Europe, and even in Singapore. So, my adjustment primarily was the context. Meaning, the situation of the country, the environment. With the ties, not so much. (Alyssa, 1978, female, highly skilled, Philippines)

Regular visits to the Philippines keep the connections and memories alive. For many interviewees, the Philippines is home; thus, adjustments for those who return for visits and those who have returned more or less for good, if any, were uneventful. However, they acknowledged missing the discipline and efficiency they experienced in their host countries. On the other hand, some of them had a renewed appreciation of close family ties, Filipino culture and values and the natural environment of the Philippines. When asked what he valued in the Philippines, Jerold (male, highly skilled, 1985, Philippines), a returnee from the UK, highlighted the resilience of Filipinos especially in times of crisis or disasters. These responses reflect that temporary migrants' appreciation of the cultural norms and values of their home and destination countries is a differentiated and selective process. Migration invites comparisons between home and destination countries, but the assessment of positive and negative aspects of the places they had been is multifaceted.

Both European and Filipino migrants regularly maintained contact with their family and friends in their home countries and in other parts of the world, usually through the following: video chat using Facetime or Skype, call or messaging applications for mobile phones like Viber and WhatsApp, social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter and e-mails or phone calls. Some keep in touch with their professional contacts in previous destination countries, especially those who worked for international organisations and who studied abroad.

Many European migrants visited their home countries once or twice a year. The visits were occasions to introduce their children to their home countries and to meet their relatives. In the Philippines, they are occasionally visited by family members and friends from Europe who also take the opportunity to tour different parts of the country. Several interviewees said that due to the negative press about the Philippines, their families and friends expressed concerns about their safety in the country. Most Filipino migrant workers regularly visit the Philippines; it is less common for family and friends to visit them in Europe. Students were less likely to return to the Philippines for visits, except for those conducting fieldwork in the Philippines.

Notions of home drew a variety of reflections. Several European interviewees cited their countries of origin as home because that is where they grew up and where their family is based. Many of the migrants considered the Philippines as home

because it is where they are currently living, although some said they do not feel the Philippines can really be their home. Others said home is about their relations with the people that truly matter to them. In the case of Hernan, the Philippines is home because it is where his Filipina wife and children are:

> I think it's more now home in the Philippines...because I have family here. Home is where your family is... I live with my family. So that's home. (Hernan, 1955, male, highly skilled, Spain)

> I would say both [are] home. I think the place where you were born and where you grew up is somehow still a special home to you... I would say both are home for me, but there's still a kind of stronger feeling towards your place of birth and where you grew up. (Harmon, 1974, male, highly skilled, Germany)

> I have my home 'home' which is where I grew up. If I go there, everything is very familiar... But you know, you also see how it changes over time. It kind of changes without you... In general, it's more of a shifting concept for me, because in other places, I can also feel at home... because it's familiar. And after a while, if you haven't been to a place in a while, then you return, and you go and you see all these places and you see these associations... and it kind of feels like home. But, you feel it's moving on without you, and it changes, and you don't really feel part of it anymore. But, everything is so familiar. You know. It's a strange feeling. And also the people, they always change. People I studied with in different countries, most of them are gone there. Most of my friends from my school, they don't live on our island anymore because there's no prospects for them, no jobs. So, it's less the people, it's more the place for me. And now I feel at home here. It takes about a minimum of six months, I think? And then you feel like... Yeah, this is where I am, this is my home now. (Johann, 1985, male, highly skilled, Germany)

Diana thinks the Philippines is a temporary home, but her home will always be the country where she grew up. Pau (male, 1981, highly skilled, Spain) is less certain about what home means for him:

> It depends... Sometimes you think about Spain as home, but when you are there, you realise it's not your home anymore...The point is that in the end, maybe you just go there on holiday, so you are not there for a long time. You feel out of context there. You don't feel really home.

Among Filipino migrants, many consider the Philippines as home, mainly because it is where their families and friends are and where they want to settle for good. For Josefa (female, less skilled, 1944, Philippines), home is her house in her hometown where she was born and where she grew up in. Alyssa's definition of home is 'connected to people', particularly her family and husband:

> It's really where the people you value most are based... So, the roots are not physical, it's more emotional, the idea of home. (Alyssa, 1978, female, highly skilled, Philippines)

> Home is still where my parents are. I never really intended to settle down anywhere else other than the Philippines. I just went out to train, to get skills. (Carmelo, 1979, male, highly skilled, Philippines)

The experiences of European and Filipino migrants in their countries of destination reflect temporary migrants' capacities for adjustment and adaptation, which may have been honed by previous experiences of migration and international

travels. A significant aspect of their transnational lives is maintaining connections to family members, to close friends and, to a lesser extent, professional contacts. Temporary migrants viewed 'home' in different ways, suggesting a degree of fluidity and ambiguity in defining the concept (Lam and Yeoh 2004; Vertovec 2004). Although some migrants may have more than one home, the notion of home in relation to the family or the place where one grew up in continues to hold a special place for migrants.

Overall, findings show that despite their different backgrounds and different migration routes, Filipino migrants to Europe and European migrants to the Philippines share some similarities. For both groups, temporary migration is an opportunity-driven phenomenon, with motivations ranging from socio-economic factors (e.g. employment, income) to sociocultural ones (e.g. lifestyle, searching for a partner). Many of the migrants were able to adapt to destination countries through their social networks (in the case of Filipinos) and professional networks (mostly in the case of the Europeans in the Philippines). Few relied on host government institutions to facilitate their adjustment in the destination countries. Sociocultural transformations were common across different types of migrants, although many of them were not politically active in the destination countries.

Striking differences can also be noted in the migration experiences of these two groups of migrants. Filipino migrants to Europe had to comply with more requirements and faced more restrictions in seeking admission to European destinations. Once legally admitted, Europe offers a pathway for residence, which not only allowed for family reunification but also transformed temporary migration to settlement. Europeans coming to the Philippines were less burdened with requirements by comparison. However, beyond admission, it is difficult for Europeans (and foreign nationals in general) to acquire residency in the country. In terms of occupation, less-skilled migrants dominated Filipino migration to Europe, while highly skilled migrants were the majority of those coming to Europe. Compared to European migrants, Filipino migrants' social networks played a significant role in chain migration and inclining them to niche employment (domestic work and other care work) in European countries. Remitting to their families in the Philippines was a common practice for the Filipino migrants, but not for Europeans. It can be argued that Filipinos send remittances because they need to support their families back home (which motivated them to migrate in the first place). It is also possible that there are cultural underpinnings why Filipinos remit and Europeans do not, one of which is the different expectations of individual and family responsibilities.

4.5   Conclusion

The bidirectional exploration of migration flows between the Philippines and Europe produced some interesting insights about some lesser known aspects of mobility in this migration corridor. We highlight several of these in this section.

The study's findings suggest that the emergence and evolution of temporary migration between these two spaces derive from different triggering and maintenance factors. Migration from the Philippines to Europe has been largely fuelled by people flows responding to employment opportunities in Europe. Migration increased and was sustained by the transnational connections between migrants and nonmigrants. In Europe, Filipino migrants forge 'thick' social ties with other Filipino migrants. Such family and ethnic networks have shaped their economic and social adaptation in the destination countries. Migrants maintain links with nonmigrants in the Philippines. The possibility for family reunification in Europe has contributed to sustaining migration flows and transforming temporary labour migration into settlement.

Much of European migration to the Philippines has been triggered by investment flows and development assistance. These flows had been accompanied by the migration of European professionals employed by multinational companies and international organisations. Due to limited employment opportunities for foreigners in the Philippines, migration from the Philippines to Europe remains small in scale and mostly temporary. For work-related migrants, the Philippines was an assignment rather than a choice destination. However, uncertain conditions in Europe, such as the ongoing economic crisis at the time of the study, are also contributing to emigration from the region. For the younger migrants, the main driver was the search for better work prospects, while for the older ones, it was mostly affordable retirement (and warmer weather). The role of ethnic networks in triggering or sustaining further migration to the Philippines is not as important as Filipino migration to Europe. An acknowledgement of Europe also as an origin region of migrants holds implications for promoting dialogue and reciprocity in its engagement with third countries.

The study has uncovered insights about the return migration of Filipinos from Europe. (In general, the migration literature in the Philippines is mostly about those who leave, and little is known about those who return.) The return of talents who acquired education from Europe and the return of workers in their old age suggest different challenges and opportunities for the Philippines, which can be explored further in future research.

The study has contributed in filling some knowledge gaps about European migration to the Philippines and about the Philippines as a destination country. It would be interesting to examine the transnational practices of European migrants in the Philippines and in other parts of Asia. To date, the literature on transnationalism has traditionally focused on the transnational practices of migrants from the developing countries to more developed destination countries.[9] Furthermore, as a destination country, the governance framework of international migration to the Philippines remains focused on admission policies. Once foreign nationals are already in the country, the protection of their rights and providing programmes and assistance to integrate them in society are issues which have yet to receive policy attention.

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[9] Beaverstock (2011), for instance, has done research on British expatriates in Singapore.

Finally, the ways in which temporary migration becomes permanent settlement, or how permanent settlement enables migrants to engage in transnational practices, suggest some fluidity in the presumed distinctions between temporary migration and permanent migration. A time element is often part of defining what constitutes temporary migration in policies and legal instruments. As illustrated by the views and experiences of migrants in the study (e.g. Filipino migrants in Europe who did not acquire citizenship because they had plans of returning to the Philippines or European migrants who are on tourist visas but have been extending their stay in the Philippines), the temporariness in temporary migration is not only time-bound, but is also a state of mind.

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