

Asians in the Arab World: Labor Migration and Public Policy

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Ten years after the first oil price rises were declared in 1973 the countries of the Middle East were still struggling to understand the implications of these momentous events. Economic changes induced by events of 1973 created a dynamic process that fundamentally changed both the view of, and the reality in, the Arab world. The economic development of the region is critically tied to manpower requirements; many of the bottlenecks and constraints on economic growth stem directly from the flow of labor across national boundaries.¹ The appearance of increasing numbers of South and East Asian workers in the Arab Gulf represents the most important recent change in the labor markets of the region. The new flows of Asian labor, beginning around 1975, were partly a response to market conditions and partly fueled by political concerns. Arab labor exporters could not fully meet the demand for labor. In addition, Asians had a distinct political advantage: Asian workers were unlikely to make claims for citizenship. Asians were alien and could continue to remain disenfranchised. They were regarded as more likely to be passive observers of political processes rather than as potential activists or claimants on social services and other benefits of citizenship.

Now, at the time of writing, in 1983, there emerge signs of yet another change. The Middle East press reports new labor agreements among Arab countries as well as criticism of the large number of Asians. These signs must be interpreted with caution. If such a reaction is occurring it may be politically motivated. For example, while Arab labor contractors might now become almost as effective as their Asian counterparts, they are unlikely to have surpassed them.

To fully appreciate the implications of the Asian presence, it must be placed in the context of migration processes in the Middle East. This article presents the view from the Middle East by reviewing the migration processes of the past decade and highlighting the initial issues of political economy emerging from the large-scale movement of labor across national boundaries. The major policy issues are then identified, as an essential requisite for making cautious assessments regarding future prospects.

A DECADE OF MOBILITY

The most important fact about migration in the Middle East is its rapidly changing nature. In retrospect one can discern five phases in the flow of labor across national boundaries. While not mutually exclusive, they characterize substantially different types of dynamics at each point in time, which elicited different policy responses for both sending and receiving

states. Together they reveal the underlying shifts that have taken place as the individual economies of the area adjust to new realities.²

The initial phase in the intra-regional migration process ended with the events of October 1973. The region experienced two traditional types of movement. Egyptians (and, to some extent, Jordanians) migrated to other Arab countries, principally as teachers and administrators. The small numbers involved made control possible since they required minimal organization and regulation by the governments of both sending and receiving states. Formal policies governed procedures for individual secondment of official state-to-state missions.

At the same time relatively fewer skilled workers would migrate for work in the service and construction sections of various states. Examples include Yemenis to Saudi Arabia and Sudanese to Egypt. Palestinians demand separate treatment since their plight represents a non-voluntary movement, the result of violence and coercion. Yet this refugeeism became a cornerstone of the migrant communities in many labor-importing countries.

Around 1970, all but 12 per cent of the migrant workers originated from other Arab states. No single migrant group dominated the labor force of any one country, with the exception of the 200,000–250,000 Yemenis working in Saudi Arabia. Together with an estimated 94,000 Egyptians, 92,000 Syrians, and 71,000 Palestinians, they represent the majority of the 648,000 Arabs working abroad at the time.³

Four types of migration patterns characterized the countries of the region in this period: countries that exported unskilled or relatively unskilled labor to Europe (Algeria, Turkey) or the Gulf region and Libya (North and South Yemen, Syria); countries that imported a small number of workers at all levels of skills (the Gulf region and Libya); countries exhibiting a relatively highly skilled personnel (Egypt, Jordan); countries exhibiting a relative self-sufficiency in manpower (Morocco, Tunisia).

The second phase in this process was characterized by exploding investments and attendant demand for labor. The oil price increases of 1973 initiated this new phase in labor mobility, shaped by massive investments in the newly rich oil-exporting countries. The Arab world experienced large-scale adjustments in their national labor forces and a general expansion of economic activity.

By 1975, the evolution of migration flows resulted in a new fivefold regional profile: countries that imported labor of all kinds (the Gulf, Libya); countries sending skilled and unskilled laborers (Egypt, Jordan); countries that exported their skilled labor for employment in low status positions (Yemen); countries that sent labor to Europe and began to import skilled labor from elsewhere in the Middle East (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco); and countries that both exported and imported labor within the region (Iraq, Oman).

The stock of expatriate workers swelled from 880,000 to 1,800,000 between 1970 and 1975, with most of the increase in the last two years. Both the labor-importing and -exporting states found that growing demand taxed the minimal regulatory policies and mechanisms in place. At the same time, sending states eagerly sought to encourage rather than constrain the export

of labor. Supply readily responded to demand. In retrospect this period should be seen as one of effectively unregulated, market-determined labor movements.

The period 1975-76 was particularly dynamic for the political economy of the Arab world. The new equilibrium in the disposition of the regional labor force proved transitional. A convergence of labor shifts, economic change, and massive investment programs contributed to the emergence of new trends, ushering in the next phase.

The third phase in Middle Eastern migration evolved through the latter part of the 1970s. Arab workers continued to migrate, but the Gulf states began to recruit large numbers of South Asian workers. Indians, Pakistanis, and, to a lesser degree, Bangladeshis increased their presence. As early as 1975, Indians and Pakistanis accounted for 18 per cent of all migrant workers.⁴

Two factors led to the large-scale entry of Asians into the labor markets of the Middle East. First the size of the demand for migrant workers outstripped the ability of Arab states to supply them. Second, South Asian workers willingly accepted jobs and wages that Arab workers resisted. The supply of Asians expanded rapidly, challenging the position of the traditional suppliers. Some evidence suggests that Indians and Pakistanis supplanted Egyptians and Jordanians in some of the more skilled occupations.

The following numbers illustrate the continued growth in migration, particularly with respect to Asians. From less than 200,000 in 1975, the number of Pakistanis working in the Middle East climbed to 500,000 in 1977; by 1979 the figure reached 1.25 million. The number of Egyptians also continued to grow, from 330,000-400,000 in 1975, to 600,000 in 1976, to 1,365,000 in 1978. Based on these figures, which must by necessity be viewed with caution, Egypt and Pakistan dominated migration flows in the last part of the decade. They also indicate that the migration phenomenon is much larger than depicted by reports based on data collected in 1975 by the World Bank and the International Labor Office.

The number of North Yemeni and Indian migrants reinforce this assertion. North Yemen managed to increase its export of workers to 500,000 or more by 1977. India emerged as an equally important supplier, with up to 500,000 workers in the Gulf by 1979. India and Pakistan clearly forced Egypt and Yemen to share their dominance of the Gulf labor markets. Asians were now almost as important as Arabs in the region.

By this time the Gulf states had – to different degrees – initiated various policies designed to deal with the influx of foreigners and to control the extent to which different nationality groups interacted with the host societies. For example, Saudi Arabia decided to strictly enforce its border crossing procedures, thus constraining the flow of Yemenis into the country. Arab sending states also began to try to organize policy responses to counter what looked like negative effects of migration, including growing shortages of skilled manpower and the failure to attract a large enough share of worker remittances. This phase, then, marked the beginning of the politicization of migration in both senders and receivers.

The fourth phase emerged by the decade's end, marked by two new trends. First there was a growing complexity in Asian labor. Koreans, Taiwanese, Filipinos and others began to appear in great numbers, in the Gulf and elsewhere. At the same time governments in both sending and receiving countries assumed a much more active role in managing the migration process.

Drawing upon the most recent information available, Table 1 presents our best estimates of the imports and exports of labor in the early 1980s for the individual countries of the Middle East. Against this background, Table 2 presents estimates of the number of East Asian workers in the Middle East. China, Taiwan and Indonesia, while small in terms of absolute numbers, are nevertheless important. Together with South Korea, the Philippines,

TABLE 1
MIGRANT WORKERS AS A PROPORTION OF THE LABOR FORCE IN SEVERAL
MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES IN THE EARLY 1980s

	Exports of Migrant Workers to Libya and the Gulf Region	Imports of Foreign Workers	Labor Force	Proportion of Migrant workers to Labor Force
Algeria	(650,000)		4,000,000	(16)
Bahrain		80,700	137,900	59
Egypt	2,000,000		11,000,000	18
Iraq		.75-1 million	4-4.3 million	19-25
Jordan	300,000	120,000	450,000	67 27
Kuwait		378,710	482,000	79
Lebanon	140,000		700,000	20
Libya		467,000	920,000	51
Morocco	(366,000)		5,800,000	(6)
Oman	50,000	145,000	298,000	17 49
Qatar		94,400	111,400	85
Saudi Arabia		1.1-2 million	2.5-3.4 million	44-59
Sudan	470,000		5,695,000	4
Syria	80,000		2,400,000	3
Tunisia	80,000 (350,000)		1,400,000	6 (25)
Turkey	250,000 (1,000,000)		15,000,000	2 (7)
UAE		491,000	551,000	89
Yemen, A. R.	600,000		2,350,000	26
Yemen, P. D. R.	80,000		430,000	19

Source: Nazli Choucri (with the collaboration of Peter Brecke), *Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes*, 2 vols., Technology Adaptation Program Report No. 83-3 (Cambridge, MA.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1983), Table 3-7. See Appendix to this paper for individual country sources. These figures are compiled on the basis of information from Arab states. Data from Asian sending countries, by destination, result in substantially larger numbers for the Gulf states' expatriate labor force.

TABLE 2
ALTERNATIVE ESTIMATES OF THE STOCK OF ASIAN WORKERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST
1975-82

	1975	1977	1979	1980	1981	1982
India	154,000		300,000 500,000		250,000	913,000
Pakistan	191,000	500,000	200,000 1,246,000		775,000 1,400,000	
Bangladesh		50,000	100,000		178,500	
Sri Lanka					50,000	
Indonesia				8-14,000	20,000	
Korea		60,000	80,000		182,400	
Philippines			80,000		342,300	
Thailand			30,000		159,000	200,000
Taiwan				3,397		
China				3,000		100,000

Sources:

- 1975: J.S. Birks and C.A. Sinclair, 'International Migration in the Arab World: Rapid Growth, Changing Patterns, and Broad Implications', paper prepared for the Seminar on Population, Employment, and Migration in the Arab Gulf States, Kuwait, 16-18 December 1978, p.9.
- 1977: S. Gerakis and S. Thyanithy, 'Wave of Middle East Migration Raises Questions of Policy in Many Countries', *IMF Survey*, Vol. 7 (1978), p.261.
- 1979: The primary source is the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 11 May 1979, p.38. The number for Pakistan is obviously too low. The alternative estimate comes from Ijaz Giliani, *Pakistani Emigration to the Middle East: A Cost-Benefit Analysis*, Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 1981, p.23. The second figure for India comes from Myron Weiner, 'International Migration and Development: Indians in the Persian Gulf', *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 8 (1982), p.31.
- 1980: Data gathered in Lily Ling, 'East Asian Migration to the Middle East: Causes, Consequences, and Considerations', *International Migration Review*, forthcoming.
- 1981: All figures from Lionel Demery, 'Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East: An Empirical Assessment', paper delivered to the conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East, East-West Center, Hawaii, 19-23 September 1983. He admits that the Indian figure is unreliable. The alternative estimate for Pakistan comes from the *Middle East Economic Digest*, 29 January 1982, p.48.
- 1982: Figure for India is from A.K. Tandon, 'Policies and Programmes Concerning Labor Migration from India to the Middle East', Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East, East-West Center, Hawaii, 19-23 September 1983; the entry for Thailand is cited in Vichitra Prompunthum, 'Overseas Employment Policy in Thailand', East-West Center Conference. The number for China comes from the *Middle East Economic Digest*, 8 October 1982, pp.75-84.

and Thailand they represent the eastward expansion of the Middle East migration phenomenon.

Three features emerge from the data: the sheer size of the proportion of the labor force that is migrant; the domination of the Gulf's labor supply by migrants; and the pervasiveness of mobility in general, as almost every state in the region participates in the migration process. With some 3.5-4.65 million migrants, balanced against a combined labor force of 9-10.2 million workers (that is, migrants equalling approximately 40-46 per cent), governments of Gulf states could no longer refrain from policy intervention.

The labor importers revealed - and articulated - an increasing uneasiness with the size of their expatriate work forces. They began urging, if not forcing, migrants to return home upon completion of their contracts. Visa, residency, and citizenship laws were strengthened and pressure was put on the business sector to adhere to recruitment and employment procedures. South Korean work camp projects were seen as attractive alternatives to expanding the expatriate communities already in place.

New factors and trends suggest the emergence of a fifth phase in migration labor: a period of stabilization and, perhaps, decline in the total number of migrants. The migration process during this period is characterized by a shift toward the import of more highly skilled labor; a concomitant shift in the sectoral allocation of labor from construction to industry and services; and a relative (small) increase in the proportion of East Asian workers.

These changes result from a combination of three factors: (1) structural change in the economies of the labor importers; (2) an end to the financial surplus for some of these importers; and (3) political opposition to continued unbridled growth, motivated, in part, by the large numbers of migrants living in host countries. The volume of migration in the Middle East may well have reached its peak.

Perhaps the most important consequence of the emerging fifth phase involves the political repercussions of this potential decline in migration for the labor-exporting countries. A large cadre of returning migrant workers accustomed to higher incomes and better jobs could be a source of political unrest. The large numbers of workers who did not, nor will not, have the opportunity to go abroad poses an even greater threat. Countries such as Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, and Pakistan must face the possibility of internal stress if or when the option to migrate is no longer available for workers in the labor force.

PROFILE OF POLICY RESPONSES TO MIGRATION PROCESSES

The fluidity in migration processes lends itself to a tentative schematic view of the process itself, with its attendant features and policy concerns.⁵ During the initial phase of the process, the supply of labor responds to demand. Target migrants are single men without dependants. Rotation is the implicit mechanism for making migration temporary. There is little government organization and/or intervention. The market is left to regulate the process. There is a high rate of worker remittances on a per worker basis (Phase 1).

Then, as the process goes on, there is a beginning of differentiation

and selectivity in demand for labor. Competition arises between potential suppliers. Policy responses in recipient countries begin to emerge. Sending states begin to articulate their reaction to the migration condition, new perceptions are expressed, benefits of migration are understated and some negative consequences are stressed. The migrants continue to repatriate earnings, a high volume of remittances appears in the balance of payments accounts, and sending states begin to count on these earnings as a major source of foreign exchange (Phases 2 and 3).

Changing economic conditions coupled with saturation of labor in some sectors results in a leveling in the growth of demand and attendant leveling in remitted earnings. Market saturation sets in. Pressures in the recipient states for reverse migration emerge. Attempts to restrict flow of skilled and professional workers on part of senders appear, as do concerns for secondary or replacement flows (Phases 3 and 4).

Stabilization in the migration process occurs as market equilibrium is tentatively restored. There are new attempts to organize policies for the return of migrant labor and their integration in domestic communities. The non-returnee migrant population begins to settle in the host states, where that is feasible. There is an increase in the flow of accompanying dependants, a decline in gross activity rate, and the age-sex composition of migrant communities begins to parallel a normal profile. At this point there is a possible decline in flow of remittances (Phases 4 and 5).

The outcome of this entire process is the absence of new net migration. Settled expatriate communities meet labor needs. Remittances level off, maybe even decline. Sending states are required to deal with the issue of return migration. At this point the migration process becomes more formalized and regulated at both ends of the process by senders and receivers (beyond Phase 5).

In retrospect, then, policy interventions have been articulated and evolve in response to the different phases, from the initial phase of recruitment (at which point migration is characterized as temporary) to the fairly regularized maturation and stabilization of the foreign migrant population. A critical question generally emerges: whether to integrate the migrant community and accept an assimilation posture or to insist that they return to the home state. The growing complexity of migration-related issues forces the adoption of more comprehensive strategies as the process evolves further and becomes more politicized.

Asian states entering the process in the Middle East at a later stage – the East Asians and Bangladeshis – find themselves facing a different environment from that faced by earlier migrants from both Arab states and South Asia. The ability of the newcomers to capture competitive shares of the migrant labor market depends on how well they react to the changing nature of demand and the change in policy in the importing countries. It also depends on their own policy priorities to pursue expansion of market share or to focus on protection of their workers, emphasizing welfare issues.

ASIANS IN THE ARAB WORLD

By 1980 Asians accounted for approximately one-third of the foreign labor force in the region. According to the high-growth scenario of a recent World Bank study, the Arab proportion of the foreign workforce in the Gulf will decline from 65 per cent in 1975 to 52 per cent in 1985.⁶ They forecast an increase in the percentage from the Indian subcontinent, from 21.6 per cent (1975) to 25.6 per cent (1985); workers from the Far East will soar from 1.3 per cent of the total foreign labor force to 10.5 per cent. Given the differences of opinion over these forecasts, it is none the less clear that an Asian presence will continue to grow through the decade.⁷

Table 3 presents estimates of the flow of Asian nationals to the labor markets of the Middle East. Despite data problems, it is clear that the flows have swelled to dramatic proportions. The Indian migrant streams of the early 1980s are notable for their yearly size, as are those of Korea and the

TABLE 3
FLOW OF ASIAN MIGRANTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST, SELECT COUNTRIES

	India ¹	Korea ²	Philippines ³	Bangladesh ⁴	Thailand ⁵	Sri Lanka ⁶
1973						
1974		395				
1975		6,466	1,552		984	
1976	4,200	21,269	7,812	6,087	1,287	
1977	22,900	52,247	25,721	15,725	3,870	
1978	69,000	81,987	34,441	22,809	14,215	8,082
1979	171,000	99,141	73,210	24,485	8,329	20,980
1980	236,200	120,535	132,044	30,573	20,475	24,053
1981	276,000	138,310	183,582	55,787	23,848	
1982	239,545			62,805	105,016	

Sources

1. Cited in A.K. Tandon, 'Politics and Programmes Concerning Labor Migration from India to the Middle East' (paper prepared for the Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East, East-West Center, Hawaii, 19-23 September 1983), p.7
2. Data from Korean government sources, cited in Sooyong Kim, 'The Labor Migration from Korea to the Middle East: Its Trends and Impacts on the Korean Economy' (paper prepared for the Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East), p.5.
3. Lionel Demery, 'Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East: An Empirical Assessment' (paper delivered to the Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East), p.7
4. These figures from the Manpower Planning Center represent the flow of Bangladeshi workers to all countries; they do not give separate treatment to the Middle East. Demery suggests that, in the aggregate, 99 per cent of these migrants were destined for the Middle East. Cited in Demery (op.cit.), p.7.
5. Cited in Vichitra Prompunthum, 'Overseas Employment Policy in Thailand' (paper prepared for the Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East), p.13.
6. R.B.M. Korale, 'Migration for Employment to the Middle East' (paper prepared for the Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East), p.4.

Philippines. For Thailand, the apparent fourfold expansion from 1981 to 1982 may well be the result of effective policy management, as indicated below.

The extent of Asian migration and its contribution to a mosaic of nationalities in the Gulf labor markets is further revealed by some recent census data for select Gulf states.⁸ In Bahrain, for example, about one-third of the population is foreign, while close to 60 per cent of the labor force is migrant. Kuwait shows the migrant factor even more sharply. About 60 per cent of the population and close to 80 per cent of the labor force is composed of migrant labor. In the UAE almost 90 per cent of the work force is foreign, a proportion almost matched by Qatar. Oman, in contrast, has only about 50 per cent of the labor force made up of foreigners. Kuwait issued a greater proportion of new work permits to Asians than to Arabs in 1979 to 1981. The drop for Arab nationalities is greater than for workers holding Asian passports. The issue of work permits is a useful indicator of composition of demand and of official preferences in meeting labor requirements.

Oman issues work permits for the private sector predominantly to Indians. Pakistanis rank second, but with a much smaller proportion of permits issued. Details of the distribution of nationalities in the civil service are not available, but two factors stand out. First, numbers of Arabs and Asians are roughly the same in terms of their employment by the government of Oman. Second, Arabs clearly dominate the education sector (56.8 versus 0.8 per cent), reflecting the comparative advantage of Arab nationals in this sector.

In Abu Dhabi, where over 80 per cent of all employees in the government are foreign, a similar pattern prevails. Arabs and Asians each account for about 40 per cent of workers employed by the government. Of the Asians, Pakistanis account for 20 per cent and Indians for 17 per cent. The predominance of Asians is seen also in work permits granted by the UAE. In 1980 two-thirds of work permits went to Asians. Permits to Indian nationals amounted to about 40 per cent of all permits.

Asian migration to the Middle East is distinctive in that it encompasses the entire cross-section of skills in the sending countries but concentrates heavily in specific sectors; it occurs as a result of officially sanctioned policies; and it represents the migration of both individual worker and entire corporations to the receiving states. In contrast to the Arab migration, Asians appear relatively more formalized in structure and in process. Asian states consciously view labor transfers as part of a strategy to restructure overall relations between themselves and the Arab world. As with Arabs, Asian exporters consider migration as a temporary situation, a way to pay their oil import bills; however, they also wish to establish longer-term trading relationships. The Asian senders and the Arab labor importers seek to control and regulate the flow of labor, making it the basis for broader interaction.

The clearest distinction between Asian labor and Arab labor (in all the phases of migration to date) is that the former is *organized* migration, regulated by governments and corporations, whereas the latter, though regulated in some occupations (such as education), has been generally

unorganized and *individual* (or private) in nature. This difference suggests that the policy issues raised by Asian labor are substantially different than in the more traditional forms of migration of Arab citizens.

There are notable distinctions between South Asian and East Asian labor exporters. For instance, Pakistani, Indian, and Bangladeshi workers conform to the archetypal notion of the migrant as one who transfers his or her production capacity and purchasing power in search of employment abroad. By contrast, East Asian migration is contract-related. Migrants are employees of either companies from their own countries or other Third World multinationals that have contracts in the Middle East. Those on company contracts remain abroad for a shorter duration than other migrants, typically six months to one year. The terms of the contract are similar to those at home, with an additional expatriate allowance. East Asian contract migrants have much of their salary paid directly to their families, in the home currency.

The mechanisms for bringing East Asians to the Gulf differ from those for South Asians. In many instances East Asian firms tender lower bids for construction projects. More importantly, they offer an attractive method for supplying workers which minimizes their contact with the population in the host country. Since they are sensitive to the large numbers of foreign workers already in their midst, Arab labor importers welcome this new source of labor and the arrangements by which they are recruited. South Korean and Taiwanese firms have built work camps with barracks to house, feed, entertain and otherwise support their workers. Thus these workers are more easily contained and isolated.

MIGRATION PROCEDURES FOR ASIANS

The introduction of South and East Asian labor in the Gulf represents a substantial transformation of both the methods of migration and the expected interactions between governments of sending and receiving countries.⁹ The South Asian worker is generally hired by a local firm, sometimes run by the government, which in turn has a contract with a labor importer or government. The East Asian worker is usually employed by a local firm which has a contract to perform some service in the importing country itself. Depending upon the ownership or control of the local firm and the nature of the contract, the respective governments may have a direct role in migration.

Although recruitment procedures differ, in general inducements occur at the group or state level. The Philippines and South Korea regulate the process more than other senders in the region. In 1974 the government of the Philippines created the Overseas Employment Development Board to serve as a government placement office and the Bureau of Employment Services to supervise private agencies. These institutions are frequently bypassed, however, by numerous illegal – and often unscrupulous – agencies operating without a license.

South Korean construction companies undertake their own recruiting in Korea and elsewhere. They select from the domestic labor pool, but are increasingly employing East Asians from other countries at a cost 40 per

cent below that of Korean nationals. The Korea Overseas Development Corporation is the government agency through which all South Koreans are hired by foreign companies. The government thus attempts to put a quality control on the labor which it exports.

The government of Thailand has become more involved with the migration process through legislation, information services for the workers, and establishment of new government agencies in Thailand and in the countries where there is heavy concentration of Thai workers. Private sector involvement is undertaken through private employment agencies and through Thai corporations which obtain contracts abroad and export workers directly. The government has stated the following as its objectives: (1) legislation of new government policies to facilitate labor migration and increase its benefits 'to all parties concerned'; (2) publicizing application procedures and benefits of working abroad; and (3) conducting departure orientations with respect to working conditions and culture of the employing country. In addition, Thailand is providing remittance services for overseas workers through Thai banks. The main development in government structure to enhance labor migration is the proposed expansion of the Department of Labor through domestic and international offices, with a special branch created specifically for overseas labor (the Office of Overseas Employment Service Administration).

In Thailand, the goal is a recruitment of workers through increased governmental participation in all aspects of the labor migration process: private sector contractual relations between workers, agencies, and companies; skill certification; orientation; and remittance services. The implication is that publicization of the measures which the government has taken to facilitate and enhance security of labor migration for the worker will increase the numbers of Thai workers willing to emigrate.¹⁰

Private agencies, varying widely in their reliability, recruit South Asian labor. Some 400 such agencies operate in Pakistan, 300 in India, and over 200 in Bangladesh. Before 1976 the governments placed no central controls on them. In 1976, the Pakistani government created the Overseas Employment Corporation, chartered to promote the export of labor. The next year India established a licensing system to screen and supervise the agencies without resorting to direct government intervention. In 1979 Bangladesh created a similar institution.

While East Asian migration encompasses the entire labor spectrum of the sending countries, it concentrates heavily in specific sectors – most notably construction. The skill profiles of migrants from South Asia resemble those from Egypt, Jordan, and the Sudan. Approximately one-third have completed at least secondary school and many of them have had either advanced or vocational training as well. One-third are skilled workers, such as electricians or technicians. The final third comprises mainly semi-skilled laborers, for example bricklayers and painters.

As a rule the South Korean migrants are older than their Arab counterparts. They tend to bring their families and establish themselves in organized communities. Previously, Muslim South Asians were preferred over Arabs because they would accept lower wages, were apolitical, and were sup-

posedly willing to leave after a set period. Now, however, their wages approximate Arab rates. More ominous for the host governments, communities of workers organized by nationality may serve functions similar to labor unions.

New policy responses of the UAE may be illustrative of emerging trends. The government devised a new law that requires foreign workers to leave the country for six months before changing jobs at the Asian communities. The law not only insures rotation but, more importantly, guards against any time lag between employment, during which it is alleged that migrant communities, 'floating' in the society, could be a source of tension, if not overt trouble.

REMITTANCES FROM ASIAN MIGRANTS

The immediate economic effects of migration for the sending countries are associated with remittances. The value of workers' transfers often represents a significant element in the composition of GNP. The South Asian states, like the Arab labor exporters, have come to rely on remitted earnings to help stabilize their balance of payments positions. The example of India is illustrative, where remittances 'were large enough in the 1970s to cover the deficit in India's trade balance and enabled India to increase its reserves in spite of the rise in oil prices'.¹¹

TABLE 4
REMITTANCES IN SELECT MAJOR ASIAN LABOR-EXPORTING COUNTRIES

	Remittance in Million US Dollars	Compared with GDP (%)	Compared with Exports (%)	Compared with Imports (%)
<u>Pakistan</u>				
1974	178.0	2.0	17.5	9.4
1975	257.4	2.3	24.5	11.7
1976	409.9	3.1	35.2	18.7
1977	866.3	5.7	77.3	34.8
1978	1303.3	7.4	83.2	40.5
1979	1494.8	7.5	76.7	34.8
1980	2038.2	8.5	79.3	37.4
1981	2056.5	7.3	75.7	36.3
<u>India</u>				
1974	232.1	0.3	6.4	5.4
1975	429.8	0.5	9.2	8.7
1976	641.9	0.7	11.9	13.9
1977	932.8	0.9	14.9	17.6
1978	1169.4	1.0	17.9	15.8
1979	1436.7	1.1	18.9	14.6

TABLE 4 (contd.)

REMITTANCES IN SELECT MAJOR ASIAN LABOR-EXPORTING COUNTRIES

	Remittance in Million US Dollars	Compared with GDP (%)	Compared with Exports (%)	Compared with Imports (%)
Bangladesh				
1975	15.7	0.2	4.9	1.3
1976	18.8	0.3	4.7	2.3
1977	78.8	1.1	16.5	7.7
1978	115.3	1.3	21.0	8.6
1979	152.6	1.6	23.3	8.8
1980	286.2	2.6	36.1	12.2
1981	385.9	3.6	49.0	15.8
Thailand				
1975	18.2	0.1	0.8	0.6
1976	24.2	0.1	0.8	0.8
1977	44.4	0.2	1.3	1.0
1978	109.9	0.4	2.6	2.1
1979	187.3	0.7	3.6	2.8
1980	376.1	1.1	5.8	4.5
1981	477.6	1.3	6.9	5.4
Philippines*				
1974	60	0.4	2.2	1.9
1975	90	0.6	4.0	2.6
1976	90	0.5	3.6	2.5
1977	90	0.4	2.9	2.3
1978	110	0.5	3.2	2.3
1979	181.2	0.6	4.2	3.1
1980	205.6 (774)	0.6	3.6	2.7
1981	253.5	0.7	4.4	3.2

Sources: International Monetary Fund, *Balance of Payments Statistics*, Vol. 33, Yearbook, Part I, 1982; International Monetary Fund, *International Financial Statistics*, Vol. 26, No. 6, June 1983; cited in Nazli Choucri (with the collaboration of Peter Brecke), *Migrion in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes*, 2 vols., Technology Adaptation Program Report No. 83-3 (Cambridge, MA.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1983), Table 3-11.

* The data for the Philippines are somewhat problematic since IMF data do not always conform to government sources. The alternative estimate for the Philippines is cited in Lionel Demery, 'Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East: An Empirical Assessment' (paper delivered to the Conference on Asian Labor Migration to the Middle East, East-West Center, Hawaii, 19-23 September 1983), p. 33.

Estimates of the value of worker remittances vary widely in accuracy, reliability, and comparability.¹² Table 4 shows the size of remittances and their relation to trade and GDP, based on IMF figures. Overall remitted earnings as a percentage of GDP appear smaller for Asian exporting countries when compared with Arab exporters. While in 1980 Egypt's remittances equalled 11.4 per cent of GDP, Jordan's 21.6 per

cent, Sudan's 3.2 per cent, North Yemen's 48.1 per cent, and South Yemen's (1979) 37 per cent; for Pakistan remittances accounted for 8.5 per cent of GDP. This magnitude stands in sharp contrast to India, where remitted earnings equalled one per cent of GDP in 1978/79. In terms of size, Indian remittances are about two-thirds those of Pakistan. In Bangladesh, while the scale is lower than the other two countries, the contribution to GDP is higher. Thailand and the Philippines are included in Table 4 for comparison. In both cases remittances are smaller in size than for other Asian states. This is due to the relatively lower number of migrants.¹³

There is considerable uncertainty about the reliability of data on a remittances, in part due to the recording conventions, but also due to the channels utilized. These figures only reinforce our reservations about official data and our ability to make meaningful judgements based on them. For example, the vast discrepancy in the two estimates for Philippine remittances of 1980 is not yet resolved. Since the issue of the social costs and benefits of remittances to the labor-exporting states cannot be addressed without some notion of the magnitude of remittances, it seems imperative to redress these significant gaps in data on the size, composition, and uses of these earnings.¹⁴

The development of mandatory remittance schemes in some Asian sending states is a distinctive policy response. The Philippines requires that a migrant remit 70 per cent of earnings for seamen and construction workers and 50 per cent for other workers. It has also attempted to develop bilateral channels to direct the transfer of its workers' earnings. Korea, as well, requires mandatory remittances, facilitated through its project package type of migration. China reserves 40 per cent of the earnings of its workers abroad for the government. All these schemes have yet to be evaluated and compared with past unsuccessful attempts by European senders to attract remittances.¹⁵ The creation of sound remittance policies has become a top priority in the labor-exporting states. The ability of the government to draw a substantial portion of these hard currency earnings for socially productive uses is the only way that the exporting states may justify the costs associated with labor migration.

Finally, there is the recruitment process itself. Asian countries vary extensively in the extent of assistance or formalization of the recruitment process. Aside from the Koreans, whose procedures are distinctive, every Asian state is grappling with the organizational issues. The functions of recruitment, information, education, registration, and transportation are all being addressed in varying ways and with varying degrees of success. The policy response thus is gradually matched by institutional and administrative arrangements.

EMERGING POLICY: CONSTRAINTS FOR ASIANS IN THE GULF

The now extensive and seemingly rigid policy responses in labor-importing countries provide significant constraints for an Asian presence in the Gulf.

These responses have not been aimed at Asians specifically, but they of necessity encompass all migrant communities. Most governments in the labor-importing states have been forced to reevaluate their policies regarding the unchecked influx of foreign labor, given the high proportion of expatriates already settled in the region.

Host countries generally exhibit three related sets of concerns. First, they fear that the foreign communities may threaten the existing political and cultural order, either through the migrants' own potential for disruptive activity or through active anti-foreign backlash by their citizenry. Second, they seek managerial control of all important foreign economic sectors, thus the pressure to indigenize the labor force where possible. Third, they wish to diversify the nationality mix of migrants as much as possible in order to avoid a situation of dependency on one numerically dominant foreign group.¹⁶

In almost all labor-importing states work permits are issued for specific jobs to control the employment location of foreigners. For example, in the construction sector contracting firms recruit most of the labor, often arranging block visas for large numbers of workers. Government policy generally discourages the entry of dependants of less-skilled workers. All the Gulf states' policies aim at reducing dependence on foreign labor – though this may be more in the nature of a policy stance than a realistic goal. Bahrain, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia have official policies that give hiring preference to nationals, then Arabs, and only then to non-Arabs. In practice some countries have demonstrated preferences for South and East Asian labor, although these preferences are seldom articulated formally.

The Gulf states give explicit preference to their own nationals in terms of the provision of social services and general individual rights. Kuwait has regulations that preserve the residential segregation of its citizens from the alien population. In Saudi Arabia the housing shortage for foreigners became so severe that the government introduced regulations making the provision of accommodation the responsibility of the contracting firm. Work camp housing is prevalent at the new industrial enclaves that have been developed away from population centers, such as Shuaiba (Kuwait), Um Said (Qatar), Jebel Ali (Dubai), Ruwais (Abu Dhabi), and Yanbu and Jubail (Saudi Arabia). The governments of Bahrain and Qatar have passed very stringent naturalization laws designed to prevent foreign workers from becoming permanent citizens. In Kuwait and Saudi Arabia it is virtually impossible to apply for and obtain citizenship.

In most importing countries labor codes are often vague or exclude foreign workers. Where protective legislation does exist, there are few agencies to process complaints or enforce employer compliance with the laws. Saudi Arabia has recently introduced two measures to protect foreign workers. The first is a compulsory occupational hazards insurance requirement. The second measure is directed at expatriates who have returned to their native countries. An overseas department was created for the General Organization for Social Insurance to guarantee that those workers who contributed to the Saudi social security system for 12 months or more receive the payment due to them through local banks.¹⁷ The law thus provides an incentive to return home.

Workers may not organize in most Gulf states. Only Kuwait permits the organization of trade unions. Non-Kuwaitis may become members only if they have been in the same job for five years. They may not hold union office. Any signs of spontaneous worker activity in the host countries have been quickly put down. Wages often reflect a worker's national origin. In Kuwait wages and conditions of work are apparently better for Egyptians than for Pakistanis and Indians. Saudi Arabia at least has legislation (the 1969 Labor and Workman Law) providing for equal pay for equal work for all workers regardless of nationality.¹⁸ Where minimum wage legislation exists, it does not cover foreign workers.

To date the Middle Eastern receiving countries have used policy to change the composition of their migrant labor forces, with preferences both for and against Arabs. Efforts are directed to keeping the foreigners contained, holding down costs by making them the responsibility of contractors, and strictly limiting the possibilities for assimilation and naturalization. The continuing flows of migrants, the heavy dependency ratios they imply, and the recent strategies of economic retrenchment in the Gulf all point to the expansion of government regulations. The case of the UAE is illustrative. The Emirates have generally been open in their immigration policies. Yet the government introduced new procedures in February and March 1983 stipulating that visitors as well as workers spend at least six months outside following a visit.¹⁹ Executive recruiters are forced to hold interviews outside the country. The government is trying to reduce illegal labor and to strengthen its own mechanisms for monitoring foreign workers.²⁰

POLITICAL DILEMMAS IN POLICY RESPONSES

These concerns and the policies that attend them are facets of the contradiction inherent in the migration phenomenon, namely the facade of employing 'temporary' workers for relatively permanent positions. In the Gulf, the host governments reject the possibility (largely on political grounds) of assimilation or integration of the migrant communities; meanwhile economic logic dictates the establishment of a stable, at least semi-permanent work force. Much like the situation of temporary workers in Europe, host government policies will take into consideration the maturation or stabilization of migrant populations, including the increased flow of dependants associated with 'settling'.²¹

The policy responses of receiving countries will range widely, and perhaps distribute along a continuum, from policies designed for the segregation of migrant communities on the one hand to policies of voluntary and/or forced repatriation on the other. This is a stark characterization, yet one whose implications Asian migrants might well consider.

With the maturation of the migration process, as noted above, the labor-exporting countries face a changing set of issues of their own. Potential new areas of focus include the levelling of growth in demand for workers as well as in the growth rate of remittances; the heightened shortages of scarce professional and skilled manpower; and the structuring of co-operative (sender-receiver) arrangements to manage labor exchange and repatriation.

To the extent that migrants organize and expand settlements or enclaves in the receiving states, the governments of origin may be called upon to support their expatriate communities. In general migrants cannot depend on their home governments to play an effective role in securing improved benefits, services and living conditions, as well as political and social rights for them. Experience demonstrates that labor-exporting countries have little real influence on the determination of policy in the receiving countries.

The position of foreign workers within the host society results from the interplay of domestic interests. There is, of course, a country's direct ruling group. But there is also the state bureaucracy, the national business community (itself potentially composed of diverse factions), the major foreign companies, the religious establishment, professional associations, and political organizations. For instance, the Saudi business sector has stepped up pressure on the state to protect local interests in a period of economic slowdown, at the expense of foreign (mainly Korean) construction companies. The government passed two laws in 1983 to counter complaints of unfair foreign competition lodged by the private sector. The first requires that all state projects be open to public bidding, thus opening up the market to smaller national firms. The second directs that 30 per cent of all work on state projects is to be sub-contracted to local firms. The legislation pointedly excludes Saudi-Korean joint ventures from qualifying as local firms.²²

The highly controlled political environment of the Gulf states keeps the foreign workers from organizing and severely limits the extent to which domestic groups can and will press their cause – a most critical factor in gaining temporary workers the limited rights won in the European states. This 'precarious' situation of the migrant communities in the Gulf states will continue to lend a pragmatic political cast to migration policy in the sending countries.²³

OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

Five trends shape the current phase of migration in the Middle East and provide sharp contrast to their migration of the early to mid-1970s.²⁴

First, the regional movements of labor continues, but at a slower pace, as the basic infrastructural projects in the oil-exporting countries near completion and as investment programs are influenced by declining oil prices.

Second, the migration process grows increasingly more organized on both the sending and receiving ends. Dislocations caused by the explosion of migration in the earlier phases, the intent of exporters to try and capture an increasing share of workers' remittances, as well as a desire on the part of the labor exporters to offer an attractive labor package, led to efforts to bring migration under tighter control.

Third, the national composition of migrants grows more diverse. Both politics and economics played a part in increasing the flow of South and East Asian workers into the region. Market forces as well as an intense concern with security help to shape the preferences of importing countries in the recruitment of certain nationalities for certain occupations.

Fourth, demand becomes increasingly complex. The rush to import mas-

sive quantities of labor, regardless of skills, has given way to much more selective import policy. Transformations in the economies of the importing countries generate demand for new mixes of skills. Responses to this demand will inevitably influence the composition of the labor force in sending countries.

Fifth, the need for a practical, comprehensive labor exchange policy between labor exporters and importers emerges as the region experiences the effects of a contraction in economic activity due to the decline in petroleum prices.

The increased role of Asians – their dominance in certain Gulf countries – augurs well for their future participation in the labor market of the region. Asian exporters have made great strides. Comparisons of the demographic map of the region for 1975 and 1980 reveal the dramatic change in flows, composition, and distribution of workers.

Shortages continue to plague the traditional Arab labor-exporting states. They also exhibit a continued lack of appreciation for the extent to which Asian exporters have entered their once exclusive markets. Migration remains highly unorganized in the Arab sending countries. Policy fails to contribute to competitiveness and instead centers on control and regulation of the individual migrant. These factors suggest possible new problems for Arab labor exporters in the coming years – due, in part, to the Asian role, but more significantly to the failure to protect and promote their initial advantageous position.

The future of Asians in the Middle East will be influenced by economic conditions, including changes in labor force composition in the region and future investment patterns. Political factors are much harder to assay and we approach them warily. At present, observers note a trend toward a new preference for Arab workers. While domestic pressures to reduce non-Arab and non-Muslim workers could become real, such observations are purely speculative.

There are also political and strategic factors that cannot be ignored. The combined influence of three factors places strategic issues in context. These are the interaction of (a) political-security concerns of the conservative Gulf states with (b) the attractive, economically efficient export policies of the South Asians and (c) the still strong comparative advantage of traditional Arab senders in some sectors. The outcome could be a more or less formalized segmentation of the labor markets in the Gulf. Egyptians will not be dislodged from their control of the education system of the various Gulf states. Other areas may be equally impervious to new entrants. The language and cultural ties make Arab nationals the first choice in service and government sector posts. At the same time Asian states promise efficiency, access to relatively sophisticated technologies and a wide range of non-migration-related economic activities. Their strength in the construction sector may later be matched in electronics and other technical and manufacturing ventures.

Migration processes themselves change as a result of the movement of labor, and the Middle East demonstrates this dynamism very well. Transformations in the flows have been dramatic. New conditions generated in

both sending and receiving countries lead to a demand for new sources of supply as well as changes in the quantities and skill mixes supplied.

The focal points of concern for the remainder of the decade will be on policy development and policy response. Almost every state in the migration network is actively engaged in the search for appropriate policy postures and policy instruments. The essential challenge therefore is to delineate the mutually advantageous options, rather than those that are state-centric and zero-sum in their effects.

NOTES

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1. For details see Nazli Choucri (with the collaboration of Peter Brecke), *Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes*, 2 vols., Technology Adaption Program Report No. 83-3 (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1983a); Nazli Choucri, Richard Eckaus, and Amr Mohie-Eldin, *Migration and Employment in the Construction Sector: Critical Factors in Egyptian Development* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1978); and Nazli Choucri, 'The New Migration in the Middle East: A Problem for Whom?' *International Migration Review*, Vol. 11 (1977), pp.421-43.
2. See Choucri (1983a), Chapter 3. An earlier version of this assessment was presented in Nazli Choucri, 'Political Economy of the Middle East: Dynamics of Migration' (prepared for the American Political Science Association), 1982.
3. Choucri (1983a), Table 3-1.
4. Choucri (1983a), Chapter 4.
5. This section is adapted from Robert J. Vitalis, 'Poverty Without Theory: The Study of Middle East Labor Migration', MIT Department of Political Science, paper in preparation.
6. Ismail Serageldin, James A. Socknat, Stace Birks, Bob Li, and Clive A. Sinclair, , *Manpower and International Labor Migration in the Middle East and North Africa* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).
7. See Choucri (1983a), Chapter 4, and Lily H.M. Ling, *Change in the International System: East Asian Emigration to the Middle East*, M.S. thesis, Department of Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1982. It is increasingly evident that the World Bank's 1975 estimates were underestimates, even for that year, and that the 1981 projections err on the downward side.
8. We thank the Arab Planning Institute and the Center for Arab Unity Studies, organizers of the Seminar on Foreign Labor in the Gulf (Kuwait, January 1983) for providing these figures.
9. Much of the materials for this section come from Charles B. Keely, *Asian Worker Migration to the Middle East* (Center for Policy Studies, The Population Council, 1979) and Ling, 1982.
10. See Vichitra Prompunthum, 'Overseas Employment Policy in Thailand: Policies and Programs Concerning Labor Migration from Thailand to the Middle East' (Thailand: Labor Studies and Planning Division, Department of Labor), 1983. I am grateful to Beth Frierson for a synopsis of these policies.
11. Myron Weiner, 'International Migration and Development: Indians in the Persian Gulf', *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 8 (1982), pp.1-36.
12. For a discussion of theoretical and empirical involved with the calculation of foreign remittances see Gurushri Swamy, *International Migrant Workers' Remittances: Issues and Prospects*, World Bank Staff Working Paper No. 481 (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 1981).
13. Choucri (1983a), Section 3.7.

14. Gilani and his associates provide one of the few comprehensive studies of remittances in an Asian sender, see Ijaz Gilani, M.F. Khan, and M. Iqbal, *Labor Migration from Pakistan to the Middle East and its Impact on the Domestic Economy*, Final Report, Research Project on Export of Manpower from Pakistan to the Middle East (Washington, DC: The World Bank), June-July 1982.
15. See Swamy (1981).
16. Myron Weiner, 'Notes on Asian Migration to the Middle East: Migration Trends, Problems, and Policies', Appendix C of study for the U.S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment, *Manpower Issues in Technology Transfer to the Middle East* (1983b), directed by Nazli Choucri; and Choucri (1983a).
17. *Middle East Economic Digest*, Vol. 25 (11 December 1981), pp.44, 48.
18. Excluding employees of the public sector, agriculture, family enterprises and domestics; see United States Department of Labor, *Labor Law and Practice in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, Bureau of Labor Statistics Report No. 407 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1972), p.64.
19. *Middle East Economic Digest*, Special Report, 1 July 1983, p.26.
20. This section drew upon Choucri (1983b), Chapter 5, written with the collaboration of Diane Beth Hyman.
21. With concomitant change in crude activity rates and the normalization of the age-sex profile among foreign nationalities.
22. *Middle East Economic Digest*, 22 July 1983, p.18
23. See Weiner (1982) for a discussion of current policy dilemmas of the Indian government.
24. See Choucri (1983a) for a more detailed discussion of the implications for the future (Chapters 11 and 12).
25. Discussions with Robert J. Vitalis were useful in clarifying these issues.

APPENDIX

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| Algeria | Migrant workers are those in Europe. The numbers come from <i>Quarterly Economic Review of Algeria: Annual Supplement 1982</i> , The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd., 1982, p.5. |
| Bahrain | Foreign worker and labor force figures come from <i>Size and Composition of the Labor Force and Population in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries</i> , a paper presented at a seminar on 'Foreign Labor Migration in Arab Gulf Countries' in Kuwait, 15-18 January 1983. The labor force figure is an estimate based on adding the number of migrant workers to 25 per cent of the domestic Bahraini population. The population figure comes from <i>The Middle East and North Africa, 1981-82</i> (London: Europa Publications Ltd.), 1981, p.276. |
| Egypt | The only recent estimate of the number of migrant workers is three million. We believe that to be too high. The estimate of two million comes from adding the 1,365,000 estimate for 1978 by the Egyptian Ministry of Work and Training to the estimate of 700,000 Egyptians in Baghdad in 1981 by Hannah Batatu. The 1978 figure appeared in <i>Al-Ahram</i> , 18 September 1978. Batatu stated his estimate at a talk given at the Harvard University Center for International Affairs on 29 October 1981. The labor force figure comes from an extrapolation of figures given in <i>The Middle East and North Africa, 1981-82</i> , p.348, and the <i>Quarterly Economic Review of Egypt: Annual Supplement 1981</i> , 1981, p.7. |
| Iraq | The lower estimate for migrant workers was arrived at by adding Batatu's estimate for Egyptians with an estimate of 60,000 Filipinos which appeared in the <i>Middle East Economic Digest</i> , 29 January 1982, p.53. The labor force figure is an estimate based on adding the migrant workers figure to an extrapolation of Iraqi labor force figures given in the <i>Iraq Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1978 and Iraq: A Country Study</i> , Area Handbook Series (Washington, DC: American University, 1979). The higher estimate comes from the Egyptian Minister for Immigration and |

- Egyptians Abroad as reported by Stephen K. Hindy, 'Egyptians Evacuating to Higher Pay Nations', *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, 17 December 1982. The total including other nationalities may well exceed the one million estimate used.
- Jordan *Quarterly Economic Review of Syria, Jordan: Annual Supplement 1982*, 1982, p.26.
300,000 Jordanian migrant workers is an implausible number. Many of them are Palestinians with Jordanian passports and are not really relevant to the Jordanian workforce. A reasonable guess is that about half are Palestinians, which would mean that one-third of the Jordanian workforce has been migrating – a much more believable figure than two-thirds.
- Kuwait Migrant workers figure from Al-Salem and Dhahar, *Expatriate Labor in the Gulf*, p.25.
The labor force figure comes from *Size and Composition of the Labor Force and Population in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries*. The population figure comes from *The Middle East and North Africa, 1981–82*, p.525.
A corroborating estimate of 'about 70 per cent' appears in the *Quarterly Economic Review of United Arab Emirates: 3rd Quarter 1982*, 1982, p.7.
- Lebanon *Quarterly Economic Review of Lebanon, Cyprus Annual Supplement 1981*, 1981, p.6.
- Libya The migrant worker figure comes from the *Quarterly Economics Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta, 1st Quarter 1982*, 1982, p.10. The labor force figure is extended from a figure for 1980 given in the *Middle East Economic Digest*, 4 July 1980, p.22. The estimates given in that article are 350,000 migrants and a labor force of 800,000. Since the revised migrant worker figure is 117,000 higher, the labor force figure should be raised as well.
- Morocco Migrant workers are in Europe. The figures come from the *Quarterly Economic Review of Morocco: Annual Supplement 1982*, 1982, p.4. The number for the labor force is an extrapolation from the 1971 figures given in the QER.
- Oman The exported migrant worker figures are calculated from the *Middle East Economic Digest Special Report on Oman*, 18 November 1980, p.8.
The imported migrant worker and labor force figures come from *Size and Composition of the Labor Force and Population in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries*.
The labor force figure is problematic. In *The Middle East and North Africa, 1981–82*, p.641, the estimated number of gainfully employed in 1978 was 150,000. That is too low to be plausible. If we allow for some growth in the domestic workforce and add most of the migrant workers figure, the sum will be in the area of 250,000. Population figures give some support to that number. An extrapolation of the numbers given in the *1980 World Bank Atlas*, p.14, to 1980 would be 890,000. Twenty-five per cent of that is 222,500. However, migrants have a much higher participation rate than the native population, so it is likely that the labor force is somewhat higher – probably around 250,000.
- Qatar The foreign workers and labor force figures come from *Size and Composition of the Labor Force and Population in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries*.
- Saudi Arabia The number of migrant workers and consequently the size of the Saudi labor force is a matter of great uncertainty. The Saudi government claimed a migrant workforce of 1,059,800 in 1979/80, but outside observers tend to give much higher estimates. They range from 1.5 million to 2.7 million and are presented in the *Middle East Economic Digest*, issues 19 December 1980, p.97, 24 April 1981, p.40, and 20 November 1981, p.23, and Al-Salem and Dhahar, *Expatriate Labor in the Gulf*, p.25. Al-Salem and Dhahar's estimate was used as an upper limit because 2.7 million seems impossibly high. The size of the native Saudi labor force ranges from 750,000 (*MEED*, 24 April 1981, p.40) to 1,411,400 (*Quarterly Economic Review of Saudi Arabia: Annual Supplement 1982*, p.6). Adding the numbers gives a possible range for the total workforce of up to 3.4 million. The uncertainty leads us to simply present

- the range as plausible values.
- Sudan From discussion in Nazli Choucri, *Assessments of Macroeconomic Impacts of Migration and Remittances in Sudan*, MIT TAP Report 84–4, 1984.
The labor force figure is calculated from data appearing in the *Quarterly Economic Review of the Sudan: Annual Supplement 1982*, p.7.
- Syria The migrant worker figure is again a projection appearing in Birks and Sinclair, *The Socio-Economic Determinants of Intra-Regional Migration*, p.18.
The labor force figure is an extrapolation of figures given in the *Quarterly Economic Review of Syria, Jordan: Annual Supplement 1982*, 1982, p.6.
- Tunisia The first migrant figure is Tunisians working in Libya. The second figure is the total number of Tunisian migrant workers. These and the labor force figure come from the *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta: Annual Supplement 1980*, 1980, p.17.
- Turkey The first migrant worker figure is from the *Middle East Economic Digest*, 29 January 1982, p.55. The second figure is the total number of migrant workers. It appears in *The Middle East and North Africa, 1981–82*, p.800. The labor force figure is from the same source, p.807.
- United Arab Emirates The migrant workers and labor force figures come from *Size and Composition of the Labor Force and Population of Gulf Cooperation Council Countries*.
- Yemen, A.R. (North) *The Middle East and North Africa, 1981–82*, p.856, reports a 1980 Yemini census finding of 1,395,123 migrant workers. This seems impossibly high since on the same page it reports 600,000 in Saudi Arabia, and we know that the vast majority of Yemenis go to Saudi Arabia. The large number corresponds to two-thirds of the male workforce, which also defies belief. Another estimate appearing in the *Middle East Economic Digest*, 8 January 1982, p.41, is 500,000. We decided to use the 600,000 figure.
The labor force figure comes from the Joan Clarke, *Yemen: A Profile*, paper prepared for the AID/Near East Bureau Seminar on Labor Migration in the Middle East, 20 September 1977, p.8.
- Yemen, P.D.R. (South) The migrant worker figure is a projection from 1975 presented in Birks and Sinclair, *The Socio-Economic Determinants of Intra-Regional Migration*, p.18.
The labor force figure is an extrapolation of figures appearing in the *Middle East and North Africa, 1981–82*, p.882.