Defending Indonesia's Migrant Domestic Workers

Mary Austin

On the morning of 8 June, 2009, Siti Hajar, a thirty-three-year-old Indonesian woman from a village in Garut, West Java, staged a daring escape from the house in Kuala Lumpur where she had been employed as a migrant domestic worker for three years. She used an iron rod to prise open the grille on the front gate and called to a neighbour who helped her find a taxi to the Indonesian embassy. There she told officials that her employer, a Malaysian widow and mother of two, had repeatedly beaten her with a cane and even poured boiling water over her. She was owed thirty-four months' wages. Her meals were meagre, mainly consisting of plain rice twice a day, and sometimes she had been forced to eat pork. Kept as a prisoner in the house, she had tried to run away several times before without success.

A few days after her escape the *Jakarta Post* published a photograph of Siti sitting up in her hospital bed in the University of Malaya Medical Centre where she was being treated for her injuries. A diminutive figure with her hair loose and wearing a hospital-style gown, Siti is flanked by two men standing at her bedside. One is the smartly suited figure of the Indonesian ambassador to Malaysia, Da'i Bachtiar, with his head slightly bowed and wearing an expression of grave concern. The second is a journalist who is filming and recording the scene. Siti herself is shown speaking on a mobile phone. The news report accompanying the picture explains that she was using the ambassador's phone to receive a direct call from no less than the president of Indonesia, who promised her the government would do 'whatever was necessary' to seek justice for her and ensure such abuses did not happen again. Siti herself spoke of how she wished to return home, but despite her sufferings, did not rule out the possibility of seeking work in Malaysia again.¹

Pictures of Siti Hajar circulated nationally and internationally, reaching *TIME* magazine by 28 July (Thomas 2009). Portrayals of her conformed to the paradigm of the migrant domestic worker as a dependent female victim.²

1 Story reconstructed from news reports published on 10 and 12 June, available at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/06/10/siti-hajar-i-want-forget-hell.html> and www.thejakartapost.com/.../sby-calls-justice-maid-abuse-case.htm, accessed 3 September 2013.

2 For an influential critique of the construction of women in the 'Two-Thirds' world as dependent victims, see Chandra Mohanty's essay 'Under Western Eyes', in Mohanty, C. (2003) *Feminism Without Borders* Durham N.C. and London: Duke University Press.

The part of her story that was perhaps overlooked was her affirmation that she might return to Malaysia. This suggests that to Siti, as an impoverished divorced woman and mother, Indonesia seemed to have little or nothing to offer. It is also an unequivocal statement of her sense that she has the right to work and make her own decisions about her future.

In late June 2009, however, following a public outcry about Siti Hajar's experiences, Indonesia imposed a moratorium on sending domestic workers to Malaysia, making it impossible for women like Siti to access this work legally. In July the government began discussions with Malaysia to agree a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) setting out domestic workers' terms and conditions (Maulia 2009). Despite government and migration industry optimism that the matter would be settled quickly, negotiations went on for three years, generating a large amount of media coverage and public debate. Migrant worker NGOs seized the opportunity to use the media to mobilize public opinion in support of migrant domestic worker rights.

In so doing, NGOs reflected the universalist standpoint enshrined in the Beijing Declaration, which asserted that 'women's rights are human rights'.³ It was crucial to 'move beyond' the nation-state, since both sending and receiving states in Southeast Asia had proved reluctant to act on behalf of migrant women (Piper 2003: 42). Feminist citizenship theorist Ruth Lister suggests that fewer women would experience such exclusion if liberal and participatory models of citizenship were synthesized, creating what she calls a 'differentiated universalism' (1997:39). This would allow for positive discrimination and different levels of participation and give more weight to social and economic rights. Lister contends that feminist endeavours in that direction would require three things. First, shifting the borders of the public-private divide so that women's needs became recognized as 'political'. Second, questioning hegemonic notions of the common good, and third, building women's individual and collective confidence in political participation. At the same time, women need to continue to hold politicians to account (Lister 1997:33–42). Such a formulation, I suggest, offers a useful framework within which to view the citizenship challenge facing Indonesian migrant worker NGOs at the time of the 2009 ban.

With this framework in mind, I set out in this chapter to examine the evolution of citizenship practices in Indonesia in response to repeated (and

3 Formulated at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995.

verified) reports of migrant domestic workers being abused.⁴ Grounded in a case study of the three-year dispute with Malaysia as portrayed in the *Jakarta Post*, Indonesia's largest English language newspaper, the chapter explores two questions. First, taking up one of the key themes of this volume, what can we learn about the ways in which civil society activists, in this instance the press and migrant worker NGOs, operating in a weakly institutionalized state, can succeed to some degree in holding a government to account? Second, is there any evidence of a shift in dynamics, a change in the representation of the migrant worker, and a greater sense of citizenship entitlement and participation amongst the women themselves?

To answer these questions, I will first outline the policy framework and gender norms underpinning the Indonesia/Malaysia trade in domestic workers. Next I summarize the relationship between migrant worker NGOs and the government prior to the 2009 ban. Then I examine the interplay between activists, the press, newspaper readers and government as revealed in the *Jakarta Post* coverage of the dispute with Malaysia, charting changes in government policy and in the representation of migrant domestic workers. Finally, I draw on interviews I held with journalists in Jakarta in the summer of 2012 to reflect on the possibilities for further realization of domestic worker citizenship rights. Lister's ideas about the public-private divide, the common good and political participation will weave through the discussion to come.

My reliance on the *Jakarta Post* perhaps needs some explanation. I undertook this study as part of an MA dissertation and with limited time and not yet fluent Indonesian, I decided to focus on English language sources. The *Jakarta Post* stood out because of its reputation for reliability, its online archive and wide circulation. Chaired by respected international relations scholar and former politician, Jusuf Wanadi, (CSIS, n.d.), the *Jakarta Post* belongs to the Kompas- Gramedia Group (Haryanto 2011:106–108) whose flagship publication *Kompas* has been recognized internationally as perhaps the most trustworthy Indonesian newspaper, at least as far as economic and political reporting goes (Varshney, Panggabean and Tadjoeuddin 2004:9). The Group also has a strong media rather than industrial portfolio so is potentially less invested in the migration 'industry' than the other English language daily, the *Jakarta Globe*, where Haryanto found that some journalists believed its owner was more concerned about his business interests than 'objective information'

4 For a comprehensive account of the evidence of abuse in the system see *Help Wanted: Abuses against Female Migrant Domestic Workers in Indonesia and Malaysia*. Human Rights Watch, July 2004 Vol. 16, No. 9 (B).

(Haryanto 2011:108–110). Given the close links some *Jakarta Post* staff have with prestigious US and UK institutions (CSIS, n.d.), its coverage may tend to reflect dominant international migration management paradigms. On the other hand, it aims to ‘promote an Indonesian perspective amidst the deluge of Western viewpoints dominating the global view of information’, albeit perhaps a Jakarta oriented one.

Migrant Domestic Workers before 2009

Prior to the 2009 ban up to 4000 women a month left Indonesia to become domestic workers in Malaysia (‘Govt Ban may Lead to Increase’ 2009), earning at least five times more than they might have done at home (Rudnyckyj 2004:416). Malaysia’s rapid economic growth created high demand while Indonesia’s market niche lay in having a ready supply of cheap and docile labour, undercutting the Philippines (Chin 1998:179–182). Costs were kept down by imposing low wages, long hours, no days off, mandatory live-in arrangements, restrictions on women’s right to marry, bear children or enjoy family reunification, and an immigration status which tied women to a particular job making it impossible for them to bargain once arrived. Women who left their employment early risked arrest and deportation and Malaysian labour legislation excluded ‘informal’ work in the home (Varia 2010:8–13). Such arrangements rendered domestic workers vulnerable to psychological, physical and sexual abuse (Ford 2006b:321).

Nevertheless, Indonesian government policy up to 2009 was to promote the export of domestic workers (Kaur 2010:8; Silvey 2004:251). To some extent this was a continuation of established practices. Successive colonial and postcolonial governments had long sponsored out-migration from overcrowded Java to relieve unemployment and reduce the risk of social unrest (Tirtosudarmo 1999:217). Government thinking also reflected World Bank policy (Ratha and Shaw 2007:133–134). Recognizing the potential of remittances, in the 1990s the government began licensing private companies to recruit and export workers and created a Bureau of Labour Export within the,⁵ and set ambitious targets to send more (female) workers overseas (Tirtosudarmo 1999:210–213). By 2009 the value of remittances had reached 6.6 billion US dollar with domestic workers, who accounted for seventy-seven percent of Indonesia’s migrant work force, making the largest contribution (IOM 2010:1). As a mark of their commitment to the ‘common good’ migrant domestic workers were accorded the accolade ‘heroines of foreign exchange’ (Nurbaiti 2008).

5 From this point in the chapter onwards, ‘Ministry of Manpower’.

Recent studies have documented the intertwined roles of government and business elites in sustaining the supply chain. Lindquist's meticulous exposé of recruitment in Lombok demonstrates that the system depends on traditional patron – client networks reaching down to village level. The business is lucrative: fees to local labour agencies in Lombok almost doubled between 2007 and 2009, rising to six hundred US dollar per domestic worker 'delivered' to Jakarta (Lindquist 2010:124–127) and, as one of my journalist informants in Jakarta commented, 'if you have money you can be a working agent, it's good business, but corruption goes on in the agencies...so many hanky panky' (interview, June 27 2102). Civil servants, village heads and doctors supply passports, birth, medical and training certificates and letters of permission from the applicant's husband or father as household head (Rudnyckyj 2004:407). Other studies focus on state-sponsored training and holding centres designed to 'prepare' women going overseas which in practice often severely restrict their movements and impose highly gendered norms on their dress, speech and behaviour, encouraging unquestioning compliance (Lyons 2005:5–6; Killias 2010:898–899).

To avoid such indignities as well as the high cost and delays of official procedures, many women travelled to Malaysia through unofficial channels (Hugo 2005:65). However, in 2002 Malaysia instituted a policy of mass deportations, deploying RELA, a state-sponsored volunteer organization, to round up undocumented migrants for cash, making 'illegal' migration much more risky (Lindquist 2010:120).

Female labour migration was underpinned by New Order cultural constructions of the virtuous female citizen in which humility, deference to male leaders and family members, and notions of gratitude were more significant than individual rights. Women's responsibilities to the nation lay in fulfilling their *kodrat* (their female 'destiny') as wives and mothers; their duty was to maintain family harmony and raise virtuous citizens for the future. Both Kathryn Robinson (2009:84–86) and Kate O'Shaughnessy (2009:32–35, 199) have analysed New Order legislation, particularly the 1974 Marriage Law which enshrined men as heads of families, and the Civil Servants' Marriage Regulations (PP 45/1990 and PP10/1983), and drawn the conclusion that by downgrading women's citizenship the political elite bolstered their own hegemonic masculinity. At the same time, O'Shaughnessy suggests, official endorsement of the subordination of women within families offered a degree of compensation to non-elite men for their virtual exclusion from the political realm (2009:199). To this end, gender-neutral ideals of citizenship were supplanted by the notion that women's citizenship was defined by her difference and was embodied in the role of obedient wife and mother (Robinson 2009:72; O'Shaughnessy 2009:198).

As more women entered the paid workforce, women's citizenship was redefined again in the early 1990s (Robinson 2009:91). Women in paid employment

had to fulfil a dual role, always putting their family first and always ensuring they met their marital obligations to manage arrangements on the domestic front, at the same time contributing to Indonesia's economic development (Blackburn 2004:25–26, 182–184; Suryakusuma 1996:99). As Carla Jones expressed it in her portrayal of Javanese middle-class home life in the 1990s, 'the image of the sparkling clean, emotionally harmonious domestic space had been harnessed...to appear as the exclusive focus of women whose work in the home was performed out of feminine love and caring' (2004:514).

Such a framing of the domestic realm rendered paid domestic workers invisible (Elias 2010:854). Since women were only secondary earners, working class women who took up domestic work were easily constructed as victims of 'neglectful or absent husbands' or of adverse economic conditions rather than as willing participants in the labour force (Blackwood 2008:18). Working in someone else's home, women became putative, albeit junior and subservient, members of their employers' families expected to show gratitude for the privilege of entering a modern and affluent household (Jones 2004:523).

Susan Blackburn suggests in her comprehensive study *Women and the State in Modern Indonesia* that women's membership of the polity was strongly communitarian. In the interests of the 'common good' women were offered an unequal citizenship, predicated on and reinforced by a patriarchal demarcation of the public-private divide at national and community levels (2004:104–109). Crucially for Indonesian women, their citizenship is multi-layered but central governments have proved both unwilling and largely unable to challenge women's frequent subordination within their families, religious or ethnic groups (Blackburn 2004:87–88). Consequently, the women's movement has consistently campaigned to bring private matters into the public and therefore political domain and to persuade the state to intervene to help transform those aspects of their local communities, which they perceive as restricting their freedoms (Robinson 2009:164; Blackburn 2004:88). It would seem, then, that in seeking reforms, migrant worker NGOs were challenging not only the commodification of female labour inherent in the international migration industry but also the gender regimes inside Indonesia which served to maintain it.

Rights-Based Counter-Claims: Migrant Worker and NGO Activism Prior to 2009

Kathryn Robinson (2009) and Sylvia Yazid (2008) have provided detailed accounts based on interviews with former activists of how NGOs became involved with migrant domestic worker issues. They suggest that the pattern of

Indonesian NGO and government relationships was set in the 1990s. Solidaritas Perempuan (with the strap line Women's Solidarity for Human Rights) was the first organization to advocate on behalf of domestic workers, campaigning against proposals to prohibit the trade, saying: 'They want to stop, we want to regulate as the women have the right to work and that must be defended' (Robinson 2009:108). Its options were, however, limited. One former chair recounted an attempt to meet the minister for Women's Rights when they 'were not admitted into the building...[we] could only shout on the terrace while making noises by banging pots' (Yazid 2008:7). Several other studies argue that Indonesian governments lacked the political will to protect migrant worker rights, leaving responsibility with the labour companies (Silvey 2004:252; Hugo 2005:59; Tirtosudarmo 2011:13). Without access to policymaking, Solidaritas Perempuan and the other NGOs which followed it, looked to the press and international human rights organizations to legitimize their claims that the government was culpable in not protecting Indonesian women's rights.⁶

Given the government's lack of engagement, returned women migrants and NGOs used the political and press freedoms following Suharto's resignation to make even more 'noise'. They demonstrated in front of a recruitment office in Jakarta in October 1998, occupied the office of the minister for Women's Affairs on May 1st, 1999 and organized mass protests to secure the repatriation of an Indonesian domestic worker sentenced to death in the United Arab Emirates in April 2000 (Robinson 2009:115–116). In 2002, Malaysia deported some 400,000 Indonesian migrants to a small town in East Kalimantan, creating a humanitarian crisis. A consortium of NGOs used their citizen's right to file an action against President Megawati and eight other government officials, accusing them of failing to meet their human rights' responsibilities under Indonesian law. This step proved decisive; following the crisis various departments committed themselves to more interventionist policies (Ford 2006a: 228–247).

Over the next two years the Ministry of Manpower created a complex regulatory structure, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs improved services to domestic workers overseas and the Ministry for Women's Empowerment focussed on protection rather than prohibition. In 2004 the Indonesian parliament passed Law Number 39/2004 on the Placement and Protection of Migrant Workers, and ministers agreed a new MOU with Malaysia (Robinson 2009:116). Migrant domestic workers however, were not covered in this memorandum. Although Malaysia took the significant step of agreeing that their 1955 Employment Act would apply to Indonesian migrant workers in general, their legislation

6 Michele Ford (2006) estimates that by 2006 over one hundred NGOs were dealing with migrant labour.

specifically excluded domestic workers from all the inherent safeguards except for recourse against irregular or late payment of wages (HRW 2004:74). This sort of exclusion not only reflects an underlying belief that rights-claiming should not extend to the domestic domain but also speaks to the low status and invisibility of paid domestic work in both Indonesia and Malaysia (Elias 2012:22; Robinson 2009:102; Anggraeni 2006:199–200).

Although Malaysia and Indonesia signed a separate bilateral agreement covering domestic workers in 2006, NGOs and international agencies remained highly critical (Rahayaan 2006). Women would in future have written employment contracts but employers could still retain women's passports, there were no limits on working hours, no minimum wage, no provision for a day off and women were still prohibited from getting married (Varia 2010:13). Hence NGOs intensified campaigns to persuade Indonesia to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families⁷ which differentiates migrant rights on the basis of 'legality' and 'illegality' but not on the basis of gender or the formal or informal nature of their work (Komnas Perempuan 2009).

In sum then, relations between migrant worker NGOs and the government by 2009 were predominantly adversarial with NGOs adopting a strategy of bringing into public view the sometimes shameful consequences of the commodification of female labour. The government had shown itself to be more reactive than proactive in developing migration policy, but over time government and NGOs had developed a common agenda in the sense that both saw the extension of the state's regulatory powers as one way to curb abuse.

Mobilizing Support for Migrant Domestic Workers in the *Jakarta Post*

Recent studies of the media in post-Suharto Indonesia suggest that journalists have the potential to mobilize and mediate citizenship practices. Journalists take pride in their investigative journalism and see themselves as watchdogs and missionaries, supporting disadvantaged groups, condemning malpractice and improving society (Steele 2011:99; Romano 2003:56–57; Sen 2008:2–4). Kitley argues that the press not only provides a platform for separate interest groups to promote their own views but also serves to create a sense of shared citizenship by engaging wider publics (2008:210–212). Wichelen (2010) examined recent, heated, public contestations about the female body conducted

7 From here on referred to as the 'United Nations Migrant Worker Convention'.

through the media including debates about pornography, public piety, female leadership and polygamy. Seeing these contestations as citizenship practices, she suggests that when women noisily demanded political visibility, challenged gender stereotypes and sought to re-work definitions of the virtuous citizen and the common good, many different publics became engaged (2010:114–115). Sensational stories such as that of Siti Hajar sell newspapers; these studies raise the question of how far journalists built on public interest to promote reform.

The *Jakarta Post* and *Kompas* journalists I met with gave the impression that the issue of migrant domestic workers resonates in a similar way across Indonesian society. Their editors give 'top headlines' to stories about migrant workers and the newspaper has had one journalist covering the topic full-time. I located some 450 articles in the *Jakarta Post* archive published between January 2009 and June 2012 which dealt with domestic workers in Malaysia. There were never fewer than five, frequently more than ten, and sometimes more than 20 articles each month over the three years. My analysis concentrates on three periods: May/June 2009, December 2010 and May/June 2012. These were the periods of peak reporting which corresponded with moments of intense pressure on the government or turning points in negotiations with Malaysia.

The overall tenor of the reporting appears to be that of a morality tale. Women are not the main protagonists but the subject of two intertwined contestations. On the one hand, NGOs and international agencies are frequently set against the two nation-states of Indonesia and Malaysia who need to be goaded into taking action to protect migrant women. On the other hand, since the Indonesian and Malaysian governments are continually in conflict with each other, the migrant domestic worker becomes a matter of nationalist pride. Thus she comes to symbolize a struggle between women (and indeed, citizens) and the state, and at the same time becomes emblematic of that state.⁸ Beneath the surface of the narrative, I suggest, is an ethical one about the kind of nation Indonesia wants to be.

Migrant as Victim: May/June 2009

The predominant trope in the forty-five articles published in May and June 2009 was that of migrant domestic worker as heroic victim, somewhat akin to

8 For a fuller discussion of the way female citizens, particularly in postcolonial states, carry the burden of symbolizing a nation's 'identity and honour', see Nira Yuval-Davis (1997) *Gender & Nation*, London: Sage Publications.

the returning soldier. The stories of five women run through the two-month period: Siti Hajar, with whom I began this chapter, Kartini, who died as a result of her injuries Nurul Wijayanti, found dead at her employer's home, and Modesta Rangga and Sumasri, both hospitalized following abuse (Suherdjoko and Maryono 2009). Descriptions of the women's wounds, scarred faces and bruised 'bodies and thighs' emphasize violation and hint at sexual abuse ('Another Indonesian maid' 2009). However, the women are portrayed as emblems of the nation; hence it is the nation, which is shamed rather than the women or their families. A senior embassy official, for example, accompanied Kartini's body home while a village head in East Java was reported as awaiting the return of Nurul Wijayanti's body. Kartini and Siti Hajar are linked with iconic 'suffering' female figures: the wife of the Prophet Ibrahim who suffered piteously because of her husband's response to her infertility and Indonesia's national heroine who died in childbirth ('Another Indonesian maid' 2009; Rusdi 2009). 'Home' for the injured victims, following their rescue by (male) government officials was thus in the confines of the village and under the protection of their families.

Thirteen articles include comments from rights-based NGOs including Migrant Care, founded in 2004 to campaign for male and female migrant workers, three legal aid organizations and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Articles focus on women's experiences in Malaysia and echo themes of victimhood, vulnerability and disempowerment, often showing the domestic worker as lacking agency, uneducated and unskilled and therefore, perhaps, responsible for her abuse. NGOs castigated Indonesian embassy staff for ineptitude in handling cases, demanded revision of the 2006 MOU with Malaysia and pressed for ratification of the United Nations Migrant Worker Convention. Migrant Care and The Legal Aid Institute were particularly outspoken accusing the 'incumbent president and vice president' of being interested only in their re-election, capitalizing on the fact that the Siti Hajar case coincided with the 2009 Presidential election campaign ('Concrete measures needed' 2009).

Even so, the pattern of government reluctance to act decisively observed in the pre-2009 period appears to be repeated, at least initially. The government made no moves towards reform following Kartini's death in May, indeed, immediately following her death the head of the Migrant Workers Placement and Protection Agency issued a press release celebrating the 11.64 billion US dollar remittances received the previous year and announced plans to make migration easier ('Migrant workers sent' 2009). The consulate secretary in Malaysia deflected attention away from Kartini's death focusing instead on other problems migrants caused the embassy (Suherdjoko and Maryano 2009). Only after the publicity surrounding Siti Hajar did ministers move cautiously towards a

moratorium while expressing fears of unemployment and loss of foreign currency. Delays were justified as arising from a need for departmental coordination ('RI may stop' 2009).

Readers expressed a range of views. A frequent response was to blame Malaysians and especially Malaysian Chinese. Readers express feelings of hurt national pride and anger that Indonesia was reduced to sending its workers overseas, particularly to 'uncivilized' Malaysia which has 'stolen' Indonesian culture. Some readers believe the press over-dramatizes issues, but more want Indonesia to emulate the Philippines in taking a tougher line on protecting its citizens. On December 11th for example, one reader, Dodo, argued that 'it is the job of the government to ensure that its citizens are protected, even when those citizens are overseas. This is something the government needs to improve so that it can fulfil that basic obligation towards its citizens.' ('Comment: Empowering our migrant workers' 2009). The trope of the uneducated domestic worker, prevalent in 2009, recurs, often with the rider that Indonesian education needs improvement. A minority of readers mention the lack of protection for domestic workers at home and a few advocate a total ban.

In June, government spokespersons shifted their stance, implementing the moratorium and indicating that they would take NGO agendas into negotiations with Malaysia. NGOs on their part seem to have achieved these concessions by reinforcing stereotypes of the migrant domestic worker as vulnerable, uneducated and having little agency. As Rachel Silvey pointed out in her study of domestic workers going to Saudi Arabia, NGOs mobilize the state's own 'paternalistic discourses' and images of 'idealized femininity' (2004:258). While victim narratives clearly engage the public and shame the government they do not serve so well to undermine the sorts of private/public divides in which gendered unequal citizenship is embedded.

Shifting the Ground? December 2010

Four events in December 2010 brought gendered power relationships rather than victimization into public view. First, Malaysia deported thousands of migrants drawing attention to the Indonesian government's failure to police its own migration policies and creating problems for Indonesia reminiscent of the 2002 mass deportations ('1372 RI Workers Deported' 2010). Second, Malaysia humiliated Indonesia by winning the ASEAN Football Federation Cup, provoking strong anti-Malaysian feelings. Third, ministers from both states attended a bilateral commission meeting in Bali, which would be likely to be conducted in a tense atmosphere of heightened sibling rivalry with Indonesian politicians

under intense media scrutiny (Weiss 2010:172). Lastly, International Migrants Day and International Human Rights Day were both celebrated during the month. NGO and other non-state actors took advantage of heightened public interest to pressurize the government while various parts of the state apparatus engaged in a 'blame game' (Adamrah and Khalik 2010.). In this context the discourse around migrant domestic workers seems to change. Rather than victims of Malaysia, migrant women become 'subjects' for bureaucratic and technological state regulation, and the focus of articles moves from individual women to that of the nation-state. The underlying question raised was whether the Indonesian government could maintain its legitimacy while it continued to fail to protect the civil rights of its migrant domestic workers, and continued to neglect the social and economic rights of its poorer citizens in general.

Jakarta Post editors appear to have taken a strongly interventionist line in this period. Twenty of the twenty-nine stories published about migrant domestic workers carried criticisms of the government from NGOs, academics, journalists or international agencies. Rather than using the mass deportations to vilify Malaysia, non-state actors accused the government of complicity with malpractice nearer home, drawing attention to Indonesia's failure to protect its own citizens. Seven articles blamed the Ministry of Manpower for poor quality pre-departure training using headlines such as 'RI domestic helpers expected to work with no tools of trade' and 'PJTakis criticized for poor training'. Whereas in 2009 domestic workers were described as low skilled, these reports expose labour agency incompetence and government failures in regulation. While most pieces still implicitly blame abuse on women's own shortcomings, one journalist quotes a domestic worker, Indriati, who challenges this, pointing out that even good training will not necessarily deter abusive employers (Sijabat 2010b).

Corruption and ineffective bureaucracy is another repeated theme. The language is frequently outspoken. Indonesia, for example, is 'full of thieves and witches' who prey on migrants (Suryakusuma 2010) and a returned migrant and the director of Migrant Care accused the government of 'legalizing' and 'financing modern slavery' ('Even the Best' 2010). Labour agencies also blamed the government for malpractices. A journalist visited a training centre where he found that 'Migrant worker and labour supply company staffers said labour export mechanisms were the same as before without any significant breakthroughs...they still had to struggle with red tape and pay fees to government officials' (Sijabat 2010b).

Editors also found space in the paper for 'authoritative voices' supporting migrant worker rights. As well as featuring critical reports from Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, the paper carried a series of seven

longer-than-average, analytical pieces all of which went beyond 'victim' narratives, written by academics and researchers within and beyond Indonesia. Of these, three represented the struggle to protect migrant domestic workers as part of a broader women's movement against patriarchal, ineffectual and unrepresentative government. The remainder focused on 'technological' solutions, arguing for tighter laws and supervision and urged Indonesia to adopt and implement international norms. NGOs demanded reform of the bureaucracy, decentralization, an Indonesian domestic worker law and ratification of the United Nations Migrant Worker Convention. Overall, non-state actor intervention in the discourse during this period shifted the ascription of weakness and blame from the migrant domestic worker to the Indonesian state.

Sustained public criticism led ministers to defend themselves but in the process, political rivalries came into view. The foreign minister issued a statement highlighting his own department's initiatives and (implicitly) criticizing other ministries (Budianto 2010). Later, still under pressure, he issued a second statement saying that although his ministry is 'often blamed by the public', the Labour Placement Directorate and Ministry of Manpower should be held equally responsible (Adamrah and Khalik 2010). In turn, the minister of Manpower announced two new decrees. One reduced the role of the Placement and Protection Agency to that of 'operator' while retaining key regulatory and supervisory powers within the Manpower Ministry. The second delegated some powers over migration to regional authorities (Sijabat 2010a), perhaps responding to criticisms from some regions that the government lacked real understanding of the issues or determination to deal with problems. The *Jakarta Post* supported this position, asserting that: 'compared to violence and abuse by employers in the destination countries, problems such as identity fraud, cheat, systematic extortion, detention, et cetera, which occur in Indonesia make up 80% of the problems' (Bachtiar 2010).

This sense that the government in Jakarta is to blame is echoed in the letters and comments pages. While readers express a range of views, what seems to be shared is the sense that migrant domestic workers embody readers' hopes and fears for their newly democratic nation ('Comments: Empowering our Migrant Workers' 2010). If migrants are victims, they are victims not so much of Malaysia but of an unscrupulous government which tolerates corruption and fails to provide for its citizens at home as this reader's comments following an article by a senior journalist (Sijabat 2010b) expressed it:

It seems like another one of those promises, when the heat is on, ending with no results or solutions. The scavengers (VARIOUS GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS) are all out for money from the migrant

workers before they leave Indonesia and when they return. The migrant workers are copping abuse while they are employed overseas and before they leave by their so-called protectors.... Look in your own backyard.

In sum then, this brief analysis of the December 2010 press coverage suggests that by exposing the 'grubby' details of the Indonesian end of the migrant domestic worker trade and mobilizing diverse publics, NGOs and the press not only held the government to account but advanced their claims that domestic labour and the needs of disadvantaged female citizens are important matters of political concern. One element of success lay in invoking feelings of shame. Not only were Indonesian citizens mortified by the repeated dishonouring of their compatriots overseas and their government's apparent unwillingness or inability to protect them, they expressed feelings of shame and disillusionment about the corruption, deception, fraud and exploitation apparently embedded in the Indonesian end of the migration chain. These feelings were legitimized by international rights-based organizations which claimed migrant domestic workers rights as 'global citizens'. At the same time the migrant domestic worker seems to have been transformed into a powerful symbol of Indonesia's 'little people', excluded from many of the material and social benefits of Indonesia's economic growth and democratization. The challenge is to the state's legitimacy in abandoning its most vulnerable citizens to the deregulation, privatization and marketization inherent in the globalized domestic worker trade.

A New Direction? January 2011 to June 2012

Widespread and prolonged public criticism of the government seemed to produce a new sense of urgency and acted as a catalyst for policy change. In January 2011 the DPR⁹ agreed to prioritize a Domestic Worker's Bill, covering home as well as overseas workers. In May, Indonesia and Malaysia agreed upon a new MOU which allowed women to retain their passports, entitled them to a day off a week and safeguarded their right to communicate with families and the embassy. Recruitment fees were capped. While this agreement did not meet all NGO demands, it was an improvement on its 2006 predecessor. The government established a joint task force with Malaysia, commissioned a legal firm in Malaysia to support migrants, and instituted a migrant worker 'hotline'. On 14 June 2011, the government publicly shifted its policies towards a multilateral, rights-based approach to migration when President Yudhoyono endorsed

9 The Indonesian House of Representatives.

ILO standards for migrant workers in a keynote speech at the hundredth ILO Conference in Geneva. Pressures on the government did not abate, however, particularly because the Saudi Arabian authorities went ahead with the execution of an Indonesian migrant domestic worker named Ruyati Binti Satubi on June 18th, leading to extremely critical and prolonged national and international press coverage blaming ministers for failing to intervene ('President To Meet House' 2011). The DPR summoned the foreign minister to defend Indonesia's record, but questions continued to be asked until the president held a press conference on 23 June announcing that Indonesia would impose a ban, similar to the moratorium with Malaysia, to pressurize Saudi Arabia to agree to new bilateral agreement offering workers more protection (Simamora 2011). In May 2012, the minister of Manpower urged ASEAN states to implement and improve their own agreement on the protection of migrant workers and spoke of 'the fundamental rights and dignity of migrant workers and their family members' (Sijabat 2012, 11 May). Finally, in April 2012 Indonesia ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families, a step activists had been calling for since 1993.

Agency and Empowerment? May/June 2012

In May and June 2012, themes of victimhood and weakness, so prevalent in 2009, appear to be being replaced by those of agency and empowerment. Women workers' voices figure much more prominently. 'To show and to empower' introduced Murtini, once 'a helpless...maid' but now 'a brave domestic worker unafraid to stand up for her rights', Ririn, confident in 'demanding' her rights, and Lita, previously a domestic worker but now an actress. Rather than relying on NGOs to speak for them, these women had joined a theatre group which stages performances across Java using stories written by returned workers (Krismantari 2012). A woman named Baby Nasution was deported from Malaysia when a compulsory medical showed she was HIV positive. Her story, presented as triumph over adversity, not tragedy, tells how Baby built a new life, married, had children, and helped establish the first national HIV network for women. In Baby's words: 'there are many [HIV Positive] women out there who are abused and...get infected through lack of information, unaware of their legal protections. These issues motivate me in my work' (Emilia 2012).

Other reports similarly challenge the 'vulnerable victim' and 'heroine of the nation' paradigms. A hospitalized worker is seen not as victim but as a heroine to be praised for 'fighting strongly with three armed men' who were trying to kidnap her employer's child; here it is not her earning power or ability to

send back remittances but her moral and physical courage which is singled out for praise ('Indonesian Maid in Malaysia' 2012). A report from Hong Kong depicts migrant domestic workers such as Sriyatin, who had plans to open a new style duck eggs business, avidly taking advantage of business workshops to learn entrepreneurial skills ready for when they return (Christanto 2012). Such stories frame migrant domestic workers as powerful individuals who not only improve their own and other workers' lives but participate as active and articulate citizens as well.

Domestic work, too, is now more frequently framed as a responsible job to be viewed alongside other categories of employment rather than the refuge of the lowest skilled. At a regional meeting of national and international agencies held in Kuala Lumpur, several NGOs (Migrant Care, Solidaritas Perempuan, CARAM Asia and Tenaganita) called for the moratorium not to be lifted until domestic workers had the same legal protections as other workers (Sijabat 2012, May 10). Here, I suggest, the women are calling upon not just their rights as Indonesian citizens but as members of a transnational community of global citizens claiming and negotiating 'universal' rights.

Migrant domestic workers are also linked as real 'workers' with trade unions. On the first of May, the Indonesian Labour Union Confederation urged the president to be 'firm' with Malaysia about migrant workers, including domestic workers, (Priyambodo 2012) while JALA PRT, an organization representing home and overseas domestic workers, 'urged' the DPR to pass the 'long-awaited' Domestic Worker Bill (Krisnantari 2012). A member of the DPR, Rieke Pitaloka, demanded 'a special job description for housemaids'. If accepted this would differentiate work as a 'maid' from that of cook, gardener or babysitter, hopefully reducing the domestic worker's load (Govt Told to Keep' 2012). This sort of framing of the migrant domestic worker replaces a collective of heroic women going overseas on behalf of the nation with the notion of women as individuals with 'inherent' human rights, including the right to 'decent work' and the freedom to travel in search of it. An art exhibition held at Taman Ismail Marzuki, Suharto's showpiece cultural centre also stressed the importance of seeing migrant domestic workers as individuals. The catalogue explained that, 'the term migrant worker does not apply to a certain social group. Migrant workers are individuals who are part of families living in certain areas' (Indrasafitri 2012).

Women whom the New Order had constructed as export targets but otherwise neglected, were gaining entry into the nation's political and cultural space. However, deeply held beliefs about women's 'nature' and fears of their sexuality still seem to be in conflict with women's rights as independent workers and the idea that abused women are to blame re-enters the discourse. This is seen,

for example, in a comment which accuses migrant women of undermining village values by placing 'material goods' over family harmony (Krisnantari 2012). The head of the government's migration task force, a former minister of Religion and ambassador to Saudi Arabia, felt able to state baldly his opinion that abuse results from 'flirtatious behaviour'. He went on to say: 'it always takes two to tango. Maybe they are driven by their desires but the migrant worker's attitudes are surprising' (Pramudatamo 2012). NGOs and trade unions united in condemning his views, but such stories perhaps hint at the emergence of a counter-discourse with strong religious undertones.

The minister for Manpower also caused consternation by announcing on May 29th that the government planned to stop sending migrant domestic workers abroad altogether by 2017. Anis Hidayah from Migrant Care responded angrily, accusing the president of merely mouthing 'empty words' when he told the ILO he recognized domestic worker as being in the formal sector (Christianto and Pramudatama 2012). This apparently contradictory announcement reveals, perhaps, the impact of conflicting pressures on the Indonesian government. Increasingly well-coordinated NGOs, international agencies and other authoritative voices demanded they be tough with Malaysia and take seriously the task of implementing regulatory frameworks and international norms. On the other hand, perhaps less clearly articulated, deeply embedded beliefs in women's *kodrat* (innate nature), ambivalence towards modernization and development agendas and some interpretations of Islam led others to see permanent prohibition as a better solution. However it does seem clear that the combination of press and NGO advocacy had not only held the government to account but also tapped into readers' concerns about the 'common good'. As one reader put it, 'What kind of nation does democratic Indonesia want to be?' (Guharoy 2012).

By Way of Conclusion: Future Reflections

The discussions I had with two journalists from the *Jakarta Post* and three from *Kompas* led me to reflect on the persistent challenges as well as new possibilities suggested by this case study of citizenship practices. All my respondents recognized that turning government rhetoric about migrant domestic workers into reforms on the ground will be slow. They expressed some cynicism, saying that although ministers react 'when the press makes a lot of noise' and politicians use migrant issues in campaigning, this 'doesn't mean they care'. Implementing new regulations is problematic where corruption is endemic. As one

journalist put it, 'after fourteen years we have learnt that every political party is corrupt once it has gained power'. Even the minister for Manpower, who 'used to be so poor he couldn't afford shoes', faces corruption charges (interview, 27 June 2012). The telling of this story epitomizes perhaps the emblematic position of the migrant domestic worker as the embodiment of the 'left-behind' poor, and especially of the left-behind poor women who not only are not benefitting from Indonesia's substantial economic growth but find themselves having to go overseas in the search for better futures (De Silva and Sumarto 2014:239–240). In the meantime, as was frequently re-iterated to me by activists pushing for the domestic worker bill, some wealthy politicians and public officials are said to have five or more domestic workers in their own homes and DPR members appear generally reluctant to support claims for a minimum wage for domestic workers (interview, 30 July 2015; observation JALA conference 16 June 2015). Nor is decentralization felt to be a remedy since, as I was told by another journalist, it can 'make little kings in the regions [who] don't help the smaller people' (interview, 28 June 2012).

Secondly, some Islamic groups continue to push for permanent prohibition. The head of the PKK (Family Welfare Movement) in Bandung was quoted in August 2012 as saying, 'I ask...how can they meet the basic need of the biological, nobody could answer. I therefore agree that the MUI [Muslim Council of Indonesia] issued a fatwa that do not allow women to become migrant workers' (Yulianti 2012). Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia held a well-attended and well-resourced international women's conference in Jakarta in January 2013 arguing for the state to 'eradicate' migrant domestic work and ensure women are financially supported by male relatives or the state (Muslimahediacentre 2013). However, while well-publicized, such views may be in a minority. Of greater significance may be the work of Fatayat NU, the women's branch of the Muslim mass organization Nahdlatul Ulama. Fatayat NU is a strong advocate of the rights of migrant domestic workers, aiming to empower women by providing 'the theological arguments for the rights of migrant domestic workers as workers, as citizens and as Muslims' (Rofiah and Nadjib 2010). While one of the journalists I interviewed felt that Indonesian women need to be vigilant about the extension of *syariah*, not least because the Ministry for Women's Empowerment has limited influence, the *Kompas* journalists I met, by contrast, downplayed religion as a possible restraint on women going overseas, arguing that economic imperatives are of greater significance in determining their choices.

Thirdly, although my case study provides evidence of a change in the status of migrant domestic workers in terms of media framing and entry into public space, there was little evidence of any change in relation to the gendered division of labour and gender hierarchies within families. My informants suggested

that attitudes to gender and migration could be different outside the capital, depending on local norms and economic circumstances. While continuing debate about migrant workers has provided opportunities for women to demonstrate political leadership and for returned migrants to build confidence in political participation, publicly performing shifts in gender relations and resistance to the normative gender regime, my interviewees felt that the gender order in Indonesia is proving slow to change. One *Kompas* journalist spoke honestly of his own family saying, 'For me, I have to work and earn money...my wife has to stay in the house and take care of my kids' (interview, 27 June 2012).

Finally, and returning to Ruth Lister's ideas about how to move towards a more female-friendly, differentiated conception of citizenship, press and NGO participation in the public debate about migrant domestic workers going to Malaysia does seem to have made domestic workers, inside Indonesia as well as overseas, much more visible. Ati Nurbaiti, the feminist journalist at the *Jakarta Post*, shared with me her view that the issue of domestic workers has been seen as 'outside the democracy sector', hidden within the 'private' realm. As she said: 'We do not discuss maids in Indonesia'. She explained that *Jakarta Post* journalists are aiming to persuade their readers to 'see the link' between the treatment of domestic workers overseas and the way Indonesians treat their own domestic workers at home. She believes an Indonesian law on domestic workers is vital, 'but I think it's not time yet...it is only supported by women's groups and although the percentage of women in the DPR is at its highest yet at 18%, I don't think it's enough' (interview, June 27 2012).

On the other hand, NGOs and the press caused some embarrassment to the Indonesian government by bringing out the 'dirty linen' of the Indonesian end of the migrant domestic worker trade. By linking the needs of working class, disadvantaged women with more middle class anti-government and anti-corruption agendas, press and NGOs mobilized a wider public. In so doing, they not only pushed the government to change its policies but contributed to a broader change in the status and public perception of the migrant domestic worker, and potentially, of the Indonesian domestic worker at home. The question as to why domestic workers inside Indonesia received much less attention than domestic workers overseas would seem to merit further investigation. Just as in Malaysia, Indonesian domestic workers, at the time of writing, are excluded from national labour legislation. Although their cause might not engender the strong feelings of (masculine) national pride that fuels public outrage about migrant domestic workers, they could equally well come to symbolize Indonesia's neglected underclass. Nor does their location within the private realm necessarily exclude them from discussions of citizenship entitlement; activists have, after all, succeeded in getting legislation passed to

ban domestic violence (Law No.23/2004). However, specific legal protection for domestic workers constructs them as *workers* rather than subordinate family members and hence challenges the legally enshrined position of men as household heads. At the same time, as in Malaysia, middle class women in Indonesia depend heavily on domestic workers to fulfil the gender expectations placed on them (Elmhirst 1999:258). Open discussion of domestic worker pay and work conditions could therefore invoke contradictory feelings of self-interest and shame, feelings which a family metaphor of domestic workers serves to cloak and contain.¹⁰

References

- 1372 RI workers deported in November. (2010, December 4). *Jakarta Post*.
- Adamrah, M. & Khalik, A. (2010, December 30). Poor coordination risks diplomacy. *Jakarta Post*.
- Anggraeni, D. (2006). *Dreamseekers: Indonesian women as domestic workers in Asia*. Jakarta: Equinox.
- Another Indonesian maid allegedly abused in Malaysia (2009, June 28), *Jakarta Post*.
- Bachtiar, P. (2010, December 23). Local govts key to emigration governance. *Jakarta Post*.
- Blackburn, S. (2004). *Women and the state in modern Indonesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blackwood, E. (2008). Not your average housewife: Minangkabau women rice formers in West Sumatra. In M. Ford & L. Parker (Eds.), *Women and work in Indonesia* (pp.17–40). London: Routledge.
- Budianto, L. (2010, December 1). Government faces challenges in protecting migrants. *Jakarta Post*.
- Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). (n.d.). *CSIS Foundation: Jusuf Wanandi*. Retrieved on February 2, 2016, from http://www.csis.or.id/foundation/page/jusuf_wanandi.html.
- Chin, C. (1998). *In service and servitude: Foreign female domestic workers and the Malaysian 'Modernity' project*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Christanto, D. (2012, May 20). Migrant workers ponder their future. *Jakarta Post*.
- Christianto, D. and Pramudatamo, R. (2012, June 29). Govt vows to stop sending maids abroad by 2017. *Jakarta Post*.
- Comment: Empowering our migrant workers. (2010, December 11). *Jakarta Post*.

¹⁰ See the discussion in Locher-Scholten (1998).

- Concrete measures needed to end labor abuses", (2009, June 19). *Jakarta Post*.
- De Silva, I. & Sumarto, S. (2014). Does economic growth really benefit the poor? Income distribution dynamics and pro-poor growth in Indonesia. *Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies*, 50(2), 227–242.
- Elias, J. (2010). Making migrant domestic work visible: The rights-based approach to migration and the 'challenges of social reproduction'. *Review of International Political Economy*, 17(5), 840–859.
- Elias, J. (2012). Foreign policy and the domestic worker: the Malaysia–Indonesia domestic worker dispute. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 15(3), 391–410.
- Elmhirst, R. (1999). Learning the ways of the priyayi: Domestic servants and the mediation of modernity in Jakarta, Indonesia. In J. Momsen (Ed.), *Gender, migration and domestic service* (pp.242–265). London: Routledge.
- Emilia, S. (2012, May 27). The moment of truth. *Jakarta Post*.
- Even the best have problems too: Activist. (2010a, December 21). *Jakarta Post*.
- Ford, M. (2006a). After Nunukan: The regulation of Indonesian migration to Malaysia. In A. Kaur & I. Metcalfe (Eds.), *Mobility, labour migration and border controls in Asia* (pp. 228–247). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Ford, M. (2006b). Migrant worker organizing in Indonesia. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 15(3), 313–333.
- Govt ban may lead to increase in illegal migration to Malaysia. (2009a, June 28). *Jakarta Post*.
- Govt told to keep its policy on workers. (2012a, June 7). *Jakarta Post*.
- Guharoy, D. (2012, May 1). Analysis: What kind of nation do Indonesians want?. *Jakarta Post*.
- Haryanato, I. (2011). Media ownership and its implications for journalists and journalism in Indonesia. In K. Sen & D. Hill, Haryanto, I. In *Politics and the media in twenty-first century Indonesia: Decade of democracy* (pp. 104–18). London: Routledge.
- Hugo, G. (2005). Indonesian international domestic workers: Contemporary developments and issues. In S. Huang, B. Yeoh & N. Rahm (Eds.), *Asian women as transnational domestic workers* (pp.54–91). Singapore: Marshall Cavendish.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW). (2004). Malaysia: Labor accord fails Indonesian Migrant Workers. Retrieved from <https://www.hrw.org/news/2004/05/10/malaysia-labor-accord-fails-indonesian-migrant-workers>.
- Indrasafritri, D. (2012, May 15). Showing the struggles of migrant workers. *Jakarta Post*.
- I.O.M. (2010). *International migration and migrant workers' remittances in Indonesia*. Makati City, Philippines: International Organization for Migration.
- Jakarta Post (n.d.). *Company Profile – Online edition*. Retrieved on February 2, 2016 from http://www.thejakartapost.com/company_profile.
- Jones, C. (2004). Whose Stress? Emotion work in middle class Javanese homes, *Ethnos*, 69(4), 509–528.

- Kaur, A. (2010). Labour migration in Southeast Asia: Migration policies, labour exploitation and regulation. *Journal of the Asia Pacific Economy*, 15 (1), 6–19.
- Killias, O. (2010). 'Illegal' migration as resistance: Legality, morality and coercion in Indonesian domestic worker migration to Malaysia. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 38, 897–914.
- Kitley, P. (2008). Out there: Citizens, audiences and mediatization, in K. Sen & T. Lee (Eds.), *Political Regimes and the Media in Asia* (pp.208–226). Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.
- Komnas Perempuan. (2009). *Dari Siti Hajar to perlindungan pekerja migran*. Retrieved on October 10, 2012 from <http://www.komnasperempuan.or.id/2009/06/dari-siti-hajar-ke-perlindungan-pekerja-migran-tuntutan-ratifikasi-konvensi-migran-1990-dan-seruan-penguatan-kerjasama/>.
- Krismantari, K. (2012, June 6). To show and to empower. *Jakarta Post*.
- Lindquist, J. (2010). Labour recruitment, circuits of capital and gendered mobility: Reconceptualizing the Indonesian migration industry. *Pacific Affairs* 83(1), 115–132.
- Lister, R. (1997). Citizenship: Towards a feminist synthesis. *Feminist Review* 57, 28–48.
- Locher-Scholten, E., (1998) 'So Close and Yet so Far: The Ambivalence of Dutch Colonial Rhetoric on Javanese Servants in Indonesia 1900–1942', in Clancy-Smith, J. and Gouda, F. (eds.) *Race, gender and family life in French and Dutch colonialism*. Charlottesville, Va.; London: University Press of Virginia, pp. 131–153.
- Lyons, L. (2005). Embodying transnationalism: The making of the Indonesian maid. In E. Lorek-Jezinska and K. Wieckowska, (Eds.), *Corporeal inscriptions: representations of the Body in Cultural and Literary Texts and Practices* (pp. 171–185). Torun, Poland: Nicholas Copernicus University Press.
- Maryono, A. and Suherdjoko (2009, May 29). Migrant worker's body flown home. *Jakarta Post*.
- Maulia, E. (2009, July 7). Malaysia, RI to revise agreement on workers. *Jakarta Post*.
- Migrant workers sent Rp 120 home last year. (2009c, May 27). *Jakarta Post*.
- Mohanty, C. (2003). *Feminism Without Borders*. Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- MuslimahMedia centre. (2013, December 10). *News report of Hizbut Tahrir International Women's Conference Indonesia*. Retrieved on October 15, 2014 from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H98lwaClzEI>.
- Nurbaiti, A. (2008, July 20). 'No sense of urgency' to help Indonesia's heroes. *Jakarta Post*.
- O'Shaughnessy, K. (2009). *Gender, state and social power in contemporary Indonesia: divorce and marriage law*. London: Routledge.
- Piper, N. (2003). Bridging gender, migration and governance: Theoretical possibilities in the Asian context, *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 12(1), pp. 221–248.

- Pramudatamo, R. (2012, May 30). 'Flirtatious' migrant workers to blame for abuse: Govt task force. *Jakarta Post*.
- President to meet House, Cabinet to discuss migrant worker protection. (2011, June 23). *Jakarta Post*.
- Priyambodo, R. (2012). Labour unions urge President Yodhoyoni to be firm against Malaysia. *Antara News*. Retrieved from <http://www.antaranews.com/>.
- Rahayaan, S. (2006). *Solidaritas Perempuan's statement on MOU between Indonesia and Malaysia*. Retrieved on September 9, 2013 from http://www.zoominfo.com/CachedPage/?archive_id=0&page_id=1608745476&page_url=//www.mfasia.org/mfaStateMents/Statement52-SPonMOU.html&page_last_updated=2010-02-24T10:55:48&firstName=Salma&lastName=Rahayaan.
- Ratha, D. & Shaw, W. (2007). *South-South migration and remittances*, Washington D.C. : The World Bank.
- RI may stop sending workers to Malaysia. (2009, June 23). *Jakarta Post*.
- RI, Malaysia hold border talks in Bali. (2010c, December 7). *Jakarta Post*.
- Robinson, K. (2009). *Gender, Islam and democracy in Indonesia*, Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge.
- Rofiah, N. and Nadjib, A. (2010). *Mari kenali hak-hak buruh migran Indonesia: Perspektif Islam dan perempuan*. Jakarta: Fatayat NU. Retrieved October 12, 2013 from http://r4d.dfid.gov.uk/pdf/outputs/womenempmus/fatayat_marikenali_series2.pdf.
- Romano, A. (2003). *Politics and the Press in Indonesia*. Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.
- Rudnykyj, D. (2004). Technologies of servitude: Governmentality and Indonesian transnational labor migration. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 77, pp. 407–434.
- Rusdi, M. (2009, June 18). Letters: Siti Hajar's suffering. *Jakarta Post*.
- Sen, K. (2008). Mediating political transition in Asia. In K. Sen & T. Lee, (Eds.), *Political Regimes and the Media in Asia*. Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.
- Sijabat, R. (2010a, December 9). Govt recovers loopholes in migrant worker transfer. *Jakarta Post*.
- Sijabat, R. (2010b, December 31). Migrant workers still waiting for change. *Jakarta Post*.
- Sijabat, R. (2012, May 11). RI reminds ASEAN of migrant workers' protection deal. *Jakarta Post*.
- Silvey, R. (2004). Transnational domestication: state power and Indonesian migrant women in Saudi Arabia. *Political Geography* 23, pp. 245–264.
- Simamora, A. (2011, June 23). President: Indonesia to ban labor export to Saudi by Aug. 1. *Jakarta Post*.
- Steele, J. (2011) Indonesian journalism post-Suharto: Changing ideals and professional practices. In K. Sen & D. Hill, (Eds.) *Politics and the media in twenty-first century Indonesia: Decade of democracy* (pp. 85–103). London: Routledge.
- Suherdjoko & Maryano, A. (2009, May 29). Migrant workers body flown home. *Jakarta Post*.

- Suryakusuma, J. (1996). The state and sexuality in New Order Indonesia. In L. Sears & J. Suryakusuma, (Eds.) *In Fantasizing the Feminine in Indonesia* (pp.92-119). Durham: Duke University.
- Suryakusuma, J. (2010, December 20). A tangled tale of Indonesian women. *Jakarta Post*.
- Thomas, L. (2009, July 28). Indonesia Pushes for Better Migrant Worker Protection. *TIME World*. Retrieved on September 28, 2013 from <http://content.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1913134,00.html>.
- Tirtosudarmo, R. (1999). The Indonesian state's response to migration. *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 14, 212–228.
- Tirtosudarmo, R. (2011) Migrant workers as a constitutional challenge for Indonesia, in *Migrant Workers in Asia: Policies and Practices in Social Sciences*. Jakarta: UNESCO.
- Varia, N. (2010). *Slow reform: Protection of migrant domestic workers in Asia and the Middle East*. New York: Human Rights Watch.
- Varshney, A., Tadjoeeddin, M.Z., & Panggabean, R. (2004). *Patterns of Collective Violence in Indonesia, 1990–2003*. UNSFIR.
- Weiss, M. (2010). Malaysia- Indonesia bilateral relations: Sibling rivals in a fraught family. In N. Ganesan & R. Amer, (Eds.). *International relations in South East Asia: between bilaterism and multilateralism* (pp. 171–198). Singapore: Institute of South East Asian Studies.
- Wichelen, S. (2010). *Religion, politics and gender in Indonesia*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Yazid, S. (2008). *Activism of Indonesian NGOs on the issue of women migrant workers: Engaging in national and international cooperation*. Paper presented to 17th Biennial Conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia in Melbourne, 1–3 July 2008 retrieved on October 12, 2013 from <http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/mai/files/2012/07/sylviayazid.pdf>.
- Yulianti, T. (2012). Netty Heryawan Support MUI Fatwa issuing prohibition TKW. *Detik Bandung*. Retrieved on September 20, 2012 from <http://bandung.detik.com/read/2012/07/08/121459/1960349/486/netty-heryawan-dukung-mui-terbitkan-fatwa-pelarangan-tkw>.