INFRASTRUCTURES AND (IM)MOBILE LIVES

INTERRUPTIONS, FAILURES, AND REPAIRS

ARI
ASIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
National University of Singapore

21-22 FEB 2022
ONLINE VIA ZOOM

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WORKSHOP CONVENORS

Dr Yi'En Cheng
Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

Dr Chand Somaiah
Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

Dr Exequiel Cabanda
Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

Prof Brenda S.A. Yeoh FBA
Asia Research Institute, and Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

This workshop explores the relationship between migration, infrastructures, and (im)mobilities as it relates to infrastructural breakdown and transformation. The workshop is concerned with the diverse interruptions, failures, and repairs that are involved in the ongoing production of mobility systems and flows. What happens when the infrastructures that maintain migration regimes and mobility flows are disrupted? How do interruptions and glitches in various infrastructures, in turn, re-shape existing or create new practices and meanings of mobility and immobility? How might thinking about failures and repairs help (re)examine and theorise existing mobility infrastructures that organise and reproduce migration patterns, processes, and experiences?

Scholarship on migration infrastructures has focused on an array of actors and systems that enable, mediate, channel, and manage mobilities across borders (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014; Lin et al., 2017; Shrestha and Yeoh, 2018). Scholars have examined infrastructures of various kinds that include international labour migration, education mobility industry, marriage brokerage, urban real estate, and more. Analyses have covered the key components of state regulations, commercial intermediaries, socio-technological platforms, and humanitarian as well as migrant social networks. The focus of these studies has largely been on the ways in which infrastructures underpin and support existing mobility regimes and circuits alongside enduring issues of class, gender, race and nationalism. Yet, since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of these migration infrastructures such as state policies aimed at containing the virus spread have been re-organised to prevent and to slow down mobilities rather than to facilitate them. Some intermediaries such as commercial brokers have faced greater difficulty in enabling migrant flows due to tightened border controls. Physical infrastructures that send, host, transfer, and repatriate different migrants across borders, ranging from university campuses to ventures like the Belt and Road Initiative's inter-state projects, have also been immobilised in various ways. Insofar that migration infrastructures mediate (im)mobilities, their capacity to function and to exist is closely entwined with human movements. Even before the present pandemic, multiple phenomena such as environmental disasters and geopolitical turmoil have created conditions of compulsion vis-a-vis freedom that articulate (im)mobilities as part of the international migration regime, and where certain migrant bodies are produced as less mobile as compared to some who move with relative ease. Therefore, migration infrastructures play an important role in constituting the power geometries of migration in both sending and returning as well as past and present contexts, whereby diverse infrastructural forms and processes enhance the mobilities of some even as they also intensify the immobilities of others.

If a focus on migration infrastructures encourages attentiveness to systems of maintenance and reproduction, then this must be accompanied by a close examination on infrastructural breakdown and its transformative potential. As such, this workshop aims to explore the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of migration infrastructures, while at the same time pay attention to those inventions, experiments, and potential overhauls that emerge to rebuild them. In particular, the workshop is interested in multiple kinds of interruptions and failures and their associated repair-works within diverse migration regimes and circuits, including those related to labour, family, education, geopolitical, and environmental migrations, in both historical and contemporary contexts of global Asia. Similarly, the workshop is also keen to explore the ways in which different material, imagined, and digital infrastructures intersect with migration and mobility.

The workshop invites empirically informed papers that engage with theoretical and/or methodological innovation to examine a range of issues organised around the interrelated themes of interruption, failure, and repair.

1. Interruption: How are the infrastructures that support migration and mobility regimes interrupted by various events, processes, and practices? What structures, discourses, norms, and routines do they interrupt, and to what extent are they challenged?

2. Failure: What kinds of failure happen to migration infrastructures, and how do they re-shape existing migration processes and patterns? How are mobilities and immobilities configured in and through failure within infrastructures of migration and beyond (e.g. education, care, urban, and more)?

3. Repair: How do different actors and institutions respond to infrastructural breakdown and glitches, and what projects of restoration do they engage with to reinstate mobilities? How else might we approach the repair of infrastructural breakdown in ways that help rebuild migration and mobility systems in a more ethical manner?

SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME

MONDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2022

10:00	## OPENING REMARKS **BRENDA S.A. YEOH FBA** | National University of Singapore

10:15 – 11:45	## PANEL 1 RISK AND PRECARITIES CHAIRPERSON **CHAND SOMAIAH** | National University of Singapore

10:15 Patchwork Infrastructures: Indonesian and Filipino Multinational Migratory Trajectories to Chile

CAROL CHAN | Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano

10:35 Infrastructural Risk: Tamil Low Wage Migrants, Covid-19 and the Vulnerabilities of Transnational Immobility

LAAVANYA KATHIRAVELU | Nanyang Technological University

10:55 Protection of Migrants' Labour Rights: How Labour Market Institutions Fail High-Wage Migrant Workers

WAYNE PALMER | Bielefeld University
NICOLA PIPER | Queen Mary University of London

11:15 **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

11:45 **END OF PANEL 1**

15:00 – 16:00	## PANEL 2 BIO-GOVERNANCE AND HEALTH CHAIRPERSON **SAMANTHA LIM** | National University of Singapore

15:00 Reworking Chinese Aeromobility and Learning COVID-19 Health Code Infrastructure

DYLAN BRADY | National University of Singapore

15:20 Im/mobility in the Transnational Surrogacy Market: Disruptions and Vulnerabilities in and Beyond Pandemic Times

HEATHER JACOBSON | The University of Texas at Arlington
ANIKA KÖNIG | Freie Universität Berlin
ANINDITA MAJUMDAR | Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad

15:40 **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

16:00 **END OF PANEL 2**

SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME | MONDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2022

18:30 – 20:00	PANEL 3 EDUCATION MOBILITIES
	CHAIRPERSON **FRANCHESCA ROSE MORAIS** | National University of Singapore

18:30	Health Packages and Affective infrastructures: Promises of (Im)Mobility in Pandemic Times
	JUAN ZHANG | University of Bristol

18:50	Casualties of Infrastructural Re-Construction: Nepali Student-Migrants, Suspended Mobility, and the COVID-19 Pandemic Governance in Japan
	TINA SHRESTHA | Waseda University

19:10	Infrastructural Interruptions and Agency during the Pandemic Times: Researching Foreign Scholars in China
	BINGYU WANG | Nankai University

19:30	**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

20:00	**END OF PANEL 3**

20:30 – 21:30	KEYNOTE ADDRESS
	CHAIRPERSON **BRENDA S.A. YEOH FBA** | National University of Singapore

20:30	(Im)Mobility Infrastructure and Logistical Power
	BIAO XIANG | Max Plank Institute for Social Anthropology

21:15	**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

21:30	**END OF WORKSHOP DAY 1**

SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME	TUESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2022
11:30 – 13:00	**PANEL 4** CRISIS AND PRECARITIES
	CHAIRPERSON **THEODORA LAM** | National University of Singapore

11:30	Disrupted Refugee/Migrant Journeys: Of Storm, Shipwreck, and Doldrum
	MIRIAM JAEHN | National University of Singapore
11:50	Gendered Migration Infrastructure
	SHRUTI GUPTA | National University of Singapore
12:10	Location (in)Dependence? The Reassertion of Geography in Pandemic-Affected Digital Nomad Mobilities and Lives
	JOKE METHORST | University of Waikato
	FRANCIS COLLINS | University of Waikato
	LYNDA JOHNSTON | University of Waikato
12:30	**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**
13:00	**END OF PANEL 4**

16:00 – 17:30	**PANEL 5** BROKERAGE AND INTERMEDIARIES
	CHAIRPERSON **EXEQUIEL CABANDA** | National University of Singapore

16:00	Crisis Infrastructuring: The Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) Programme
	SIN YEE KOH | Monash University Malaysia
16:20	Private Labour Recruitment Agencies and Disruptions in Labour Mobility Regime in Indonesia
	PAMUNGKAS A. DEWANTO | Vrije Universiteit
16:40	Stocking Up and Cutting Down: Negotiating Infrastructural Disruptions in Times of Immobility
	AN HUY TRAN | University of Duisburg-Essen
	SANDHYA A.S. | Max-Planck Institute for the Study of Societies
17:00	**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**
17:30	**END OF PANEL 5**

SINGAPORE STANDARD TIME	TUESDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2022

19:00 – 20:30 **PANEL 6** BORDERS AND BORDERLANDS

CHAIRPERSON **YI'EN CHENG** | National University of Singapore

19:00 Move, Moved, Removed: The Emergence of a Double-Sided Migration Infrastructure in China's Southwestern Borderlands in Relation to Burmese Jadeite Entrepreneurs

FANGLIANG ZHANG | Yunnan University
TIANLONG YOU | Yunnan University

19:20 Beneath the Highway Runs a Trail: Mobility, Activism, and Infrastructural Failure across the French-Italian Borderland

CÉLINE ESCHENBRENNER | Tulane University

19:40 Restarting Labor Export in a Pandemic: The Failures of Migration Infrastructure for Internal Mobility

YASMIN Y. ORTIGA | Singapore Management University
KAREN ANNE S. LIAO | National University of Singapore

20:00 **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

20:30 **END OF PANEL 6**

20:30 - 20:45 **CLOSING REMARKS**

YI'EN CHENG | National University of Singapore
CHAND SOMAIAH | National University of Singapore
EXEQUIEL CABANDA | National University of Singapore
BRENDA S.A. YEOH FBA | National University of Singapore

20:45 END OF WORKSHOP

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

(Im)mobility Infrastructure and Logistical Power

Biao Xiang

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As we witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic that started in 2020, large-scale lockdowns without the redistribution and the securitization of mobility are unsustainable and counterproductive. The redistribution of mobility means assigning mobility work to particular groups, say "key workers", in order for others not to move. The "securitization of mobility" means interventions that minimize perceived public threats associated with movements, for instance protocols that protect key workers and contact tracing systems. (Im)mobility infrastructure is what facilitates, halts, redistributes and securitizes mobility. (Im)mobility infrastructure is not given, it has to be enacted by government actions. In doing so government acquires "logistical power" which means government's dominance over private actors based on its coordination of circulation of people, goods and information. This article, based on preliminary observations about China, sketches out the main components of the (im)mobility infrastructure (Apps, residence "grids", intermediary agencies), and outlines how government enacts (im)mobility infrastructure (legislation, delegating social control to private agencies, and the informationalization of social activities). (Im)mobility infrastructure is not a fixed system, nor is logistical power a distinctive type of power. It is unclear whether they will become stabilized. But they point to emerging dynamics that are likely to shape our social life beyond the pandemic.

Biao Xiang's research addresses various types of migration—internal and international, unskilled and highly skilled, emigration and return migration, and the places and people left behind—in China, India and other parts of Asia. Through the lens of migration, he has examined a wide range of political economy issues, including state-society relations, labour, social reproduction, and mobility governance. In his recent research he asks why commercial recruitment intermediaries have become so prominent in unskilled labour migration in East Asia—a finding that contradicts the assumption that modern institutions and technologies have a dis-embedding and dis-intermediating effect. Currently Xiang is re-examining the multifaceted implications of mobility and immobility for societies and individuals, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition he is studying social debates in China, social research practices in the global South, and new patterns of economic circulation. Biao Xiang studied sociology at Beijing University, China, and received his PhD in social anthropology from the University of Oxford, UK. He worked at Oxford from 2004. Xiang is the winner of the 2008 Anthony Leeds Prize for his book *Global Bodyshopping* and the 2012 William L. Holland Prize for his article 'Predatory Princes'. His 2000 Chinese book 跨越边界的社区 (published in English as Transcending Boundaries, 2005) was reprinted in 2018 as a contemporary classic. His work has been translated into Japanese, French, Korean, Spanish, and Italian.

Patchwork Infrastructures: Indonesian and Filipino Multinational Migratory Trajectories to Chile

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By discussing the multinational labor migration trajectories of Indonesian and Filipino women to Chile, this paper examines the complex configurations of and relationships between persons that facilitate and enable such uncommon migration pathways. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with fifteen women, I focus on four such journeys that occurred partially due to instances of infrastructural interruptions in Southeast Asia, on the one hand—such as when commercial migrant brokerage agencies are blacklisted and lose their license to operate; when migrants are blacklisted or banned from re-entering destination countries—and the absence or inadequacy of a coherent migration infrastructure, on the other, due to the unusual routes taken. I examine the creative practices and complex relations that were forged and maintained to ensure the eventual migration and emplacement of women whose journeys had been disrupted, prevented, or delayed.

Within studies of labor migration, research on migration infrastructure has focused on processes and experiences of migrant brokerage, such as formal and informal actors and institutions involved in systematic forms of commercial migration recruitment and placement (Xiang and Lindquist 2014; Shrestha and Yeoh 2018). These migration intermediaries can facilitate the mobility of persons, and/or delay or prevent the mobility of others (Chan 2018; Killias 2018). This paper draws on such work to highlight scenarios in which such systematic forms of brokerage either do not (yet) exist or presented disruptions and interruptions to migrants' routes and plans. Instead, due to the particular and complex nature of the women's journeys from Southeast Asia to Chile, relations of intense trust and mutual obligation and care emerged as central to the possibility and accomplishment of such risky journeys. These cases represent a host of diverse configurations that variously include (Chilean) employers, (Indonesian and Filipino) migrant domestic workers, commercial migration brokers in a third country, embassy staff of migrants' countries of origin, and unexpected friendships developed both in migrants' countries of origin as well as in a previous country of destination and work.

These cases are drawn from a larger and ongoing study on migration infrastructure between Southeast Asia and Latin America. They reveal the creativity and precarity of migrants as well as a wide variety of stakeholders in drawing on multinational and global social and economic networks to redirect their migratory pathways to South America in contexts of infrastructural interruptions in Southeast Asia. These exceptional cases can shed light on alternative modes of imagining and "infrastructuring" migration (cf Lin et al. 1017) beyond the established migratory corridors and regimes.

Carol Chan is Associate Professor of Sociology at the Universidad Academia de Humanismo Cristiano, Chile. She is author of *In Sickness and in Wealth: Migration, Gendered Morality and Central Java* (2018, Indiana University Press) and co-author of *Chineseness in Chile: Shifting Representations in the 21st Century* (2022, Palgrave Macmillan), with Maria Montt Strabucchi and Maria Elvira Rios. Currently, she is working on a research project funded by the Chilean National Agency of Research and Development (ANID) titled: "Mobilizing Asia-Latin America as method: A multi-sited ethnography of migration infrastructure and brokerage between Southeast Asia and Chile" (Grant number 11200270, 2020-2023).

Infrastructural Risk: Tamil Low Wage Migrants, Covid-19 and the Vulnerabilities of Transnational Immobility

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The inherent risks of an international cross border migration system have been exposed with the Covid-19 pandemic sweeping across the globe. Much of this riskiness is embedded in infrastructural configurations that define the mobilities of temporary low wage migrants, who move to labour in industries and occupations shunned by locals and the middle classes.

Existing research on migration infrastructure has focused on expanding initial conceptualisations to focus on specific realms such as brokerage practices or educational mobilities, with particular attention to how infrastructures *sustain* and *maintain* contemporary migration regimes. Reconfigurations and vulnerabilities that also characterize such systems, in contrast, have received less attention. Drawing from disruptions entailed by the Covid-19 pandemic in India, Singapore and the Persian Gulf, this research speaks to notions of 'risk society' that were conceptualized by sociologist Ulrich Beck, in conversation with Mimi Sheller's ideas of 'mobility justice'. Specifically, it draws from the experiences of 47 low wage Tamil migrants, returnees and families left behind, to interrogate how migration infrastructure, including border regimes, migrant housing and remittances become aspects of a risk-transference mechanism.

In doing so, this paper argues that for low wage transnational migrants, infrastructural risk is heightened in moments of regulatory failure and individualized by lack of economic, temporal and mobility capital. It suggests that the outcomes of managing and mitigating infrastructural risk ultimately result in a self-management of risk by vulnerable migrants. While there emerge possibilities for more inclusive social justice outcomes, there is simultaneously a greater individualisation of the burden of care. Interrogating distinct but overlapping domains of migration infrastructure, this paper brings together and extends research on risk societies, mobility justice and migrant infrastructures in Asia in order to develop better understandings of vulnerable systems which configure lives of precarious migrant communities.

Laavanya Kathiravelu is Assistant Professor in the School of Social Sciences at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her research sits at the intersections of international migration, race and ethnic studies and contemporary urban diversity, particularly in Asia and the Persian Gulf. Her first book was Migrant Dubai (Palgrave, 2016), which interrogated the experiences of low wage migrant workers in the emirate of Dubai. She has also published widely on issues of race and ethnicity and migration in Singapore. Prior to joining NTU, she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity. She was also a Fung Fellow at Princeton University between 2015-16. In 2019, she was recipient of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council Fellowship (SSHRF). Laavanya is a board member of the migrant organisation, HOME. She is also a Fulbright Fellow at the City University of New York from 2022.

Protection of Migrants' Labour Rights:
How Labour Market Institutions Fail High-Wage Migrant Workers

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This paper takes the under-studied example of high-wage migrant workers in a middle-income country that is usually viewed in a migrant sending role, to discuss the role of labour market institutions in protecting labour rights. High-wage migrants are normally assumed to be 'successful' migrants, unlike low-wage migrants whose plight has been subject to a substantial body of research, often approached from a labour trafficking/forced labour and human rights perspective. Preliminary research has shown, however, that high-wage migrants do encounter labour rights violations. Drawing on regulatory and governance scholarship, this paper investigates the way in which high-wage migrant workers in Indonesia navigate the limited space available to seek recourse.

Labour rights protection is generally poor in Indonesia, where labour dispute resolution, labour inspection and trade union activity are comparatively deficient in general. Even less support is offered to migrant workers, as the labour market institutions tend to respond narrowly to labour issues confronting average Indonesian workers. Further weakening the institutions' protection potential, there is no trade union that tends to the needs of migrant workers, who come to Indonesia, knowing that there are very limited options to settle and that government institutions cannot be relied upon to help protect their rights.

Drawing on the legal analysis of 70 labour disputes that were settled at court, this paper demonstrates that Indonesia's primary labour market institutions do little to effectively protect migrants' labour rights. Social science methodology that harnesses the perspectives of participants in and observers of labour disputes/violations provides the necessary information to understand the various focusses and disconnects that result in institutional failure to protect migrant workers' rights at work. In doing so, it uncovers 'institutional fixes' that enable rights protection despite the dysfunctional architecture, concluding that effective labour governance for migrant workers requires assistance from non-state actors.

Wayne Palmer is a lecturer at Bielefeld University. He has 15 years' experience researching and writing about Indonesian regulatory regimes related to labour migration. Wayne's current research projects focus on institutional capacity to enforce labour rights of foreigners in Indonesia, revealing the similarities and differences in the government's response to evidence of rights abuse amongst high-wage professionals, marriage migrants and trafficked fishers. He teaches courses on labour rights enforcement and international organisations, immigrant integration in the Global South as well as on labour exploitation in the fisheries. He is (co-)chief investigator on Australian Research Council-funded project Employment Relations in Indonesia's Commercial Fishing Industry, which will also examine institutional responses to the labour rights of migrant fishers (co-investigated with M. Ford and D. S. Adhuri)

Nicola Piper is Professor of International Migration and was Founding Director of the Sydney Asia Pacific Migration Centre at the University of Sydney. In 2018, the British Academy awarded her a Global Professor Fellowship, hosted by Queen Mary University of London in the UK, where she will be conducting research until December 2022. As a political sociologist, her research interests focus primarily on global labour mobility, global and regional migration governance, advocacy politics and gender which are topics about which she has published prolifically. She has carried out consultancies and advisory roles for numerous international organisations throughout her career and is (co-)chief editor of the international peer-reviewed journal *Global Social Policy* as well as editor of the book series "Asian Migration" with Routledge. Her latest publication includes the *Palgrave Handbook on Gender and Migration* (co-edited with C. Mora).

Reworking Chinese Aeromobility and Learning COVID-19 Health Code Infrastructure

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China's massive response to the COVID pandemic has had a marked and lasting impact on aeromobility. While lockdowns have largely abated, the country-wide system of QR-based "health code" apps for tracking individual travelers remains. The urban- and provincial-scale of these apps has caused a substantial disruption to domestic travel, sometimes requiring travelers to download and register with four or five health codes to complete a single journey. International airports like Beijing Daxing mark a particularly sharp boundary, however, as flows of international travelers must be quickly assimilated into a health code infrastructure primarily designed for Chinese citizens.

The introduction of new COVID tracking measures such as the health code into the spaces of aeromobility have foregrounded the otherwise implicit role of passenger knowledge as well as reliance of the specific affordances designed into airport infrastructure. The elaborate choreography of modern air travel has always been a balancing act between the constraints of security and the demands of passengers for smooth and speedy transit. How have airports educated workers and passengers in implementing these changes? How have the affordances of airport environments shaped the new procedures? How have these procedures been regularized and automated over time? This paper's findings draw on interviews with airport workers and administrators, contributing to mobility studies a timely intervention on the politics and practices of COVID-era (im)mobility and to infrastructure studies an expansive engagement with the processes of communal learning through which infrastructures are not just repaired but re-imagined.

Dylan Brady is a human geographer whose research examines the politics and culture of contemporary China through the lenses of materiality, practice and the built environment. At present he works as a postdoctoral researcher at National University of Singapore, working with Dr Lin Weiqiang on "Peopling Infrastructure," a project investigating questions of automation and labor in contemporary airports in Asia. Dylan's work on Chinese mobility infrastructure investigates how the built environment evolves alongside the everyday practices of passengers to shape more-than-human communities and spaces. In addition to airports, his work examines the co-production of rail infrastructure and the national community, and the impacts of China's pandemic-era "health code" tracking apps.

Im/Mobility in the Transnational Surrogacy Market:
Disruptions and Vulnerabilities in and Beyond Pandemic Times

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Among the many global industries is the assisted reproductive technology (ART) market which operates within a well-connected infrastructure of networked agencies, physicians, clinics, and auxiliary professionals (such as attorneys, counselors, translators) who service a flow of patient-clients attempting to become parents with the help of these technologies. This infrastructure relies heavily upon reproductive workers upon whose bodies and bodily matters the reproductive dreams of others depend.

Due to variations in national and local ART laws and cultural mores, the global ART industry has for decades been marked by disruption, change, and the opening up of new geographic and legal niches. So-called 'intended parents' have been pulled from legally restrictive countries or those where ART treatment is very cost-intensive toward more legally-amenable national markets. Accordingly, the mobility of this industry is central to its operation. Periodic events—such as natural disasters (e.g. the 2015 earthquake in Nepal) and ART scandals (such as occurred in Thailand in 2014)—have temporarily shuttered clinics or even led to the closing down of entire national markets (such as India). As a result, ART clinics and agencies have moved to other countries where new 'repro-hubs' (Inhorn, 2015) have emerged (e.g. Kenya, Kazakhstan, or Georgia). It was not until the Covid-19 pandemic, however, that the industry as a whole was severely disrupted. In this paper, we build on the concept of 'reprowebs' (König and Jacobson, forthcoming)—an approach that adds a new dimension to the existing conceptualization of reproductive travel and helps us to better understand current developments in a rapidly-changing globalized ART industry.

This paper is based on in-depth interviews and non-participant observation collected with various actors in four surrogacy markets: India, the U.S., Germany, and Ukraine and examines the impact of the pandemic on the global infrastructure of this industry. Our findings detail the fallout of the immobilized ART industry and point to the ways various stakeholders have worked to maintain its operation, thus providing empirical evidence for understanding the ART industry as an interconnected web of providers. We pay particular attention to the exacerbated vulnerability of reproductive workers during the pandemic and the potential overhauls and long-term changes to the market.

Heather Jacobson is Professor of Sociology at the University of Texas at Arlington. Her research centers primarily on various routes to family formation in the contemporary United States. She is the author of *Labor of Love: Gestational Surrogacy and the Work of Making Babies* (Rutgers University Press) and *Culture Keeping: White Mothers, International Adoption, and the Negotiation of Family Difference* (Vanderbilt University Press).

Anika König is a visiting professor and researcher at Freie Universität Berlin. Her work focuses on transnational networks of reproduction, the body and the senses, and the anthropology of violence. Her current project is a medical ethnography of transnational surrogacy commissioned by intended parents from the German-speaking region.

Anindita Majumdar is Assistant Professor of Sociology/Anthropology at the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad. She has written *Transnational Commercial Surrogacy and the (Un)Making of Kin in India* (Oxford University Press).

Health Packages and Affective Infrastructures:
Promises of (Im)Mobility in Pandemic Times

Juan Zhang

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In spring 2020, at the peak of the first wave of coronavirus outbreak across Europe, special health packages started to reach tens of thousands of overseas Chinese students, who were stranded in different pandemic hotspots due to national lockdowns and international travel restrictions. Ordered and distributed by Chinese Consulates and affiliated student and scholar associations, these health packages were delivered with a special message attached—"the homeland is always by your side (*zuguo yongyuan zai shenbian*)." Meanwhile, Chinese students' hope to physically travel back home for health and safety was crushed by multiple restrictions enforced through state policies such as the "Five-One" and extended quarantine requirements. What, then, does "*zuguo zai shenbian*" actually mean when students are ordered to stay afar? Why do students celebrate a sense of being cared for by the Chinese state when many found themselves stuck in isolation, stopped by enhanced infrastructural barriers, and being denied the possibility of actually returning home?

In this paper, I turn to Lauren Berlant's theorization on "affective infrastructures" and examine how affective politics play key roles in infrastructural processes on a transnational scale. Based on interviews with 12 Chinese students in Bristol, as well as digital ethnographies in 2020-2021 (e.g. student WeChat group chats and posts in popular Douban groups), I aim to unpack the many layers of infrastructural processes at work—logistical, socio-cultural, technological, and emotional—through the delivery and reception of Covid-19 health packages by students in the UK. I show how the Chinese state and its paternal presence can be felt almost corporeally "by one's side", when national subjects are unambiguously denied the rights of movement and return. Affective attachments are mobilized on the basis of physical infrastructures to redirect and rekindle feelings of care, as well as to normalize interruptions, failures, and neglect. Covid health packages show how nationalist affect is made infrastructural to stabilize and maintain a tightly controlled (im)mobility regime during troubled times. Overseas students are directed towards particular Chinese attachments filled with state promises of provision and protection, with which many find special meanings in their own immobility and prolonged isolation.

Juan Zhang is Lecturer of Social Anthropology at the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology, University of Bristol. Her research interests include transnational mobilities, borders, labour migration, and casinos in Asia. She has published in journals including *Environment & Planning D*, *Environment & Planning A*, *Gender Place & Culture*, *Pacific Affairs*, *Mobilities* among others. She co-edited a book *The Art of Neighbouring: Making Relations Across China's Borders* with Amsterdam University Press, 2017.

Casualties of Infrastructural Re-Construction: Nepali Student-Migrants, Suspended Mobility, and the COVID-19 Pandemic Governance in Japan

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Migration infrastructure is typically viewed as a reliable and resilient operating system producing and sustaining migrant mobilities. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic governance on migrant mobilities worldwide has revealed the importance of foregrounding infrastructural disruptions, breakdowns, and repairs in our study of migration infrastructure. In this paper, I explore the mutual restructuring of migration infrastructure and student labor im/mobility in Japan at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, I analyze the role of intermediaries—Japanese language schools (*nihongo gakko*) and vocational colleges (*senmon gakko*)—central to the "logics of operation" (Xiang and Lindquist 2014) of migration infrastructure engaged in recruiting student-migrants, channeling them into low-wage labor, and determining the quality of their lives. Through ethnography in a Nepali migrant-community in Japan, specifically the experience of student-migrants enrolled in *nihongo gakko* and *senmon gakko*, I elucidate the joint effect of migrant labor and infrastructure restructuring during pandemic. The question I ask is not how the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted migration infrastructure but *what* longstanding mobility regulation and labor regularization, previously considered 'normal' operation of migration infrastructure, has the pandemic governance highlighted?

Tina Shrestha is Adjunct Researcher in the Waseda Institute for Advanced Study (WIAS) at Waseda University and Associate Editor of *Current Anthropology*. She received her PhD in Anthropology from Cornell University and was a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore (2016-2018). Her publications have appeared in *Anthropology of Work Review* (2019), *Pacific Affairs* (Guest co-editor for a special issue, 2018), *Studies in Nepali History and Society* (2016, 2018, 2019), *Refugee Resettlement in the United States: Language, Pedagogy and Politics* (UK: Multilingual Matters, 2015), and *Languages of Japan: Communities and Cultures* (forthcoming, Oxford University Press, 2021). Her monograph *Surviving the Sanctuary City: suffering, precariousness, and asylum-seeking work among Nepali New Yorkers* is under contract with the University of Washington Press. Her current research is on migration infrastructure, Nepali student mobility, and low-wage migrant-labor in Southeast and East Asia (awarded JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Early-Career Scientists, 2019-2023).

Infrastructural Interruptions and Agency during the Pandemic Times: Researching Foreign Scholars in China

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This paper draws on in-depth biographical interviews with foreign scholars in China (hereafter 'FSC'), investigating how both migration infrastructures 'from the above' and those embodied in more *mundane/quotidian* ways affect the home-making processes of mobile individuals during the COVID-19. Inspired by the research of Xiang and Lindquist (2014), this paper classifies migration infrastructure into three categories: first, the institutional ones (e.g., visa regimes, border control policies); second, the physical and technological ones (e.g., transportation facilities, workspace and digital applications utilised by migrant individuals); and third, the social ones (e.g., social networks of different kinds). Specifically, the paper first asks how the (im)mobility experiences and trajectories of FSC intersect with certain COVID-19-led *interrupted/altered infrastructures*, such as tightened visa policies and PCR tests for border crossing (institutional) and suspended flights (physical). Second, the paper explores whether and how these FSC manage to alleviate those infrastructural interruptions by exercising *infrastructural agency*, i.e., agentive efforts made towards mobilising their infrastructural surroundings, such as what this paper calls 'self-infrastructuring' (seeking out existing infrastructural resources), coping with 'infrastructural glitches', and utilising certain technological infrastructures. Essentially, the paper extends the literature on migration infrastructure by focusing not only on infrastructures but also infrastructural experiences and agency, i.e., how infrastructures are *identified, lived* and *utilised* by migrants. It reveals that mobile individuals do not simply pass through migration infrastructures, or passively undertake the impacts brought by infrastructural interruptions, but instead, can actively seek out and mobilise their infrastructural terrains, thus enhancing their home-making processes and (im)mobility experiences.

Bingyu Wang is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at Nankai University. She is the Associate Editor of *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*. Her research is of interdisciplinary nature and involves a wide range of pressing global issues such as labour precarity, migrant wellbeing and diverse societies. Specifically, her research areas include international and internal migration, intercultural encounters, and cosmopolitanism, with a geographic focus on Asia-Pacific and theoretical focus on emotions, embodiment, times/temporalities and the everyday. She has published widely on these topics in high-ranked international journals sand her most recently published book with Routledge is entitled *New Chinese Migrants in New Zealand: Becoming Cosmopolitan? Roots, Emotions and Everyday Diversity (2019)*. She is currently conducting research on lifestyle migration and knowledge mobilities of both academics and students between the Global North and the South.

Disrupted Refugee/Migrant Journeys: Of Storm, Shipwreck, and Doldrum

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This is a paper about disrupted refugee/migrant journeys. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in Thailand and Nepal in 2019/20 with Rohingya refugees and an analysis of online newspaper articles and I/NGO reports from 2015/16 and 2020/21 regarding Rohingya's disrupted journeys, I seek to problematize refugee/migrant dependencies and agencies in a migration industry that stretches from the Bay of Bengal to the Andaman Sea. Analyzing the Andaman Sea Crisis and the Covid-19 pandemic as events of disruption to this industry, I conceptualize disruptions to migration processes as "storms", "shipwrecks", and "doldrums". These terms are not to be taken literally but serve as metaphors to describe the nature and temporalities of disruption. Whereas a doldrum is defined by stagnancy and waiting, a storm is characterized by excess and erratic, forceful movement. Travelers may be able to navigate around or through the storm, yet their passage often ends in shipwreck. This shipwreck symbolizes the destruction of central infrastructures and a temporary end to the journey. The paper makes us of and expands the im-/mobility and migration infrastructures literature which question the production of regimes of im-/mobility (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013; Lin et al. 2017). Regimes of im-/mobility force irregular migrants into clandestine journeys made of erratic movement and stillness, bringing the question of their agency into crisis (Brigden and Mainwaring 2016; Martin 2013). I argue that it is in the moments of disruption that the question of refugees'/migrants' agency and dependency is produced and transformed. It is also the moment in which the dialectic between mobility and immobility is at its breaking point. Thus, this paper focuses on disruptions to migration processes as an interplay of moments in which agencies cease and come into being, in turn creating and juxtaposing states of im-/mobility that illuminate needs and possibilities for repair to disrupted journeys.

Miriam Jaehn is a fifth year PhD Candidate in Comparative Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore. In her current project Miriam focuses on the journey of Rohingya refugees within South and Southeast Asia and how these journeys affect the subjectivity and identity (trans-)formation of the Rohingya as a refugee diaspora in displacement. Miriam is co-author of the article "Immanent Nation: The Rohingya Quest for International Recognition" (2019) published in *Nations and Nationalism* and written together with Prof Itty Abraham. She is also author of the essay "'Remote' Ethnography During a Pandemic: Frictions and Challenges in Translating Intimacies" (2021), published in the 'Member Voices' of the Society of Cultural Anthropology website. She has presented parts of her work at the IASFM18, 26-30 July 2021, hosted by the University of Ghana and at the COTS2020, 13-15 November 2020, hosted by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Northern Illinois University.

Gendered Migration Infrastructure

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The intensification of migration flows within Asia for better employment and livelihood opportunities has resulted in the intermediation of migration pathways through the development of "migration infrastructure" (Xiang & Lindquist, 2014). Defined as a multidimensional organisational structure consisting of commercial, regulatory, technological, humanitarian and the social, it provides an analytical entry point into understanding the migration process. I leverage upon and expand on the concept to theorise, "gendered migration infrastructure" through the lens of Indian women in the UAE across income and legal categories. I argue that in addition to economic and political frameworks, social and cultural mores have been significant in shaping the migration infrastructure for Indian women. A consortium of state and non-state actors in both countries, namely, immigration officials, private and state recruitment agents, employers and most recently, skilling agencies have created differentiated and restrictive migratory pathways for Indian women founded on normative understandings of domesticity and femininity. My research shows that migration pathways and their intermediation is gender-blind and thereby, differentiate between men, women and notions of genderedness. In the proposed paper, I explain the negotiations undertaken by migrant women and the impact of gendered migration infrastructure on their (im)mobilities, migratory experiences and outcomes. I also explain how sociospatial ruptures as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic created cracks in the migration ecosystem, further exposing the precarities faced by migrant women. The paper aims to contribute to the literature on gendered migration and transnationalism in addition to shedding light on the migration of Indian women across income categories, an under-researched topic currently.

The proposed paper is based on fieldwork conducted in India and the UAE in 2017 (Masters' dissertation) and 2020-21 (ongoing PhD research). Over the two research periods, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with over 200 Indian migrant women working and living in the UAE to understand their migratory and lived experiences. Additionally, a number of transnational recruitment agents, skilling agencies and government officials were interviewed in India.

Shruti Gupta is a PhD student in the Comparative Asian Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore. Her research interests lie at the intersection of gender, migration and livelihoods; leading to the framing of her doctoral research which studies the transnational everyday lived experiences of Indian migrant women in the UAE.

Location (In)Dependence? The Reassertion of Geography in Pandemic-Affected Digital Nomad Mobilities and Lives

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This paper explores the reconfiguration of infrastructure networks in the (im)mobile lives of digital nomads during the COVID-19 global pandemic. A relatively privileged group of young people, mostly from the Global North associated with hypermobility, tech-savviness and location-independency, digital nomads emerged in relation to the technological possibility of remote work, lifestyle travel, permissive regulatory frameworks and a growing industry of co-working space provision. Southeast Asia is one of the popular lifestyle destinations for digital nomads and has witnessed a surge in co-working spaces mushrooming around these countries. Digital nomadism faces drastic changes due to COVID-19. We address these changes through a discussion of findings from 11 semi-structured online interviews with international digital nomads and 12 semi-structured interviews managers of community co-working spaces in Aotearoa New Zealand. Changes in regulatory infrastructures such as nation state-specific border controls, suspension of visas and travel restrictions have disrupted commercial and social infrastructures that usually allow for digital nomads to work remotely. Governmental restrictions have also led to temporary forced closures of co-working spaces, reducing a key infrastructure upon which flexible working opportunities operate, and reorienting home as workspace in a way that location-independent digital nomads may find constraining. Interviews also reveal how the pandemic normalises the concept of remote working, and highlights social and economic connectivity that is possible and desirable both in digital spaces as well as in co-working environments. Remaking location-independent work is observed at multiple scales, for example: new types of visas that welcome remote workers; shifts in the practices of digital nomads to make business activities more resilient to disruption; and, new practices in co-working spaces to maintain health protocols to support location-independence. This research suggests that COVID-19 has led to greater focus on the infrastructures of location-independence and their potential/failure to rework the relationship between labour, geography and mobility.

Joke Methorst is a PhD Candidate at the National Institute for Demography and Economic Analysis, the University of Waikato in Aotearoa New Zealand, where she is a recipient of the University of Waikato Doctoral scholarship. Originally from the Netherlands, she holds a MSc. in Leisure, Tourism and Environment from Wageningen University and a BSc. in Human Geography and Planning (Utrecht University). Her research interests are centred around digital geographies, lifestyle mobilities, critical feminism, postcolonial geographies and mobile workspaces. Her current research is a critical exploration of the socio-spatial dynamics of remote workers, work and workspace through the lens of critical feminist postcolonial geography.

Francis L. Collins is Professor of Geography at the University of Waikato and Director of Te Ngira: Institute for Population Research (formerly, the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis). His research centres on international migration and includes projects exploring international students and urban transformation, higher education and the globalisation of cities, labour migration, marginalisation and exploitation, and the role of aspirations and desires in migration. Francis is the author of *Global Asian City: migration, desire and the politics of encounter in 21st century Seoul* (Wiley 2018) and co-editor of *Intersections of Inequality, Migration and Diversification* (Palgrave 2020) and *Aspiration, Desire and the Drivers of Migration* (Routledge 2020).

Lynda Johnston is Professor of Geography and Assistant Vice Chancellor Sustainability at the University of Waikato. Lynda highlights the exclusionary ways in which various forms of discrimination and marginalisation —such as sexism, racism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia—shape people's everyday spaces, leisure and sport, as well as structure the resources available to them and influence who they become. Lynda is the Aotearoa New Zealand Delegate for the International Geographical Union. Lynda's publications include: *Transforming Gender, Sex, and Place: Gender Variant Geographies* (Routledge 2019); and, co-editor of *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Feminist Geographies* (2020).

Crisis Infrastructuring: The Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) Programme

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Since its inception in 2002, the Malaysia My Second Home (MM2H) programme has been instrumental in establishing Malaysia as a popular lifestyle migration destination for middle-class individuals and families. An assemblage of public and private actors promote the programme, facilitate visa applications, and support MM2H visa holders' (transnational and local) mobilities and everyday life in Malaysia. By now, the MM2H migration infrastructure is deeply embedded into other sectors of the Malaysian economy (e.g. property, education).

However, in recent years, the programme has been at the receiving end of a series of disruptions that dovetailed the COVID-19 pandemic (2020—present) and Malaysia's regime change and political crisis (May 2018—present). The recurrent and unexpected disruptions during this period of uncertainty have unsettled, suspended or derailed existing and aspiring applicants' lifestyle migration projects. Following a year-long suspension while the programme underwent a review, in mid-August 2021 the government announced drastic changes to the programme that were completely unexpected by the MM2H stakeholders. This dealt a major reputational blow and ushered in an unanticipated transformation of the programme into one that appears to be targeting the wealthy, but which is also seen as a political tool and scapegoat.

This paper examines how various actors in the MM2H migration infrastructure (e.g. current visa holders, aspiring applicants, intermediaries, key public figures, representatives of government agencies and business associations) respond to, defend, challenge and contest the programme's impending infrastructural breakdown and transformation. It interrogates the discursive strategies used by each group to advance their positions and concerns in their attempts to "rescue" the MM2H migration infrastructure and its existing logics of operation. It advances the concept of "crisis infrastructuring" to capture the reparatory efforts that are undertaken by constitutive actors when an established migration infrastructure is perceived to be under threat—that is, in crisis.

Sin Yee Koh is Senior Lecturer in Global Studies at Monash University Malaysia. She is a human geographer working at the intersections of migration studies (education, skilled, lifestyle, transnational mobilities, migration industry) and urban studies (urbanisation and social change in Asia, urban intermediaries). Her work uses the lens of migration and mobility to understand the circulations of people, capital, and aspirations in and through cities. She has published on migration and colonial legacies, race and citizenship, diaspora strategies, academic and teacher expatriate mobilities, migration and urban intermediaries, lifestyle migration-led urban speculation, cities and the super-rich, and the globalisation of real estate.

Private Labour Recruitment Agencies and Disruptions in Labour Mobility Regime in Indonesia

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Private recruitment agencies (PRAs) have been the central actor in the Indonesian migration of labourers. The centrality of PRAs is due to the Indonesian government who in the early 1980s aimed to diminish unofficial outbound labour migration and boost the country's economic performance (Palmer, 2016). Through PRA, the government has also extensively intervened in the process of migrant labourer's recruitment (Ford, 2006). Despite that for almost four decades the PRAs have maintained the privilege in channelling overseas labourers, the PRAs have also faced a series of disruption that has diminished, if not eliminated, their role. Scholars of this field have long focused on the practices of recruitment (Lindquist, Xiang, & Yeoh, 2012), yet there has been little attempt to discuss how PRAs face and encounter such disruptions in channelling labourers.

In this paper, I aim to discuss how PRAs have dealt with four main disruptions: regulatory reform in Indonesia, labour market adjustment in the receiving country, social-economic restructuring in the migrant village, and the global Covid-19 pandemic. By situating the concept of 'infrastructural involution' that Xiang and Lindquist (2014) introduced within the 'mobility regimes' approach (Schiller & Salazar, 2013), I will discuss the power struggle of the PRAs which helped determine the Indonesian labour migration regime. In exploring the four disruptions and how PRAs have been dealing with them, I rely on government regulations and Indonesian media archives from the 1970s onwards, as well as extensive fieldwork in several cities in Indonesia and Malaysia, before and during the Covid-19 pandemic times. Other than narrating the strategy of PRAs, I will also explore the relationship dynamics between PRAs and the corresponding migration facilitators including the government, civil society organizations, and their business partners including field recruiters and informal brokers. I temporarily argue that civil society politics has played a critical role in determining the fate of PRAs in facing the four disruptions.

Pamungkas A. Dewanto (Yuda) is a PhD Candidate in Social Anthropology at Vrije Universiteit (VU), Amsterdam. He is currently finishing up his PhD thesis on the emergence of Indonesian transnational migrant communities in Malaysia. He is also a research consultant in several institutes, working in the issue of recruitment and placement of Indonesian migrant workers. His recent publication appeared in *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land, en Volkenkunde*/Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia. He has also published his research notes on migration and mobility in several blogs such as Standplaats Wereld, COMPAS, as well as the Heinrich Boll Stiftung Southeast Asia.

Stocking Up and Cutting Down:
Negotiating Infrastructural Disruptions in Times of Immobility

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Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, termination of flights, stricter border controls, and uncertainties related to cross-border mobility have generated strata of immobility. Tremendous challenges have consequently been put forth for migration regimes and infrastructures whose existence heavily relies on the production, maintenance, and growth of mobility flows. Drawing on online interviews with ten labor and education intermediaries working on the Vietnam—Japan, and Nepal—Malaysia transnational migration corridors as well as content analyses of newspaper articles and online recruitment posts, this paper explores the infrastructural disruptions experienced by these intermediaries and the consequences of such disruptions on the facilitation of cross-border migration. With an actor-centric approach, the paper examines how migration intermediaries creatively and informally improvised to work around the contextual constraints brought about by immobility through the theoretical lenses of "make do" (de Certeau 1984). In particular, it investigates how migration brokers struggle to survive in the migration industry during infrastructural disruptions by adopting various tactics and strategies including stocking up and cutting down as they tried to reduce operating costs while still maintaining clients' interests and collecting prospective migrants at the same time. Furthermore, we point out that the pandemic-induced disruptions in the migration infrastructures can also lead to the increased utilization of irregular migration channels and practices among migration actors. The paper, therefore, raises the concern for migrants' safe mobility and puts the stability of migration infrastructures that facilitate transnational migration into question.

An Huy Tran is a PhD Researcher at the Institute of East-Asian Studies, University of Duisburg-Essen. Tran's current research project draws on the sociologies of migration, sexuality, and gender to explore the intersection of sexualities, masculinities, and migration among male Vietnamese migrants in contemporary Japan. He has published on international education as a migration industry between Vietnam and Japan. Tran's forthcoming publications feature topics of research methods in migration studies and returned migrants from Japan to Vietnam. His research interests also include transnationalism, student mobility, migrants' entrepreneurship, intermediaries/brokerage, and the migration industry.

Sandhya A.S is a PhD Researcher in the International Max Planck Research School on the Social and Political Constitution of the Economy (IMPRS-SPCE), Max-Planck-Institut für Gesellschaftsforschung (MPIfG), Köln, in association with University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany. With a disciplinary background in Sociology, she studies the organization and governance of mobility market in the context of Nepal and its migration corridors. Her research interests revolve around labor geography, transnational labor markets and segmentations, employer recruitment behavior and reward systems, race, gender, and employment, and neoliberal subjectivities and markets.

Move, Moved, Removed: The Emergence of a Double-Sided Migration Infrastructure in China's Southwestern Borderlands in Relation to Burmese Jadeite Entrepreneurs

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This article investigates the transformation of the migration infrastructure in the China-Myanmar borderland. The extant literature usually assumes that migration infrastructure is separated but interlinked between sending and receiving countries, and such infrastructure tends to be concentrated in sending countries to achieve the goals of receiving countries in which such infrastructure is less elaborate. However, as our case study of the jadeite industry in Ruili, China, shows, in the borderland between two countries with extremely asymmetrical state capacities and economic development, only one country, China, which is the stronger and receiving one, is able to create a migration infrastructure which can both facilitate and prohibit the mobility of Burmese migrant entrepreneurs, while the other, Myanmar, a war-tarred sending country for decades, is unable to effectively control the border at all. Using data collected from 120 face-to-face interviews and on-site observations in borderlands since 2017, as well as archival records of government policies and media reports in both languages, we find that, the symbolic migration infrastructure, such as border checkpoints which could not prevent Burmese migrants from moving across the border relatively freely through preexisting paths, routes, and migrant networks for jadeite business until 2000, gradually turns into a full-fledged, two-way migration infrastructure encompassing the well-entrenched physical infrastructure, fine-grained and flexible immigration management, establishment of the free-trade zone, government-sponsored immigrant-run business association, tightly-regulated places of worship, strengthened digital power and manpower, by which Burmese migrants were moved into China prior to the pandemic, and removed from China as local lockdowns are imposed due to the incoming of new COVID-19 cases from Myanmar.

Fangliang Zhang is a PHD student in Ethnology of Yunnan University, her research interests include border studies, technology and society, migrant entrepreneurship and etc. Since January 2017, she has been conducting the fieldwork in Ruili City, Dehong Prefecture, Yunnan Province. At present, it has lasted for four and a half years. The research object she focus on is Rohingya businessmen engaged in Jadeite industry. Therefore, she has observed Rohingya, Myanmar people in China, jadeite industry, Ruili local government, technology and migration infrastructure for many years. At present, she has participated in an international course about Rohingya crisis, and cooperated with associate professor Tianlong You to write two articles about the formation and change of Rohingya community and shocked into disembeddedness of Rohingya under the epidemic, which has been under review.

Tianlong You is Associate Professor of Sociology at Yunnan University, his research interests include global migration, border studies, migrant entrepreneurship, Asian American studies and etc. Recently, he hosted and organized a forum featuring global migration and global China with the Chinese Journal of Sociology, and a forum centering national development and international migration at the 2021 annual conference of the Chinese Sociological Association.

Beneath the Highway Runs a Trail:
Mobility, Activism, and Infrastructural Failure across the French-Italian Borderland

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For unauthorized migrants on their way to France, increased surveillance along cross-border roads and railways has turned infrastructures into funnels, leading to detection, capture, and deportation. The surrounding mountains provide pushed-back migrants with alternative routes across the border: rugged trails weave across thorny bushes and abandoned olive groves all the way to France. Drawing from four months of fieldwork alongside no-border activists and unauthorized migrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in the French-Italian borderland, I explore in this paper the way activists, in seeking to remobilize the migrants whose trajectory has been interrupted, undermine the ability infrastructures have to determine mobility. I focus on the way activists and migrants mobilize the little-surveilled trails running along policed infrastructures to cross the border undetected. One by one, I suggest, they provoke infrastructural failure: they undermine the border's ability to sort out undesirable forms of mobility from desirable, or legal ones. From a militant perspective, this failure is something to wish for and work toward; a state of repair rather than breakdown.

Céline Eschenbrenner is a graduate student in the department of cultural anthropology at Tulane University. She is interested in transnational activism, membership and belonging, infrastructures, and the politics of motion. Her research takes place along the French-Italian border among different activist collectives. Some fight against the militarization of the border and the immobilization of undocumented people. Others focus on preventing the multiplication of high-speed infrastructures between France and Italy. All attempt to promote fairer forms of mobility and motility across the border. Céline is also a contributing editor for the Society for Cultural Anthropology, for which she writes short essays and make podcasts.

Restarting Labor Export in a Pandemic:
The Failures of Migration Infrastructure for Internal Mobility

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Studies on migration infrastructure have mostly focused on how actors and agencies shape migrants' movement across *international* borders, as they emigrate from their home countries to destinations abroad. In contrast, fewer studies have examined how regulatory and commercial agencies can facilitate frequent journeys through *internal borders,* as outgoing migrants work to accumulate the necessary paperwork, certificates, and approvals for their emigration. In this paper, we examine the Philippines' struggles to restart the overseas deployment of Filipino workers in the second half of 2020, as countries began to reopen their borders amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We discuss how the Philippines failed to completely resume its labor export practices due to two factors: 1) the hardening of internal borders in an effort to isolate COVID-19 infections; and 2) the overconcentration of both regulatory and commercial infrastructure in the capital city of Metro Manila. Based on 186 interviews with Filipino nurses and cruise workers, we illustrate how aspiring migrants based outside Manila struggled to fulfill state and employer requirements for their departure, as the task of traveling to the city became riskier and most costly. Recruitment agencies saw these problems as beyond their purview, leaving aspiring migrants to rely on their own resources and social networks in navigating internal borders. Such disruptions reflect longstanding weaknesses in the Philippines' migration infrastructure, albeit only recently recognized in migration research. We argue that in understanding the interruptions and failures of migration infrastructure, it is important to include an analysis of movements both within and beyond national borders.

Yasmin Y. Ortiga is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Singapore Management University. She studies how the social construction of "skill" shapes people's migration trajectories, changing institutions within both the countries that send migrants, as well as those that receive them. In 2019, she received the National Academy of Education/Spencer Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship. Her work has also been published in Global Networks, International Migration Review, and Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education.

Karen Anne S. Liao is a PhD candidate at the Department of Geography of the National University of Singapore. She is interested in the social and political geographies of migration in Asia and is currently studying labor migrant repatriation and return during crises and emergencies. She has previously conducted research on Filipino highly skilled and professional migrants in Singapore and has published in Geoforum and Migrations Société.

About the Chairpersons and Organisers

Brenda S.A. Yeoh FBA is Raffles Professor of Social Sciences, Department of Geography, National University of Singapore. She is also the Research Leader of the Asian Migration Cluster in the Asia Research Institute. She was recently awarded the prestigious Vautrin Lud Prize (2021) for her outstanding achievements in the field of Geography. She was also the only Singaporean thus far to be elected to the Fellowship of the British Academy as a Corresponding Fellow. Her research interests include the politics of space in colonial and postcolonial cities, and she also has considerable experience working on a wide range of migration research in Asia, including key themes such as cosmopolitanism and highly skilled talent migration; gender, social reproduction and care migration; migration, national identity and citizenship issues; globalising universities and international student mobilities; and cultural politics, family dynamics and international marriage migrants. She has published widely in these fields and her recent books include *Asian Migrants and Religious Experience: From Missionary Journeys to Labor Mobility* (Amsterdam University Press, 2018 with B. Brown), *Handbook of Asian Migrations* (Routledge, 2018 with G. Liu-Farrer) and *Student Mobilities and International Education in Asia: Emotional Geographies of Knowledge Spaces* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2020 with R. Sidhu and K.C. Ho).

Chand Somaiah is a Research Fellow in the Asian Migration cluster at the Asia Research Institute (ARI), National University of Singapore (NUS). At ARI she works on the Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia (CHAMPSEA) Wave 2 (PI: Professor Brenda S.A. Yeoh FBA), and the HealthFood (PI: Professor Brenda S.A. Yeoh FBA) projects. She received her PhD in Sociology from Macquarie University, NSW Australia.

Exequiel Cabanda is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. He is a political scientist who researches the intersection of healthcare, migration-development, and education policies. Previously he taught as a university lecturer at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines. Prior to his academic career, he has worked for many years in corporate planning, policy advising, and development financing in both public and private sectors. His work has been published in the *Migration and Development*, *Higher Education Policies*, and *European Journal of Higher Education*.

Franchesca Rose Morais is a Research Assistant at the Asia Research Institute based in the Asian Migration Cluster where she works on a wide range of migration-related research. She is also a first-year Master's student in Geography at the National University of Singapore. Her research is broadly concerned with the impact of crisis and (im)mobility on transnational families and relationships. For her Master's thesis, she will be exploring more specifically the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on middle-class Indonesian migrants in Singapore and their families abroad.

Samantha Lim obtained her PhD in Comparative Asian Studies at National University of Singapore (NUS) in August 2020. She also holds an MSc in Urban Development Planning (University College London) and BSc in Real Estate (NUS). Her research interests include the everyday lives of ordinary individuals in different urban housing communities, their aspirations and their navigational strategies through threats and challenges such as people-centred collaborative actions and internal migrations or intra-urban movements. Whilst at ARI, Samantha will be working on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), under the Asian Migration cluster, and she is currently researching on student mobilities in China-Southeast Asia.

Theodora Lam is Research Fellow in Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (NUS). She obtained her PhD in Geography from NUS and her dissertation focused on understanding changing gender subjectivities, web of care and relationships within the family in the wake of transnational labour migration. Her research highlights the voices of return migrants as well as carers and children who have remained in the home countries. Theodora is currently involved in a longitudinal research project, Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia (CHAMPSEA): Waves 1 and 2. Her research interests cover transnational migration, children's geographies and gender studies. She has co-edited several special journal issues and has also published on themes relating to migration, citizenship and education in various journals and edited books including *American Behavioral Scientist*, *Asia Pacific Viewpoint*, *Environment and Planning A* and *Population, Space and Place*.

Yi'En Cheng is Research Fellow in the Asian Migration Cluster of Asia Research Institute (ARI), National University of Singapore. His research interests lie in the intersection across education, youth, and mobilities in Asian cities, with a current focus on how higher education restructuring is changing young people's aspirations and identities and their relationships to mobility and immobility. At ARI, he is carrying out research on how the Belt and Road Initiative is impacting tertiary education and student mobilities in the context of China-Southeast Asia. He is also developing a research agenda on international student mobilities and post-pandemic futures in the Asia-Pacific.