

1. How does your research engage with methods and approaches within your discipline? (200 words)

My research built on three areas of scholarship in sociology: sociology of gender, political sociology, and sociology of culture. The sociological approach to gender as a social structure at the macro-level that is linked with an interpersonal interaction at the micro-level is central to my project. My study draws on political sociology in the areas of citizenship, migration, and state formation, especially critically engaging with the notion of “mode of incorporation,” demonstrating the heterogeneity of incorporation regimes within one nation-state. My attention to discursive frames in the process of boundary-making in citizenship comes from sociology of culture, with its emphasis on discourse as cultural structures that people rely on for meaning-making. Ethnographic method is integral to the study of culture in practice, particularly observing how people make use of cultural repertoires in interaction. I bring these three scholarships together in the practice of citizenship at the margins, examining how gendered discursive frames are used in interactional borderwork between citizens and non-citizens for the citizenship practices of migrant women.

2. How do other disciplinary approaches, concepts and debates inform your research? (200 words)

My study draws on the anthropological approaches to citizenship, often referred to as the “cultural citizenship” literature, which focuses on people’s sense of belonging, performance of citizenship, and discipline and power embedded in citizenship. By interrogating the margins of the state as a central site of borderwork, my study also resonates with the recent anthropological attempt to re-conceptualize the state from people’s lived experiences. My approach to gender as intersecting with other structures of social inequality, notably race and sexuality, was developed through women’s studies, particularly postcolonial feminist theory. Emphasizing borderwork as a reciprocal process between migrant women and actors in the host society, I take into account migrant women’s agency as an integral part of negotiations of citizenship. This approach resonates with the call in feminist scholarship to critically interrogate the victim narrative. Attending to women’s agency without romanticizing resistance demands locating women’s practices within social structures and power relations. The concept of borderwork is ideal for this because it takes both migrant women and the actors in the host society as agents in interaction while not losing sight of the embedded power asymmetry and structural conditions.

3. The IDRF supports single-sited research, as well as multi-sited, comparative, and trans-regional approaches. In what ways does your research engage cross-regional perspectives? (250 words)

My ethnography focuses on the citizenship practices of Filipina migrant women in South Korea in three different local sites. All three types of migration in my project—labor migration, marriage migration, and migration in sex industry—are increasing globally in its scope. My study draws on many empirical studies of migration in Asia, North America, Latin America, and Europe, and will contribute to this trans-regional literature both theoretically and empirically by illuminating the gendered process of migration and settlement in the host societies. Examining the citizenship practices at the margins in South Korea, this project will also shed light on the similar processes at work in recent-immigrant nation-states such as Italy, Germany, Taiwan, and Japan. More broadly, this project also will enhance a theoretical understanding of citizenship as local civic practice and an interactional process that creates boundaries between citizens and non-citizens, and can be applied to the cases of incorporation of other marginalized subjects than migrants within the citizen-body.

**Citizenship at the Margins:
Filipina Migrant Women and the Negotiation of National Boundaries in South Korea**

This is a study of citizenship at the margins. It focuses on the active contestation of boundaries separating citizens and non-citizens through discourse and everyday interaction among locally grounded actors in the margins of the state. Interrogating when and on what grounds the marginal subjects are included as citizens, I employ and extend the notion of “borderwork,” a concept developed by Barrie Thorne (1993) to explain the interactive process by which gender differences are marked or unmarked, used to include/exclude individuals and structure conflicts between groups, using it now to address the marking process of citizenship. “Borderwork” is accomplished by both the host society and migrants as active agents, despite the power asymmetry in which they are embedded and the structural constraints imposed by the legal framework of the state. By examining differences in citizenship practices across three formal definitions in one state (South Korea) and for one social group (Filipina women), my research will examine how citizenship practice arises from the interplay and negotiation among local actors, rather than a legal category granted in a top-down fashion by a nation-state.

Women’s path to citizenship is deeply tied to the notion of respectability as women are regarded as biological and cultural reproducers of the nation. For this reason, women’s bodies and sexuality have been used in drawing the boundary as ethnic and national markers (Espiritu 2001; Yuval-Davis 1997; Yuval-Davis and Anthias 1989). My multi-sited ethnography focuses on the variations in citizenship claims as framed by three groups of Filipina migrant women who are engaged in the borderwork at such gendered boundaries. Through a comparison of the experiences of “labor migrants” working in a factory town in the female-dominated light manufacturing industry, “marriage migrants” living in rural communities with their South Korean husbands, and “entertainers” working at bars on an American military base, this dissertation examines how the differences in gendered notions of respectability affect the negotiations over boundaries of citizenship in practice across these three sites.

Despite their similarities in terms of age, gender, and socio-economic status in the Philippines, these women are included and excluded from the national community in highly differentiated ways, both

through their distinctive structural positions and the manner in which symbolic boundaries are drawn. The different structural locations of three groups of Filipina women relate to the type of discourses that are available for these women and their South Korean advocates as resources and constraints in the process of boundary-making. I understand discursive frames as a unit of cultural idiom that is transportable and separable that actors choose within cultural repertoires and use strategically. For instance, the gendered human rights and victimization frame that portrays migrant women as vulnerable and in need of state protection can be used as a discursive ground for extending social rights to them. For the marriage migrants in rural areas, their intimate ties to South Korean citizens can also be used for their citizenship claims as they are often valorized as loyal to their Korean husbands, whereas the workers' rights frame can be used for the labor migrants. While the South Korean state and NGO actors utilize various discursive frames in their exclusion/integration efforts for migrant women, migrant women also reproduce, challenge and resist these frames as part of an interactive borderwork.

This dissertation examines how these differences in the citizenship experiences of migrant women are shaped both materially and discursively, and by doing so, contributes to the re-conceptualization of citizenship as an interactive process of negotiation among local actors where gender plays a central role. Specifically, the study examines the following three research questions:

(1) What are the discursive frames used by the South Korean nation-state and various transnational and local advocacy organizations for migrant women as a ground of the inclusion and citizenship for migrant women? How dominant is human rights language, what alternate frames are utilized, and for what purposes are the various frames employed by these more powerful actors at the border?

(2) How are these discursive frames for citizenship put to use differently in three local sites by migrant women themselves? How does gender frame the discourses on which their citizenship claims are based, and what consequences do the different frames have for their citizenship practices, enabling or limiting practices of borderwork for the migrant women?

(3) How do frames and practices brought to bear by authorities, local citizens, migrant women and their advocates create interactional contests among them? How do the discursive resources offered by particular frames tilt the narratives of belonging and exclusion in specifically advantageous and disadvantageous ways? When is the borderwork of citizenship practice more or less successful in creating inclusion, for which individuals, and how?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Citizenship in Interaction. As “imagined communities,” nation-states produce citizens by constructing commonalities among their members, through active exclusion of others, physically and symbolically (Anderson 1983; Calhoun 1993). While nation-states are central in controlling the significant legal and political terms of citizenship (Marshall 1950; Brubaker 1996; Koopmans and Statham 1999), it is everyday interaction by government and non-government actors that translates, enacts, and challenges citizenship in practice (Basok 2004). This set of practices determines substantive citizenship, in terms of “notion[s] of dignity, thriving, and well-being” in a community (Rosaldo 1994, p.410). In this sense, the boundary that separates citizens and non-citizens is not fixed in law and policy, but is permeable and negotiable in particular local contexts with concrete actors while still being constrained within the limits of law (Glenn 2002; Poole 2004; Stasiulis and Bakan 1997). In order to understand citizenship as a process that is relational and enacted (Glenn 2002), I argue that it is critical to look at the performances of citizenship happening within the structures of law and policy through interactions of local actors. These are what I call “citizenship practices.”

Citizenship practices are activities that draw, affirm, or break down boundaries between individuals and a national community. They are reciprocal interactions, not only performed by citizens, but also by the state and by non-citizens. They take place in a cultural context shaped by discourses about what the state is, who citizens are, and when and how each can make appropriate claims on the other. I delve into the practices of citizenship through observing the borderwork--the boundary-drawing and maintenance of in-group citizenship “through contact as well as avoidance” (Thorn 1993, p.64) --in the everyday interaction between Filipina women and South Korean agents of government and NGOs and

ordinary South Koreans. My focus on interaction is based on the notion that citizenship requires “more than the assumption of rights and duties; more importantly, it also requires the performance and contestation of the behavior, ideas, and images of the proper citizen” (Manalansan 2003; p.14). Ample ethnographic research documents such performance and negotiation of citizenship practices in everyday contexts among Cambodian refugees in California (Ong 2003), Bosnian refugee women in New Hampshire (Huisman and Hondagneu-Sotelo 2005), Filipina migrant workers in Rome and LA (Parrenas 2001), as well as in my previous work on North Korean settlers in Seoul (Choo 2006). The multi-sited ethnography I propose extends this scholarship further by deploying gender in an intersectional way by looking at how the practice of citizenship takes different gendered forms for three groups of Filipina women depending on their structural positions on South Korean gendered paths to citizenship. For wives of Korean rural men, the domestic sphere is likely to be the measure of her proper performance of citizenship as a mother and a wife, whereas for Filipina entertainers, her work as a bar dancer might become the basis of her exclusion from citizenship, if her behavior is discussed in terms of how she is not conforming to “Korean” norms of sexually restrained womanhood.

Gendered Discourses in Citizenship Practices. The boundary separating citizens and non-citizens is implicated with other structures of inequality, notably race and gender (Glenn 2002; Espiritu 1997; Lowe 1996). Through the interactive process of borderwork, different discursive frames that the host society and migrants use for their claims to citizenship encounter and challenge one another. Such claims include universal human rights, maternalism, or assimilation. These frames provide cultural resources that various actors can draw on to use as tools for more or less effectively (Gamson 1992; Swidler 2000).

The gendered language of human rights forms the most familiar basis for the citizenship claims of migrant women subjects. Women’s migration, especially that of Third World women, has often been discussed in terms of a victimization narrative, especially in the discourse surrounding “mail-order bride” and “sex trafficking” (Hesford 2005; Kapur 2002; Mohanty 2003). Against the victim narrative, there have also been significant feminist attempts to identify and support migrant women and to provide

alternative, more empowering discourses (for marriage migration, Abelmann and Kim 2005; Constable 2003; 2005; for sex work, Agustin 2005; Brennan 2001; Kempadoo and Doezima 1998; Lee 2006).

Despite the dangers the victimization narrative poses, the language of human rights is resonant with ideas of liberal individualism, autonomy, and choice, and thus politically useful for the advance of human freedom (Zerilli 2005). It is increasingly the common language in the transnational sphere, via international organizations such as UN (Berkovitch 2002). Transnational feminist scholars are attempting to “be more attuned to advocates’ strategic and effective mobilization of victimization narratives, as well as the uncritical uses of such narratives in ways that may re-victimize women and support repressive cultural and political agendas” (Hesford 2005, p.148). In this project, the effectiveness and costs of human rights discourse will be studied empirically. I will attempt to test Basu’s (2000) proposition that human rights language, utilized by transnational feminist movements, has been most successful in achieving women’s civil and political rights, especially sexual victimization, yet has been less effective in addressing women’s economic and social rights (p.75). Various government and non-government actors and the migrant women themselves will frame their needs and experiences, using human rights language or other discursive frames such as “workers’ rights” (associated with class inequality and conflicts of interest), “assimilation” (associated with ethnicized cultures and a narrative of modernity and progress), and “paternalism” (associated with gendered family inequalities and legitimating dependencies as benevolent) which also are frames that I expect to shape citizenship experiences of migrant women. This dissertation will look at how these discursive frames are used by local actors as tools for drawing boundaries between citizens and non-citizens in the interactive citizenship work done by and to migrant women in different structural circumstances.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

My research sites are located in the margins of Seoul, a global city and political and economic center of South Korea. The labor migration in South Korea began in the late 1980s, as guestworkers from China and South-East Asia came to Korea to fill labor demands for manual workers (Seol 2005). Marriage migration began in the 1990s and has increased drastically, meeting a demand primarily from

men in rural areas. In 2005, 36% of marriages in rural areas were between Korean men and marriage migrants from Vietnam, China, and the Philippines, while 13.6% of marriages in general were international marriages, 9.9% between Korean men and marriage migrants (Ministry of Justice 2007). The migration of entertainers working at the bars and clubs in American military base towns dates back to the mid-1990s, when Filipina and Russian women began replacing Korean women in the sex industry around the military bases (Lee 2006). According to recent statistics, women's migration from the Philippines to South Korea is concentrated in these three sectors: light manufacturing, entertainers, and marriage migration. As of 2006, among 17275 Filipina women who were in South Korea with a legal visa status, 4858 (28%) are engaged or married to South Korean men, whereas 2508 (15%) have "entertainer" visas and 3237 (19%) have industrial laborer visas (Ministry of Justice 2007).

Filipinas are the only ethnic group that is involved in all three sectors of feminized migration in South Korea and therefore offer an ideal comparative case to examine the discursive and material forces shaping the citizenship experiences of migrant women. All three groups of Filipina women make different "patriarchal bargains" to sustain their lives (Kandiyoti 1988). While marriage migrants take up an integral role in sustaining the patriarchal South Korean family, labor migrants and entertainers encounter South Korea via their participation in a gender-segregated and low-paying labor market. Labor migrants, however, are often part of a Filipino ethnic community and the ethnically mixed migrant workers' community in the factory town, whereas entertainers and marriage migrants are often isolated within their specific workplaces and homes. Their citizenship practices are grounded in distinctively localized settings with different legal structures, and the discursive frames used by officials and the migrant women, and the interactional borderwork of inclusion and exclusion in substantive citizenship is expected to vary accordingly.

DATA AND RESEARCH PLAN

Data Collection. My dissertation involves three local sites with differing configurations of political economy and rhetorics of inclusion, where Filipina migrant women and South Korean agencies interact and negotiate their terms of citizenship. I will spend four months in each field site, starting from Ansan,

the factory town (September to December 2008) and moving to Ichon, the rural town (January-April 2009) and Dongduchon, the base town (May to August 2009). In each of the four-month periods, I will be in residence in each town, following the day-to-day living of Filipina migrant women in the neighborhood and participating in various activities that South Korean local government and advocacy groups organize for these women. Despite the variability of the sites, as a comparative study, my data collection will cover common topics and follow similar procedures as outlined below.

Ethnographic observations: At each site, I will ground myself in one or two local organizations that actively work with Filipina migrant women, and attend their meetings and events closely. The roles I expect to play in this setting include a volunteer for Korean language instruction, and a helper at organizing a cultural festival, cooking classes, as well as participating in protests with migrant workers. In addition, I will participate in Filipina women's informal get-togethers including Filipino mass services at Hyehwa Catholic Church in Seoul. I will travel to Seoul with Filipina migrant women on Sundays and observe how they interact with other groups of Filipina women and South Koreans. These are what I define as important parts of their boundary work. I will also follow several Filipina migrant women, with whom I develop more close relationships, to their informal meetings with friends, family events, labor disputes, shopping trips, etc.

Individual In-depth Interviews: I plan to conduct about 15 interviews with Filipina migrant women in each field site (a total of 45) to pay closer attention to the ways that they create their own narratives of belonging and of their locations in relation to South Korean nation-state, the Philippines, and the local Filipino community. I am fluent in Korean and English (one of two official languages of the Philippines) and either language will be used according to the interviewee's preference. The sampling will follow mainly a snowball method, but in order to capture more diversity among the groups, I will purposively sample among the suggested interviewees to have as much variance among the interviewees in terms of marital status, socio-economic status, the length of stay in South Korea, and the level of involvement in Filipino and South Korean communities. My primary purpose will be to include more the migrant women who have only limited contact with South Koreans. Through the interviews, I seek to

find answers to the following questions: Where do the Filipina migrant women feel they belong, and on what grounds do they claim their membership in that community? To what extent do these grounds on which they base their claims resonate with the ones that the South Korean organizations predominantly use for these groups of women? In case their claims are not successfully received, in what ways do these women contest the boundaries of citizenship for their inclusion, rights, and justice as they perceive it?

My second group of interviewees will consist of approximately 15 South Koreans in each site (a total of 45) who are involved in local governmental agencies and civil, educational, and religious organizations that work with Filipina migrant women. Since these integration workers meet the migrant women as key mediators of rights, interviewing this group is crucial to understanding how these women's lives are shaped by interactions with powerful others. I will interview various groups of people including governmental officials, social workers, labor union organizers, NGO activists, teachers, pastors, and counselors. The questions for the South Koreans will focus on the goals and objectives of their programs, their perceptions of Filipina migrant women in general and in relation to South Koreans, and what grounds they use to interpret their own advocacy work and/or incorporation or exclusion efforts.

Public texts: I will collect various materials published by the South Korean organizations that work with Filipina migrant women. I am especially interested in the documents that these organizations publish to explain to migrant women what their rights and their roles in South Korean society are, and how they may be framed as deserving members of this society. Also, I will pay particular attention to how these organizations represent these women in their interaction with other South Korean organizations on behalf of these migrant women. These documents will include the groups' statements about policy recommendations, newsletters for members, educational handouts and booklets introducing South Korean living, information booklets for outreach.

Data Analysis. I will code the data collected from the public texts, media representations, participant observations, and interviews using the qualitative analysis software *NVivo*. I will be coding the different themes and patterns as they emerge from the data, particularly focusing on the articulation of citizenship, sense of belonging and community, boundary drawing or boundary neutralization, various discursive

frames used as grounds for citizenship claims, and when these frames converge or conflict within interaction.

I will first identify the discursive frames available for citizenship claims as evidenced in media representations of migrant women and the public policy targeted for them. These provide a series of “cultural repertoires” that South Korean government and NGO actors have available to use as grounds of their integration efforts (Swidler 2000). Through participant observation, I will see when and under what circumstances Filipina women are included or excluded as citizens, focusing on the interactive processes that lead to this. I will note how these frames are used differently according to the group characteristics of Filipina women, as wives, migrant workers, and entertainers. For instance, South Korean advocacy workers, local government officials, and Filipina migrant women may debate whether or not to extend welfare benefits for migrants, and use different discursive frames such as “contribution to the local economy,” “raising South Korean children,” or “basic human rights” as legitimations. Some Filipina women may have issues with the integration/assistance programs, openly or among themselves, questioning why only certain kinds of vocational training are offered, why they are asked to give up sex work in order to enter shelters, or why they have to learn about an old-fashioned Korean ancestral ceremony that might conflict with their religion. These interactions offer ample opportunity to systemically compare how different actors use discursive frames to claim what citizens are and why certain members should or should not be included. By doing so, I will examine when and under what circumstances each frame is used for more or less successfully.

The proposed study will require strong skills in the Korean and English language, in conducting ethnography and in-depth interviewing, and in theorizing from qualitative data analysis. My training has equipped me with all three. As a native to South Korea, I am highly familiar with the local customs and cultures. After graduating from college in Seoul, I worked at an NGO that provides social assistance for refugees and North Korean migrants in Korea, which enabled me not only to work with individual migrants, but to engage with collaborative projects with various government ministries. In my Masters’ research, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Seoul, looking at the citizenship experiences of North

Korean migrants in South Korea in the summer of 2005. I conducted participant observations and 42 in-depth interviews with South Korean actors involved in North Korean migrants' settlement, including government officials, social workers, as well as North Korean migrant men and women. I discovered in my fieldwork that I need to pay attention to the interactions between actors in the host society and migrants, because it is the very site where symbolic boundaries between citizens and non-citizens are "used to enforce, maintain, normalize, or rationalize social boundaries" as well as a space where the contestation over this takes place (Lamont and Molnar 2002, p.186). From this research experience, I have established important contacts among government officials, activists, and staff-members of migrant advocacy organizations. My language skills, cultural knowledge and research experiences therefore make me a particularly suitable candidate to study the citizenship practices of Filipina women in Korea.

SIGNIFICANCE

My project offers an empirical case study of the practice of citizenship at the margins, examining gendered discursive frames in relation to the citizenship practices of migrant women. This study also contributes to theoretical understanding of citizenship as local civic practice and an interactional process that creates boundaries between citizens and non-citizens. Particularly, I illuminate the active work that the local actors and migrant women put into making claims for citizenship and interrogate the discursive contestation involved in the process. This project contributes to the literature on the migration as it brings in gender as varying in meaning but integral to the incorporation of migrants in local communities (Espiritu 1997; Glenn 2002; Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994; Mahler and Pessar 2006). It highlights the differences in citizenship borderwork done by migrant women who are in structurally and discursively different situations, despite their personal similarities in age and ethnicity. My approach to citizenship combines institutional and interactional analyses of opportunities, frames and practices, to see how borders are constructed and made more or less porous. Examining the citizenship practices at the margins in South Korea, this project will shed light on the similar processes at work in recent-immigrant nation-states such as Italy and Japan, and can inform the transnational organizations about the gendered process of migration and settlement in the host societies.

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