

# Filipinas at Copenhagen Hotels 1970s-1990s:

The European  
'Guest Worker' Era Revisited

AF NINA TRIGE ANDERSEN

---

ESSAY

From the late 1960s the Danish economy was in immediate need of labor and started importing workers from abroad, as did its neighboring European countries. Research in this era of 'guest worker' recruitment has tended to focus on male labor in the manufacturing industry, but in fact much of the recruitment was female labor for the service sector, particularly hotels and restaurants. In Denmark, one of the sectors that from early on employed large numbers of foreign born workers was the hotels concentrated in Copenhagen. During the 1960s, "one would soon encounter Filipinas at practically every hotel," as General Consul for the Philippines in Denmark, Hjalmar Ibsen, wrote in his memoirs about the first years after his appointment in 1966 (Ibsen, undated).<sup>1</sup> From the late 1970s the Philippine Overseas Employment Development Board (OEDB, today POEA) started systematically supplying labor for multinational hotel chains such as Holiday Inn and Sheraton (OEDB 1977-1981), of which the latter had in 1971 built a large hotel in Copenhagen. With sources from oral histories and archival studies, this essay revisits the guest worker era through the case of Filipina hotel workers in Copenhagen and traces their laboring lives to the 1990s when mobilizations amongst Filipina chambermaids revived the Danish hotel and restaurant workers' trade union.<sup>2</sup>

THE RESEARCH PROJECT:  
A PHILIPPINE HISTORY OF DENMARK

What I will present in this essay is part of a long-term research project called *A Philippine History of Denmark*, or in Danish: *Filippinernes Danmarkshistorie*. In practice this project began in 2010 when I was researching for a book about Filipinas in Denmark (Andersen 2013).<sup>3</sup> These Filipinas came from the generation who call themselves The Pioneers, namely the arrivals of

1960-1973; more specifically the book was about a group of Pioneers who became known as The 49ers. These 49 women were recruited via job interviews in Manila in 1973 for one-year contracts as chamber maids at the then newly constructed Hotel Scandinavia in Copenhagen.

This book is, to my knowledge, the first that has been written specifically about this generation of Filipino workers in Denmark.<sup>4</sup> At the time of publication, Filipinas in Denmark were associated with a much more recent form of – inherently temporary – migration, starting in the late 1990s, of young Filipinas recruited as so-called au pairs under a European program supposedly about cultural exchange, but which often could more accurately be described as an underpaid migrant domestic worker program (e.g. Stenum 2008; 2011).

Since the publication of the 2013-book about the collective and individual lives of The 49ers – as these lives were shaped in-between Denmark and the Philippines from 1973 until present day – I continued researching the history of migration dynamics and labor organizing as well as social, political and religious organizing amongst Filipinos and Filipinas in Denmark (e.g. Andersen 2014; 2016; 2017; 2018a; 2018b; 2018c; 2019). The overall perspective of my inquiries is and has been twofold: To carve out a space for Filipinas and Filipinos in Danish history, particularly the labor history of Denmark; and to use Philippine labor migrations – and the laboring lives of Philippine workers in Denmark – as a prism to understand the globally situated structures and changes of the Danish labor market and labor organizing traditions.

Since historical accounts of Filipino migration to Denmark were scarce when I started, and since archival institutions many places, including in Denmark, generally do not have a tradition for documenting

migrant lives and labor, researching and producing an archive of 'A Philippine History of Denmark' became an entangled process. Aside from searching for materials in existing archives – for instance the archive of the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment and Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as trade union archives, The National Archive [Rigsarkivet], and the Royal Library [Det Kongelige Bibliotek] in Denmark – I have been collecting documents and photos from private individuals.

It was originally one of the Pioneer descendants, Wesley Valdez, who during an interview in 2012 posed the idea that I should collect an archive of the history of Filipinos in Denmark. Valdez, who was then chairman of Filipino Association of Denmark (est. 1970), said that he found himself strangely connected and at the same time detached from both the history of the Philippines and of Denmark, and that he felt best represented in the history told in for instance the old association newsletters of Filipino Association of Denmark (Valdez, W. interview 2012).

An example of an article that came out of this process collecting private archives is *Fly Now, Pay Later* about the trajectories of Ms Robles (Andersen 2016). She was a pharmacist and used to have her own clinic in Tondo, Manila, but in 1971 she decided to apply for a chambermaid job in Denmark as means to get her family out of Manila, when clashes between protesters and the Marcos regime started getting more violent; her husband was a patrolman, so she was afraid he would get injured. The story of Ms Robles, who passed away in the late 1990s, was possible to write because she had meticulously kept her files related to the migration process – including a diary, letters exchanged with potential employers, receipts for wired money, etc. – and her son Rod Robles lend these files to be included in the collective archive.

The material is now in the process of being made available online ([www.filippi-](http://www.filippi-)

[nernesdanmarkshistorie.dk](http://nernesdanmarkshistorie.dk)) and stories produced from the archive are continuously being published.

## OVERVIEW OF PHILIPPINE MIGRATION TO DENMARK

With regards to Danish and European labor history, migration is generally understudied. When migration is accounted for, there is a tendency to focus primarily on male workers from former Yugoslavia and the Middle East as well as Eastern Europe, and primarily workers recruited for manufacturing industry, agroindustry and construction. Nonetheless, migrant workers in Northern Europe, including Denmark, have always also been women, and from the 1960s also coming from regions such as Southeast Asia. These women migrants found work in the same sectors as their male counterparts, but they were to a greater extent recruited for service industry and care industry, in the case of Denmark, for instance, Filipinas were predominantly employed at the Copenhagen hotels until the 1990s.

With regards to Philippine migration studies and migration history, the tendency is to focus on the US and the Middle East – and more recently also neighboring countries in Southeast Asia – whereas the routes to Europe has gotten less attention. However, in 1975, European destinations accounted for one fourth of temporary labor migrations from the Philippines (Orbeta and Abrigo 2009, 4; Abrera-Mangahas 1989, 5), and by 2011 Europe was home to almost a million Filipinos (Asis and Battistella 2013, 55).

The hotel and restaurant sector in Europe was a large-scale recruiter of migrant labor as early as the 1960s. This was also the case in Denmark, where Filipinas/os found work particularly at hotels such as Sheraton, Richmond, d'Angleterre, Kong Frederik and the SAS hotels Royal and Scandinavia. By 1975, the Danish national bureau of statistics had registered 473 Filipinos as residents in

Denmark, and by 1979 the number was 666 (Larsen 2014). Those were significant numbers in a Copenhagen context, which had around 700.000 inhabitants in 1975. From the Filipino Pioneers' oral accounts, it would seem that the official figures actually only cover part of the migration in that period: Some of the workers who arrived between 1960 and 1973 never officially resided in Denmark; instead they arrived on tourist visas and worked with or without permits for limited periods of time, and then moved on to destinations in for instance Canada, Norway and the US, or returned to the Philippines. One might thus assume that the annual inflow of workers from the Philippines has been larger than what the number of residing Filipinos suggest.

Even so, the numbers seem quite small by today's standards, especially from a Philippine perspective. However, considering that the Filipino Pioneers started migrating to Denmark prior to labor export becoming a national policy in the Philippines – as it did with the Labor Code of 1974 – and during a time when just a few thousands were annually processed by labor officials, the volume is more significant. Denmark was indeed also on the list of countries served by the Philippine Department of Labor before the institutionalization of labor export, and later by the Overseas Employment Development Board (DOL 1973, 18; OEDB 1978).

Migration from the Philippines to Denmark has, schematically put, happened in three major waves,<sup>5</sup> with the Filipino Pioneers being the first to arrive between 1960-1973. What marked the difference between the first and the second wave was a so-called immigration stop adopted in late 1973 in Denmark. Similar policies restricting immigration was adopted all over Europe in those years, as economic growth stagnated following the oil crisis. Despite formal policies, immigration did not stop, however, but the conditions for migration did change.

While already the Pioneers' generation had had a slight majority of women, the

second wave consisted mainly of women workers. They arrived in a moderate but steady flow of up to a couple of hundred per year from the mid-1970s to the 1990s. Most obtained their residence permits through marriage with Danish citizens or permanent residents since other legal options had become restricted. This post-1973 generation was largely employed in the same sector, often the same workplaces, as the Pioneers. While Europe, and not least Denmark, increasingly restricted the possibilities of legal entry for non-EU/EEA nationals during this period, the Philippines conversely refined and expanded its manpower export practices. The labor offered by the Philippines was in demand worldwide, also in Europe, despite growing legal obstacles to migration.

The third wave of migrants from the Philippines to Denmark began in the late 1990s. The number of Philippine citizens entering Denmark rose remarkably from less than 200 annually to more than 2,000 a year at the peak year 2008.<sup>6</sup> This was related to local specificities – one of those being that the Pioneer-generation facilitated the migration of nieces and nephews (Andersen 2013) – but it also mirrored a general trend in migration from the Philippines to Europe. Between 1998-1999 the official numbers of land-based deployed workers to Europe doubled from around 15,000 to 30,000, and then doubled again to almost 60,000 in 2006 (Battistella and Asis 2011, 44).

The Pioneer generation of workers from the Philippines to Denmark migrated through a combination of individual initiative, targeted job postings, networks of local agents, systematic recruitment efforts of international hotel chains as well as chain migration dynamics. One example where several of these components play a part is the story of Ms. Medina from Samal, Bataan. In the 1960s, Ms. Medina was working in a private household of an American family at Dewey/Roxas Boulevard in Manila. On her way to and from work, Ms. Medina used to

stop by the embassies and consulates to look for postings about jobs abroad. A manager from the old Hotel Kong Frederik in Copenhagen came to Manila around 1969 looking to recruit chambermaids. Ms. Medina was hired and went abroad along with four or five other women (Medina interview 2016). During the following years Ms. Medina found work for eight of her ten children as well, and whenever the Copenhagen hotel managers needed labour, the Medinas would know of old neighbours looking for opportunities abroad. Without ever running an agency, the Medinas could perhaps be characterized as drummers, as the private recruiters were once called (Vallangca 1977), as they were bringing dozens of workers from their hometown to the booming Copenhagen hotel sector. They also made sure that those who arrived on their own had a place to stay in the new country, and one of their old neighbours recruited for Royal Hotel in Copenhagen recalls staying with the Medinas in a house “full of Filipinos” (Valdez, L. interview 2013).

#### FILIPINO NETWORKS AND TRADE UNIONISM

Filipinos in Copenhagen from early on formed and joined formal and informal networks and organizations. The Filipino Association of Denmark (FAD) was established in 1970 and in consequence of the worklife of the majority of its members, the FAD celebrated its Christmas parties, Valentines parties and Independence Day celebrations at Copenhagen hotels such as the Sheraton, Hotel Scandinavia, and Royal Hotel. Many were – as the Medinas and those they recruited – living together with Filipinos they knew from their home town or were related to. Some also came to live together in housing provided by the hotels, either privately with managers who had extra rooms, or more formally as in the case of the upscale Hotel d’Angleterre in central

Copenhagen, which in the early 1970s recruited so many chambermaids straight from the Philippines that the hotel management found it necessary to rent a building close by for accommodation (Ibsen, undated; Robles archive).

Most of the Philippine workers in Copenhagen also joined trade unions from the beginning. For those who worked in factories – for instance, both the electronics factory Storno and Toms Chocolate hired many Filipinos in the 1970s and 1980s – the unions were Specialarbejderforbundet i Danmark (SiD) (union for skilled and unskilled manual workers in the private sector) and Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund i Danmark (KAD) (union for skilled and unskilled women workers in the private sector). For those employed at hotels, the majority joined the hotel- and restaurant workers’ union, Hotel- og Restaurationspersonalets Forbund (HRF). The HRF was in practice not accommodating to its foreign-born members in the 1970s, even though it was one of the unions with the highest proportion of migrants.<sup>7</sup> Few materials were available in other languages than Danish, and few Philippine workers recall having been approached by the union during the 1960s and 1970s.

Nonetheless, being organized in a trade union was so common in Denmark at the time that some thought it was not even a choice. As trade union members, Filipino workers thus took part in local labor struggles from the beginning. In 1978, when a national strike hit the entire hotel and restaurant sector, Filipinos were there manning the picket lines (HRF 1978), and as it happened, this particular conflict became a turning point for the union, not least regarding how HRF dealt with its migrant members. The outcome of the conflict paved the way for a new leadership in the HRF, who had mobilization of women and migrant workers on top of its agenda.

According to both the news coverage at

the time, subsequent debates in the HRF member magazine, as well as documents from union congresses in the following years, a majority of the members had been convinced that the national strike should have resulted in a great victory for the union.<sup>8</sup> Employers were ready to sign collective agreements and accept the workers' demands because sympathy strikes from for instance transport workers had made it impossible for hotels and restaurants to even operate during the conflict. However, the representatives of the union ended up signing a deal with employers – shortcutting all democratic procedures – that many members felt were way too soft, and the following years an opposition to the old leadership of the union started mobilizing. One of the central priorities of the opposition was to engage migrant and women members at the core of the labor organizing activities.<sup>9</sup>

The national leadership of the union was overthrown in 1982, and the opposition took over. The new leadership had two big problems, though, with regards to mobilizing migrant members: One was that they had many good intentions but no actual migrant trade union comrades – they simply did not know their migrant colleagues. The other was that they had won the national leadership but not yet the leadership of the biggest local branch of the union, which also held the largest number of migrant members, namely the Copenhagen branch (Moos interview 2015; Høgskov interview 2015).

In Copenhagen, migrant members were however beginning to document their problems and discuss their conditions amongst each other. One of the key agents in what would later become the biggest mobilizations in the history of the Copenhagen branch, was a Filipina named Ruth, married name Theil (Theil interview 2016; Høgskov interview 2015).

Ruth Theil was from a landless tenant farmer family in the Davao region in Mindanao. During her years in agricultural

college, she and her fellow students had helped their parents organize against the local landlord. She utilized this experience when she many years later found out that the hours she and her Filipina colleagues worked at Hotel Sheraton-Copenhagen, did not match the ones on their paycheck. In the late 1980s, Ruth Theil started to systematically collect documentation about the irregularities that took place at Hotel Sheraton. Occasionally she would drop by the office of the local trade union branch with the documents and ask for help to file cases for unpaid wages, but nothing happened. She tried speaking to her colleagues about their conditions, but people were afraid to get fired if they complained (Theil interview 2016).

Around 1990 the leadership of the HRF Copenhagen branch had a falling out with one of the most powerful groups in the branch, the airport club, which also included many Filipinos. The airport club had been unhappy about the lack of support from the branch leadership in a specific labour struggle and called for an extraordinary congress of the Copenhagen branch. They asked Eva Høgskov, who was known as one of the front figures of the opposition that had won the national leadership, to run for chairman in Copenhagen (Høgskov interview 2015). She won, along with an almost entirely new board, and a new era of HRF Copenhagen was about to begin.

When the new leadership entered the union office, they were in for a surprise. Eva Høgskov recalls:

“We couldn’t believe it – boxes and piles everywhere with member cases. We just started at one end and kept going. It was cases worth millions of unpaid wages and benefits, most of them belonging to Filipina chambermaids” (Høgskov interview 2015).

Ruth Theil remembers returning from four weeks of vacation in Davao to a message that the branch chairman wanted to see her.



“And there was Eva with all the paperwork I had collected. She said: ‘You’ve got to organize them, Ruth’. And I said: ‘How? They barely dare talk to me’. But we waited until the right moment came” (Theil 2016, interview).

If the new labour union leadership was taken aback by the piles of unresolved cases, so were the employers when the subpoenas started piling up on their desks. In 1992, at least 35 cases were won against both hotels, restaurants and cleaning companies, the single biggest victory was against the cleaning company Steward Service for unpaid wages, lack of job contracts, unpaid overtime and holiday supplements – a total of 400,000 Danish Kroner, equalling more than 30 months of wages (RBF 1992a, 9). At d’Angleterre, the hotel management had systematically asked the chambermaids to work more hours per week than they were paid, and the hotel was sentenced to paying 350,000 Danish Kroner to the workers (RBF 1992b). The union won so many cases that they could not keep up with the money rolling in. The new leadership worked – with the assistance of Filipina organizers like Ruth Theil – to get in touch with all the chambermaids, of which not all of them were members. They were offered three months of free membership, no fees, and if people were not happy with the union, they could just leave with their compensation from the cases. Eva Høgskov explains the strategy:

“We owed them that much, the union having been collecting membership fees from so many workers for so many years without doing anything. Most of the new members stayed, though, I think we ended up with 95 percent coverage of the Filipina chambermaids in Copenhagen. Our membership numbers skyrocketed. Those boxes turned out to be our connection to a whole lot of people” (Høgskov 2015, interview).

At Sheraton, Ruth Theil waited until April

1992, when they knew that the management would have to hire in new workers for the high season, before they started mobilizing. She invited the newly hired for dinner at “a restaurant” – her treat – and after work she sent them with taxis to the trade union office, where Eva Høgskov was waiting with sandwiches and soft drinks. Everybody joined the labor union that day and Ruth Theil was elected their shop steward. “That’s when the trouble started!” Ruth Theil says. “When the labor union notified the management that I was now official spokesperson, they got so angry” (Theil interview 2016).

Around the same time, another Filipina – Olivia, married name Medgyesi – had started organizing her colleagues at Hotel Phoenix and later Hotel Østerport in Copenhagen. They were struggling with the outsourcing of chambermaid jobs to private cleaning companies (Medgyesi interview 2013). The outsourcings were a problem because the new companies often tried to get rid of the collective agreements the workers had, and the problem was aggravated by the fact that many of the cleaning companies were either operating illegally or semi-illegally, for instance to avoid paying taxes. The trade union called these companies ‘cleaning pirates’, and some of those were organized in a tightly knit network known as the ‘cleaning mafia’, which also used physical threats and carried weapons to threaten trade unionists.<sup>10</sup>

Many of the Copenhagen hotels employing Filipina chambermaids were expensive and exclusive to the public, while things did not look very fancy behind the scenes. The trade unionists used the vulnerability of the hotels’ images by making themselves – the invisible labor – visible in the streets with posters explaining how they were being treated by hotel managements. Both Ruth Theil and Olivia Medgyesi got elected for the board of the Copenhagen branch – Olivia as the first migrant representative in the leadership of the union – in the early 1990s. By spring 1993 they had mobilized so many

of their compatriots that they felt the need for a Filipino Network in the union, which they established with support from the national leadership. Within a month, more than 100 members had signed up for the network. Besides social events such as Barrio Fiesta, the Filipino Network made sure that trade union information was available in English and that labour struggles at the hotels were discussed in the local Philippine radio station *Istasyon Pinoy*. The network also assisted Filipinos who were afraid to join the union and mobilized sympathy actions from fellow Filipinos during labour struggles by contacting Filipino associations and religious groups.<sup>11</sup>

#### WRITTEN OUT OF HISTORY

Already from the 1970s, foreign-born workers had comprised almost half of the membership in the Copenhagen branch of The Union of Hotel and Restaurant Workers (HRF) (HRF København 1983). As this essay shows a brief glimpse of, not only were migrants numerous in memberships, they were also – particularly Filipina members – often on the front lines of the labor struggles. They participated in strikes and picketing already in the 1970s and became core labor activists from the late 1980s. Yet, migrants largely escaped the attention of historians documenting this labor union's history. Not that there is much history written – the service sector, and particularly the hotels, are not well represented in labor history. There are, however, two publications written specifically about this union; one prepared for the anniversary of the Copenhagen branch in 1983, and one commissioned when the union was about to merge with two other unions in 1990.

The only mention of migrants in the anniversary publication in 1983 – at which point migrants made up around 40 percent of the membership – was that “guest workers and immigrants (...) naturally entail a lot of extra work for the branch” (HRF Køben-

havn 1983, 26-27). This seems, under any circumstance, a peculiar way of describing almost half the membership base. When the next historical account came out in 1998, the migrants' organizing and mobilizing efforts still left no traces in the official history of the Union of Hotel- and Restaurant Workers. Though research for this publication was conducted during the peak of labor struggles at the Copenhagen hotels – many places led by Filipina chambermaids – the description of migrant members still solely concerned ‘problems’ of language, of unemployment, and of illegality (Federspiel 1998).<sup>12</sup>

History is often a normative discipline in the sense that the kind of questions that are asked and the ways in which the accounts are framed, are guided by already common assumptions about how things happened and who made things happen. This often entails a gendered, racialized and institutional bias. The events that take place outside or on the margins of formal structures of recognized institutions, in this case trade unions, tend to be overlooked, as do people who are not immediately recognizable as what we could call agents of history. In the case of labour history, for instance, this would be the figure of ‘a real worker’ a ‘unionized worker’ or ‘an organizer’.

In a Danish context, for instance, men employed in the manufacturing industry has since the mid twentieth century been formative for what labor history as well as political and public discourse recognize as the typical (presumably white and male) worker, despite the fact that the manufacturing industry has been on decline since the early 1980s, giving way to not least service industry. This is one of the reasons why for instance hotel workers are not well represented in Danish historical accounts. Another normative assumption – which most likely guided the historical accounts that do exist about hotel workers – is that migrants as such are difficult to organize, or even an obstacle to trade union work.

Filipinas working as chamber maids in



Copenhagen thus slipped through the cracks of history because they were women, because they were migrants, because they were doing invisible labor, because their ways of organizing and mobilizing each other and asserting their rights as workers often took place outside or on the fringes of institutions, and because they did not hold important titles such as chairman or president – and even when they did hold titles, such as shop steward or elected board member, they remained unaccounted for. Nonetheless, they did create history, and they did leave traces, also in the official archives, particularly in the archives of the trade unions they were members of, and more generically in the archives of for instance the Philippine Department of Labor and the OEDB/POEA.

By piecing together traces from official archives with the ones that can be found in private archives – the kind of archives we all in one way or another create during our lives – as well as with oral histories, the laboring lives of migrants can be accounted for. Through these accounts, a Philippine History of Denmark emerges, contributing important components to understanding transnational and translocal dynamics of labor migration and labor organizing as well as continuities and ruptures in labor market structures in the twentieth century.

## REFERENCES

- Abrera-Mangahas, A. 1989. *Response to New Market Opportunities: The Case of the Overseas Employment Sector*. Working Paper, Series No. 89-11, Philippine Institute for Development Studies.
- Andersen, N. T. 2013. *Profession: Filippiner. Kvinder på arbejde i Danmark gennem fire årtier*. København: Tiderne Skifter.
- Andersen, N. T. 2014. Filippinske hotelarbejdere i København fra 1960erne-1990erne. *Arbejderhistorie. Tidsskrift for historie, kultur og politik*. 1,7–29.
- Andersen, N. T. 2015. “I don’t do theory. I do concept work”. An interview with Aihwa Ong. *Women, Gender & Research*. 24(1), 12-19. DOI: 10.7146/kkf.v24i1.28509
- Andersen, N. T. 2016. Fly now, pay later. Trajectories of a Filipina worker in Copenhagen. *Gränslös. Tidsskrift för studier av Öresundsregionenens historia, kultur och samhällsliv*. 6,69-81.
- Andersen, N. T. 2017. A Philippine History of Denmark from the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Pioneers to the Migrants of Today. *Philippine Studies – Ethnographic and Historical Viewpoints*. 65(1), 31-70.
- Andersen, N. T. 2018a. Organisering af filippinske hotelarbejdere i København fra 1990erne-2000erne. *Arbejderhistorie. Tidsskrift for historie, kultur og politik*. 24(2)
- Andersen, N. T. 2018b. Filipinas working on invisible frontlines in Denmark 1970s-2010s. *Gender, History, Futures. Report from the XI Nordic Women’s and Gender History Conference, Stockholm, Sweden, August 19–21 2015*. Report series of the Swedish Association for Woman’s and Gender Historians, no 2. Stockholm: SKOGH
- Andersen, N. T. 2018c. Filippinske hotelarbejdere i København 1960erne-2000erne. En rapport om arbejdsmigration og organiseringsformer med fokus på stuepigeområdet. Prepared for Privat Service Hotel og Restauration in 3F
- Andersen, N. T. 2019. *Labor Pioneers. Economy, Labor, and Migration in Philippine-Danish Relations 1950-2015*. Ateneo de Manila University Press (forthcoming).
- Asis, M. M. B. and Battistella, G. 2013. *Country Migration Report: The Philippines 2013*. Contributing expert Ricardo R. Casco (IOM). Makati City/Quezon City: International Organization for Migration.
- Battistella, G. and Asis, M. M. B. 2011. Protecting Filipino Transnational Domestic Workers: Government Regulations and Their Outcomes. *Discussion paper series No. 2011-12*. Makati City: Philippine Institute for Development Studies.
- Beretning HR-gruppen 1994-1998. 3. Ordinære Gruppekongres, Oktober 1998, Aalborg Kongres Center. RBF.
- DOL. 1973. *Annual Report*. Manila: Department of Labor.
- Federspiel, S. 1998. *Vi, der går køkkenvejen. Hotel- og Restaurationspersonalets Forbund 1933-1990*. Copenhagen: Knuths Forlag.
- HRF. 1978. Scrap book titled ‘Udklip’ about the 1978 conflict, found in the archive of HRF, later RBF now PSHR-group in 3F.

- HRF København. 1983. *Jubileumsskrift for HRF København*.
- Høgskov, E. 2015. Member of the hotel and restaurant workers' union HRF/Samvirket since the 1970s, chair of the Copenhagen branch from 1991-1998. Interview conducted in her home on March 11, 2015, as well as prior phone conversation.
- Ibsen, H. 1992. *Op og ned under fem monarker. Erindringer*. Copenhagen: Borgen.
- Kjær, I. L. 1997. "Filipino Migrants. The World's Perennial Partner in Progress?" Master thesis, Department of International Development Studies, Roskilde University.
- Larsen, D. 2014. Emails from Senior Head Clerk, Population and Education, Statistics Denmark, to author, September 5 and 8, 2014.
- Ibsen, H. Undated. Memoir notes/manuscript draft, unpublished.
- Medgyesi, O. 2013. Came to Denmark in 1989, worked Hotel Phoenix and Hotel Østerport – where she was also elected shop steward – and at various cleaning companies. Elected for the board of HRF Copenhagen in 1992. Initiated the Philippine Network in RBF in 1993. Two interviews conducted in her home in Copenhagen.
- Medina, A. 2014-2016. Interview. Angeles 'Jun' Medina is son of Benita Medina, who came to Denmark in 1969. Jun followed in 1973 and has worked at Hotel Kong Frederik, Royal Hotel, SAS Catering, Storno Electronics and Toms Chocolate factory. Retired in 2015. Interviews conducted in the Medina home in San Juan, Samal, Bataan, Philippines on December 14, 2014, and in Jun's home in Copenhagen on May 20, 2016.
- Moos, B. 2015. President of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union (HRF) and vicepresident of Samvirket from 1982-1988, president of Samvirket 1988-1990, president of RBF 1990-1994. Has since worked in various positions in the labor union until retirement in June 2015. Interview conducted at the 3F headquarters in Copenhagen on August 10, 2015, as well as prior and subsequent conversations and email exchanges.
- OEDB. 1976-1981. *Annual Reports*. (accessed at the Department of Labor & Employment Library (1976, 1978-1981) and the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration Library (year 1977) in July 2014).
- Orbeta, A. Jr., Abrigo, M. 2009. *Philippine International Labor Migration in the Past 30 Years: Trends and Prospects*. Discussion Paper Series No. 2009-33. Makati City: Philippine Institute for Development Studies.
- RBF. 1992a. *Afdelingsnyt* (1), 5.
- RBF. 1992b. *Afdelingsnyt* (3), 4.
- Robles archive. From the lives of the late Maria Lourdes and Reynaldo Robles who arrived in Denmark in 1971 and 1972. Kindly made available by their son Rodrigo Robles who joined them in Denmark in 1973. The archive consists of letters exchanged with employers and the consulate before and after arrival in Denmark, tax receipts, work permits, diplomas, letters from the Philippines state to Filipinos abroad, newspaper clippings, photographs, diaries.
- Stenum, H. 2008. *Au Pair in Denmark: Cheap labour or cultural exchange? A Study of the au pair programme in Denmark with special focus on Filipino migrants*. Report. Copenhagen: FOA.
- Stenum, H. 2011. The politics of recognition: from 'cultural exchange' to 'domestic work'. In: Stenum, H. and Isaksen, L. W. eds. *Politics of Care*. Majda Hrzenjak, Slovenia: The Peace Institute, Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies.
- Theil, R. 2016. Has worked at a.o. Hotel Sheraton, Hotel Marriott, and Hotel Dan in Copenhagen. Elected shop steward at each of these hotels and has been on the board of the labor union HRF Copenhagen. Interviews conducted on March 16, 2016, together with former colleague Violeta Jensen, and on April 4, 2016, in central Copenhagen, alone. Both interviews at cafes in central Copenhagen.
- Vallangca, R. V. 1977. *Pinoy: The First Wave 1898-1941*. San Francisco: Strawberry Hill Press.
- Valdez, L. 2013. Came to Denmark in 1972, worked for more than 15 years at Royal Hotel, then at Hotel d'Angleterre, and Gate Gourmet at the Copenhagen Airport. Was recommended for the job in Denmark by the Medina family. Interview conducted in the basement of the Saint Anne Church, September.
- Valdez, W. 2012. Former chairman of FAD, son of Laling Valdez, one of the Filipino Pioneers. Formal interview conducted at Cafe Europa in Copenhagen on July 2, 2012, as well as group interviews on various occasions, and several informal conversations from 2012-2015.

## NOTES

1. Hjalmar Ibsens notes from his time as General Consul for the Philippines in Denmark was originally meant to be published as a part II of his memoirs (Ibsen 1992), but was not finished before

his death in 1996. His daughter Ulla Gadegaard kindly found the notes and sent them to the author.

2. This essay is a revised version of a lecture held at Ateneo de Manila University, Department of History, February 19, 2018. Thanks to department chair Dr. Olivia 'Lianne' Anne M. Habana for organizing the event, and to the faculty and students at School of Social Sciences for their questions and comments.

3. Apart from official archives this essay is based on the following sources: 1) Trade union archives, not publicly accessible and not organized and readily searchable; 2) Oral history: interviews with groups of and individual Filipino workers such as the Medina family, The 49ers, Ruth Theil and other Filipina trade unionists, as well as Danish trade unionists who were engaged with migrant members in the 1970s-1990s; 3) Documents such as personal files of Filipino workers, including association publications, letters exchanged with for instance employers and relatives, photographs etc., and documents such as unpublished trade union materials that Filipino and Danish members and organizers kept from the labor struggles they were involved in. Both interviews and collection of archive material entails visiting people in their homes and hometowns, for instance in Samal, Bataan, where I have been on several occasions, and it entails spending time on tracing people, since most are not or no longer linked with for instance institutions that could help establish contact.

4. Countless newspaper articles have been written on Filipinas in Denmark, particularly since 2005/6, and increasingly Filipinas/os in Denmark are becoming the object of scholarly research, but as of now, studies dealing with historical aspects of migration between the Philippines and Denmark are scarce and – apart from my own work – consists mainly of an anthology from 2007, edited by the journalist Filomenita Høghsholm (Filipina residing in Denmark): *In the Olde World: Views of Filipino Migrants in Europe* with chapters on Denmark. There is also a thesis from 1997, from the Danish Roskilde University, in which the Filipino Pioneer Rufina Valenzuela (then Palad) and Cezar Palad are thanked for giving an interview (Valenzuelas story is unfolded in Andersen 2013), and where there is a very brief mention of migration from the Philippines to Europe from the 1960s onwards. According to the foreword, the author ended up producing the thesis as a “desk-study” after a failed attempt of doing a survey among Filipinos in Denmark (Kjær 1997).

5. Naturally, the descriptions of these waves do not

cover Philippine migration to Denmark in its total complexity – for instance the number of Philippine seamen employed by Danish-based companies (and of whom some settled in Denmark) are not included; neither are the current seemingly rising number of (urban) professionals hired for leading positions by multinational companies such as Adecco, Novo Nordisk and Maersk, nor visiting scholars or PhD students. The three waves described could also be subdivided in various other ways or sorted according to other criteria than chronology.

6. Numbers from online database of Statistics Denmark cross-referenced with the annual reports of The Danish Immigration Service.

7. This point is elaborated in Andersen 2014 and Andersen 2018a.

8. The course of this event is elaborated in Andersen 2018a, 2018c.

9. The account is based on newspaper clippings and other material from scrap book about the conflict (HRF 1978), written accounts from national congresses of the Hotel and Restaurant Workers' Union (HRF/RBF), debates in member magazines during the period, as well as interviews with later chairman Bent Moos, who was active in the union from the 1970's and part of the 'opposition' (Moos interview 2015), as well as with Eva Høgskov, also part of the 'opposition' and later chairman in HRF Copenhagen (Høgskov 2015).

10. Account based on several documents from the HRF archive (now placed at the headquarters of 3F) and the private archive of Thorkild Holmboe-Hay, trade union employee, who at the time had the struggle against pirate cleaning as his main task.

11. Account based on member magazines of HRF Copenhagen and RBF, documents from the HRF archive, as well as interviews with a.o. Medgyesi, Theil, Holmboe-Hay, Høgskov and Moos.

12. The decision to commission a history of the union HRF was made in 1990 when the union merged with two (later three) other unions, but the collection of material and preparation of the book did not commence until 1997 (Beretning HR-gruppen 1994-1998, 57; Federspiel 1998, 9). The chair of the Copenhagen branch during the 1990s does not recall ever having been approached by the historian (Høgskov 2015, interview). The vice chair Thorkild Holmboe-Hay was interviewed, primarily about his work on the campaign against the pirate cleaning companies and moonlight work in the sector, but not about his work organizing Filipinas or the ways in which Filipinas were involved in the struggles against cleaning pirates.