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Abstract

Global Householding and Social Reproduction in Pacific Asia

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Households are everywhere relied upon as basic units for social reproduction, which includes the physical and emotional nurturing of individuals in society. Creating and sustaining households, or householding, is experiencing diminishing capacities within many societies. As a result, householding is going global in all of its key dimensions. Currently, among the most prominent dimensions of global householding in Pacific Asia, are steeply rising numbers of transborder marriages; schooling of children abroad – often with mothers accompanying them; importing foreign workers to care for households and their members; the enormous amounts of remittances sent to households in home countries by international migrants; and the beginnings of retirement migration from higher to lower cost destinations in Pacific Asia. These trends are leading to profound questions about national identity, citizenship, social justice that involve not just the nation-state regulating them at the border, but many layers of organization and regulation reaching from the global to the national and sub-national local scale. For Pacific Asia, the coming multicultural societies implied by global householding is likely to be one of the most important – as well as contested – social transformation of the 21st century.