

Organized by the Asia Research Institute,  
National University of Singapore (NUS), with partial  
funding support from the NUS start-up grant titled  
"Waiting for Returns: Investments of Overseas  
Filipino Migrant Workers"

# MIGRATION AND RESILIENT TRAJECTORIES IN ASIA

**14-15 APRIL 2026**

**HYBRID FORMAT**

NUS AS8-04-04 & Online via Zoom

For more information, please visit  
<https://ari.nus.edu.sg/events/resilient-trajectories/>



**This workshop is organized by the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (NUS), with partial funding support from the NUS start-up grant titled “Waiting for Returns: Investments of Overseas Filipino Migrant Workers”.**

Resilience has been the subject of many scholarly debates and discussions across different fields and disciplines. Within migration studies, analyses of migrant integration and governance have mostly drawn attention to the structural forces that prompt or inhibit migrants’ resilience. Others home in on migrants’ adaptive and transformative practices, emphasizing that resilience is not a static trait, but a highly dynamic and multifaceted process. In contrast to the normative view that resilience only has a single, directional positive outcome, this workshop aims to draw out how migrants’ resilience processes and pathways proceed in uneven and complex ways, not only spatially by extending across multiple countries but also temporally across different life stages. Furthermore, the workshop seeks to expand understandings of how notions of resilience have been or can be reworked and mobilized creatively and collaboratively for more just or caring futures for all migrants.

In light of contemporary political, economic, and demographic transitions in Asia—such as the rise of gig work, digital labor, and ageing populations—this workshop offers a timely window into taking stock of how migrants have built resilience in diverse ways and for different purposes. The proceedings will extend and challenge current understandings of who is considered resilient, vulnerable, or at risk in the context of migration.

We welcome papers that adopt a critical approach towards how discourses and practices of resilience should be (re)conceptualized— what it is, whom it is for, how it proliferates, and to what effects – in the context of migration to and from Asia. Themes to be considered may include but are not limited to the following:

1. How have practices of resilience been presented in domains such as labor migration (skilled and unskilled), transnational familyhood, international student migration, immigrant integration, return migration and re-integration, the ageing-migration nexus, and climate-induced or other forced migrations?
2. Which migrant subjects are deemed as or asked to become resilient and why? How have migrants expanded, challenged or moved beyond such pregiven definitions, categories, and identities as they pursue other resilient processes or trajectories?
3. What are the specific strategies and practices of resilience that migrants undertake to attain residency/citizenship status, alternate forms of mobility, and/or different forms of economic, political, social and environmental stability and security?
4. Which other resources—such as labors involving care or social justice work, and skills and knowledge acquisition—as well as innovative and creative maneuvers or approaches have migrants drawn upon to augment or complement their chosen resilience strategies?
5. What kinds of multi-scalar institutional assemblages and knowledge networks have formed as governing practices or acts of resilience on the ground?
6. Through migrants’ embodied enactments of resilience, what forms of emergent or alternative political imaginaries and temporal relations have materialized in the present or in anticipation of the future?

The workshop proceedings will chart and conceptualize the multiple ways in which resilience has been called upon and enacted in the region and internationally in the context of variegated migration policy regimes, citizenship pathways, and mobilities in sending and receiving countries.

## **WORKSHOP CONVENORS**

**Asst Prof Vanessa BANTA**

Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

**Prof Elaine Lynn-Ee HO**

Asia Research Institute & Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

Singapore  
Standard Time

# 14 APRIL 2026 • TUESDAY

<b>11:15 – 11:30</b>	<b>WELCOME REMARKS</b>
	<b>ELAINE LYNN-EE HO</b> , National University of Singapore <b>VANESSA BANTA</b> , National University of Singapore
<b>11:30 – 13:00</b>	<b>PANEL 1 • LABOR MIGRATION</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>ELAINE LYNN-EE HO</b> , National University of Singapore
11:30	Migrants' Struggles and Resilience: Photovoice and Reflective Diary Insights into Indonesian Care Workers in Japanese Eldercare <b>FIKRIYAH WINATA</b> , Texas A&M University
11:50	Resilient and Vulnerable Vietnamese Irregular Migration to the UK: Waxing and Waning Subjectivities <b>TAMSIN BARBER</b> , Oxford Brookes University
12:10	Reluctant Resiliencies in Real Estate Investments for Overseas Filipino Workers <b>VANESSA BANTA</b> , National University of Singapore
12:30	Questions & Answers
<b>13:00 – 14:00</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>14:00 – 15:30</b>	<b>PANEL 2 • FAMILYHOOD</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>XIAOLING CHEN</b> , National University of Singapore
14:00	Navigating the Resilience Trap: Cross-Border Familyhood under the Developmental Migration Regime <b>TUEN YI CHIU</b> , Lingnan University
14:20	Transnational Emigration and Family Resilience during Sri Lanka's Economic Crisis <b>MICHELE RUTH GAMBURD</b> , Portland State University
14:40	Beyond Grit: Unsettling Normative Narratives of Left-Behind Children's Resilience <b>ELIZER JAY DE LOS REYES</b> , University of Southampton
15:00	Questions & Answers
<b>15:30 – 16:00</b>	<b>AFTERNOON TEA</b>
<b>16:00 – 17:30</b>	<b>PANEL 3 • TEMPORALITY AND LIFE COURSE</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>VANESSA BANTA</b> , National University of Singapore
16:00 <i>Online</i>	Waiting, Catching Up, and Recalibrating Time: Rethinking Resilience through the Temporal Practices of Chinese Returnee Migrants <b>ZHE WANG</b> , University of Oxford
16:20	Temporary Resilience: Governing Labour Migration through Temporality and Uncertainty in Germany <b>JESSICA STEINMAN</b> , Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam
16:40	Towards Resilient Ageing Futures: Anticipatory Strategies amongst Older Migrants in Singapore <b>ELAINE LYNN-EE HO</b> , National University of Singapore
17:00	Questions & Answers
<b>17:30</b>	<b>END OF DAY 1</b>
<b>17:45 – 19:45</b>	<b>WORKSHOP DINNER</b> (For Presenters, Chairpersons and Organisers Only)

Singapore  
Standard Time

# 15 APRIL 2026 • WEDNESDAY

<b>11:00 – 12:30</b>	<b>PANEL 4 • INFRASTRUCTURES</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>AH ENG LAI</b> , National University of Singapore
11:00	Culinary Infrastructures and Migrant Resilience: A Case of Indonesian Migrants in Sydney <b>ARUM BUDIASTUTI</b> , Airlangga University
11:20	Social Network, Digital Infrastructure, and Urban Life: Resilience among Overseas Chinese in Singapore <b>XIAOLING CHEN</b> , National University of Singapore
11:40	Mediated Resilience among White Wives in Chinese Foreign Marriages: Negotiating Gender Roles, Whiteness, and (Trans)national Belongings on Douyin <b>XINXIN JIANG</b> , Southwestern University of Finance and Economics
12:00	Questions & Answers
<b>12:30 – 13:30</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>13:30 – 15:00</b>	<b>PANEL 5 • COMMUNITY</b>
<i>Chairperson</i>	<b>MARYAM LAKSHIRI</b> , National University of Singapore
13:30	The New Kallang Roar: Volleyball, Community Resilience, and the Urban Commons <b>SELVARAJ VELAYUTHAM</b> , Macquarie University
13:50	In Pursuit of the 'Australian Dream': Strategies of Resilience by Young Disabled Migrants from Asia <b>BELLA CHOO</b> , The University of Melbourne
14:10	From Exit to Voice: Resilience and Resistance among China's Running Generation <b>FANGYUAN LIU</b> , Hong Kong Baptist University
14:30	Questions & Answers
<b>15:00 – 15:30</b>	<b>CLOSING REMARKS</b>
	<b>ELAINE LYNN-EE HO</b> , National University of Singapore <b>VANESSA BANTA</b> , National University of Singapore
<b>15:30</b>	<b>END OF WORKSHOP</b>

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## **Migrants' Struggles and Resilience: Photovoice and Reflective Diary Insights into Indonesian Care Workers in Japanese Eldercare**

**Fikriyah WINATA**  
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Caring for older adults is challenging both in the unpaid and paid care systems, imposing sustained physical, emotional, and mental burdens on caregivers. Japan, the world's most aging society, faces critical shortages in eldercare and increasingly relies on migrant workers from other Asian countries, including Indonesia. There is a limited understanding of how care workers' embodied practices help navigate everyday struggles and build resilience. Prior research has focused mainly on workplace conditions, leaving the broader transnational circumstances of living in Japan unexplored. Drawing on the concept of resilience in health and place, I employed participatory action research methods—photovoice and reflective diaries—to explore the embodied, spatial, and cultural dimensions of Indonesian care workers' experiences in Japan and how these shape their mental health and wellbeing. I conducted fieldwork in Summer 2025 that spanned 10 urban and rural prefectures. 15 migrant care workers contributed 44 photos and reflective diary entries. In addition to workplace struggles from long and night shifts, overloading tasks, dementia care, national exam pressure, language barriers, power imbalance, and difficulties of maintaining religious practices articulated by care workers, my research uncovers care workers' coping strategies, everyday "self-negotiation", and the importance of emotional regulation to build resilience and sustain working in eldercare facilities. Care workers also engage in place-based activities through food, friendships, and experiences of natural and spiritual landscapes, as well as memories of family, animals, and hobbies, which help maintain their mental health and wellbeing. This study highlights how migrant care workers negotiate health, care, and belonging within Japan's rapidly aging society.

**Fikriyah Winata** is Assistant Professor of Geography at the Department of Geography at Texas A&M University, United States. Her research has focused on exploring the health and wellbeing geographies of immigrants and women, geographic disparities in access to mental health care, gendered mobility, and healthcare services and resources supporting health (e.g., healthy food stores, health-promoting places, and social networks) among disadvantaged and vulnerable communities in Hong Kong, Indonesia, and the United States. Currently, she explores migrant care workers' resilience working in Japanese eldercare, addressing care issues within the aging society. In addition, she fosters methodological innovation in human geography research, emphasizing cost-effective approaches. Her research uses GIS, spatial and statistical analysis, qualitative methods, and mixed-methods approaches, drawing on both primary and secondary data from virtual and in-person fieldwork. She is one of the selected Early-Career Editorial Board members at *Health & Place*, a flagship health geography journal.

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## Resilient and Vulnerable Vietnamese Irregular Migration to the UK: Waxing and Waning Subjectivities

**Tamsin BARBER**

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In the context of irregular labour migration from Asia to Europe, resilience forms a necessary and co-constituent feature of crossing restrictive, hostile and sometimes dangerous border regimes. The plight to improve local livelihoods in Asia can intensify the drive to confront risk and enact resilience during precarious journeys. Yet migrant resilience serves different, and often, irreconcilable functions for nations, economies and communities involved in migration. Migrant resilience may positively serve sending nations and communities in Asia exemplifying 'good citizenship' and delivering development goals, while simultaneously being perceived as 'too resilient' in receiving Global North countries, representing a 'threat' to national border controls, labour markets and population management. While for migrant subjects, resilient practices largely involve self-reliance, self-exploitation and punitive self-governance.

This paper explores the impact of strategies of resilience upon migrant subjectivity and collective/community life among 'low-skilled' Vietnamese migrants making precarious journeys to the UK. Tracing migrants' experiences prior, during and after migration, it shows that not only does migrant resilience wax and wane over the course of the migration journey but that resilient subjectivities are emergent, relational and discursively co-constructed via transitory migrant communities, receiving and homeland policies, economic livelihood strategies and opportunities. Emphasizing the temporal, relational and multifocal horizons of the migrant experience, this paper moves conceptions of resilience beyond notions of the 'insidious technology of the self' (McKeown et al 2021) in the neoliberal Global North, towards one as contextual and co-relational, combining both affective forms of responsible citizenship and social mobility in Asia.

**Tamsin Barber** is Associate Professor in Sociology and Chair of the Migration and Refugees Network at Oxford Brookes University. Her research focuses on migration, race, ethnicity and inequality. Her first monograph *Oriental Identities in Superdiverse Britain: Young Vietnamese in London* focuses on the racialised identities among second-generation youth in London. She is currently writing her second monograph *Vietnamese Migrants and UK Bordering Processes* for Amsterdam University Press. This latest research focuses on undocumented Vietnamese migration and hostile bordering practices. Her research has been funded by the Leverhulme Trust, British Academy and Newton Fund. Her articles have appeared in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *Transfers: Interdisciplinary Journal of Mobility Studies, Culture, Place and Gender, Identities*, and *Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Law*.

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## Reluctant Resiliencies in Real Estate Investments for Overseas Filipino Workers

**Vanessa BANTA**

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The Philippine real estate property market has been consistently described as resilient by industry actors. This is despite recent developments that suggest otherwise, significantly impacting those who have invested their hard-earned savings, Filipino migrant workers among them. Drawing from 30 in depth interviews with Filipino migrant workers in Dubai and Singapore, this article examines their reluctant practices of resiliency amidst such volatilities. By bringing scholarships on urban resilience, migrant trajectories and resilience together in conversation, it highlights how Filipino migrant workers interpret and enact reluctant resiliencies as they navigate the Philippine real estate industry from afar and ensure payment as to not lose their investments. The article finds these practices emerge from or develop alongside migrants' shifting ideas around real estate investment as 1) a source of security for their families, 2) stable home, and 3) source of future income. However, although these may be viewed as pragmatic, even strategic responses to ensure semblances of individual and familial security, this paper underscores the need to consider how real estate investments may pose certain limits to migrants' imaginings of alternative futures.

**Vanessa Banta** is Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. She held a postdoctoral research fellow position from the University of Toronto-Scarborough and obtained her PhD in Human Geography from the University of British Columbia. Her research interests cut across issues of Philippine migration, critical development and labour. Her work has been published in journals such as *Environment and Planning A: Economy & Space*, *Antipode*, *Geoforum*, and *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*.

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## Navigating the Resilience Trap: Cross-Border Familyhood under the Developmental Migration Regime

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**Ruby YS LAI**  
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Demographic transitions such as population ageing and declining birth rates have prompted states facing demographic challenges to re-strategize their immigration and citizenship policies for sustainable development. Scholars have identified the rise of developmental migration states, especially in East Asia, where migrants' access to rights and permanent residence is increasingly linked to their utility within state development goals (Chung, Draudt, and Tian 2024). Although this pro-growth approach creates new opportunities for immigrants, its effects are highly stratified across social divisions. Focusing on mainland Chinese cross-border families in Hong Kong, this study argues that the developmentalist orientation of immigration policies has produced a "resilience trap," requiring migrants to demonstrate exceptional resilience and self-reliance to navigate institutional, sociocultural, and material constraints between host and home societies. Drawing on document analysis, ethnography, and in-depth interviews with 40 cross-border families, the study examines how these families navigate the resilience trap and negotiate institutional precarity. It first analyzes how developmental policy logics create systematic vulnerabilities and risks for Chinese migrant families, leading to their social and legal marginalization. It then explores how families mobilize spatial (home, community, cross-border), temporal (everyday, biographical, institutional), and relational (within the family and with institutions) strategies to cope with structural constraints under utilitarian immigration policies. Overall, the study demonstrates that resilience is a relational process operating on multiple levels; when adopted individually, it can reinforce prevailing social divisions and sociopolitical order, but when practiced collectively, it may foster new forms of social relations and spaces of transformation.

**Tuen Yi Chiu** is Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at Lingnan University, Hong Kong. She is a sociologist specializing in migration, gender, marriage, family, and ageing. Her current projects focus on migration decision-making, intergenerational care relations, transnational ageing, cross-border marriage migration, and older adults' marital relationships. Methodologically, she is interested in integrating interviews, ethnography, and visual methods. Her work has been published in *Sociology*, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *International Migration Review*, and *Population, Space and Place*, among others.

**Ruby YS Lai** is a sociologist and an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Policy at Lingnan University, Hong Kong. She specialises in gender, family, reproductive politics, housing, sexual violence, feminist movement and qualitative methodology. Her research examines the intersection of multiple inequalities and the agency of disadvantaged groups and minorities. Her current projects explore the gendered impact of housing precarity and gender-based sexual harassment in public spaces. Her publications can be found in *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *Sociology*, *The Sociological Review*, *China Quarterly*, *Signs*, *Current Sociology*, *Politics & Gender* and *Modern China*, among others.

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## Transnational Emigration and Family Resilience during Sri Lanka's Economic Crisis

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Sri Lanka's economic crisis of 2022 arose from decades of poor governance and led to unprecedented levels of emigration among the lower and middle classes. This essay examines how acute financial pressures have transformed transnational migration patterns. The author compares the sojourner migration common between 1980 – 2019 with patterns of permanent out-migration emerging after 2022. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork done in 2023 and 2024, the author explores how multigenerational Buddhist families in a coastal village currently approach transnational householding, with a focus on the experience of people at different life stages. Older adults left behind seek to balance a "better future" for their emigrant children and grandchildren against their own sense of disappointment, sacrifice, and loss of intergenerational connections. Migrants stay in touch and send remittances but struggle to fulfil other care obligations (such as cooking their parents' food or taking them to medical appointments) while grappling with work, residence, and citizenship requirements in their new country. More broadly, the essay examines what it means for a transnational family to be "resilient" when based in a nation deeply entangled with international debt and enmeshed in global visa requirements that restrict mobility. The essay points out conceptual flaws in the term "resilience," which may overly highlight individual, family, or local efforts, removing focus on larger-scale national economic dynamics and global citizenship regimes that create underlying burdens and hurdles. Simultaneously, the term may implicitly stigmatize those who cannot overcome massive global forces or those left behind by new developments. The essay questions who benefits and who suffers in migrant families, contextualizes discussions of resilience within deeper-reaching ideals about adaptation and sustainability, and asks what a socially just future would look like in Sri Lanka.

**Michele Ruth Gamburd** is Professor of Anthropology at Portland State University. A cultural anthropologist, she focuses on migration, adaptation, and cultural change in a Buddhist village in southwestern Sri Lanka. She writes about gender, family relations, and power struggles in *The Kitchen Spoon's Handle: Transnationalism and Sri Lanka's Migrant Housemaids* (2000) and *Breaking the Ashes: The Culture of Illicit Liquor in Sri Lanka* (2008). She explores humanitarian aid, class hierarchies, and disaster diplomacy in *The Golden Wave: Culture and Politics after Sri Lanka's Tsunami Disaster* (2013) and in a volume (co-edited with Dennis B. McGilvray) entitled *Tsunami Recovery in Sri Lanka: Ethnic and Regional Dimensions* (2010). Her most recent book, *Linked Lives: Elder Care, Migration, and Kinship in Sri Lanka* (2021), addresses issues of aging, demographic transformation, and changing intergenerational obligations in rural families.

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## **Beyond Grit: Unsettling Normative Narratives of Left-Behind Children's Resilience**

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Migration is often framed as a strategy for families to overcome economic hardship, yet it simultaneously generates its own adversities – most notably prolonged parent-child separation with profound effects on left-behind children's well-being and schooling. This duality demands resilience not only from adults but also from left-behind children in transnational families. Recent scholarship increasingly recognises that resilience, particularly academic resilience, is not an innate trait, but a relational process shaped by home, school, and community structures.

This paper explores how Filipino left-behind children navigate challenges arising from maternal migration, foregrounding their perspectives to address their persistent underrepresentation in migration research. By adopting an intergenerational lens, this paper moves beyond dominant resilience frameworks that narrowly emphasise grit and individual coping. Instead, it reconceptualises resilience as dynamic, embodied, sensory, and collective – a socio-cultural process deeply rooted in relationships. Positioning children's resilience as a form of labour and lived experience, this paper critiques output-oriented models and offers a timely departure from individualising and responsabilising narratives.

Drawing on 32 narrative interviews – with 12 left-behind children and 19 Filipina migrant mothers employed as nurses in the UK and Australia, and as domestic workers in Hong Kong and Singapore – the study incorporates written, spoken and visual representations to capture migration stories. In doing so, it addresses two critical gaps: the persistent absence of children's voices in migration discourse and the neglect of resilience's embodied and affective dimensions, offering a richer, more relational understanding of how transnational families endure and adapt.

**Elizer Jay de los Reyes** is Lecturer and Associate Programme Director of the MSc Education in the Southampton Education School at the University of Southampton, England. His scholarship examines the impact of mobilities of labour and risks on learners and educators around the world. He investigates how women's migration from the Philippines to the UK, Australia, Singapore, and Hong Kong shapes their left-behind children's aspirations and attitudes towards schooling, and their resilience. He also studies the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the resilience of historically underrepresented higher education academics especially those at the early stages of their careers. Jay was a recipient of UNIVERSITAS 21 Researcher Resilience Sustainability Fund (2022, Principal Investigator) and Researcher Resilience Fund (2020, Co-investigator). He was also a co-host of the Resilient Academic Podcast.

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## Waiting, Catching Up, and Recalibrating Time: Rethinking Resilience through the Temporal Practices of Chinese Returnee Migrants

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This paper explores how resilience may be enacted and reimagined through the temporal practices of Chinese international student returnees. Although returnees are often portrayed as globally competitive and self-managing subjects, emerging research shows that, from a temporal perspective, their everyday lives are marked by uneven rhythms, disrupted life-course transitions, and shifting notions of progress and success (Wang, 2023). Building on this literature and drawing on ongoing research that extends my doctoral work on return migration, the paper examines how returnees practise everyday resilience through temporal processes of recalibration—how they wait, slow down, or catch up amid the uncertainties of post-return life.

Based on 25 in-depth interviews, the paper investigates how returnees navigate accelerated and delayed transitions, adapt to the fast-paced temporal regimes of China’s labour markets, and reconfigure life-course expectations around work, family, and aspiration. Rather than viewing resilience as simple “bouncing back”, the study conceptualises it as a set of everyday temporal negotiations—waiting productively, slowing down strategically, and catching up selectively—through which returnees manage structural uncertainty and shifting social expectations. The paper further considers how these temporal practices draw on diverse resources, including peer networks, digital labour platforms, and transnational alumni communities. Examining resilience from a temporal perspective, the paper advances the reconceptualisation of resilience in migration studies by illuminating how resilience works and what it does in returnees’ everyday practices and negotiations of time.

**Zhe Wang** is Departmental Lecturer in Chinese Studies at the University of Oxford. Her research examines transnational migration, education, and urban transformation in contemporary China, with a particular focus on time, mobility, and everyday life among return migrants. She is the author of *Transnational Student Return Migration and Megacities in China: Practices of Cityzenship* (Springer Nature, 2023). In this paper, she serves as the first author, responsible for the research design, fieldwork, data analysis, and manuscript preparation.

**Peidong Yang** is Associate Professor at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. His research interests include migration, education, and youth in Asia, with particular attention to mobility, aspiration, and the making of middle-class subjectivities. As the second author, he will contribute to the conceptual framing, theoretical development, and critical discussion of the paper’s argument, drawing on his extensive expertise in migration and education studies.

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## Temporary Resilience: Governing Labour Migration through Temporality and Uncertainty in Germany

**Jessica STEINMAN**

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While resilience is often viewed as an essential individual capacity for migrants, this paper shows that labor migration regimes have systematically transformed it into a technique of labor extraction and control through ethnographic fieldwork with 25 Vietnamese migrants who arrived in Germany between 1986 and 2020. Drawing on interviews, participant observation, and digital ethnography of private messaging apps and Facebook groups, I analyze how state policies produce time-bound regimes of uncertainty that compel migrants to adapt to remain employable and legal. I term this process temporary resilience, in which migrants' adaptive capacities are repeatedly mobilized. This process renders resilience both a resource for labor extraction and a mechanism that produces the temporality of deferral, renewal, and waiting. The term does not suggest that resilience is fleeting. Rather, it highlights how migrants' enduring adaptive capacity is harnessed to produce and sustain the temporal uncertainty of provisional statuses while making legal temporariness administratively and socially viable. This is enforced by penalties and status loss, which discipline migrants into continually expending resilience to ensure a supply of governable and precarious workers. Tracing this process across three regimes of labor migration in Germany, from the contract labor program of the former GDR, through the post-reunification irregularization of workers, to the contemporary vocational training scheme, the paper shows how resilience is reconfigured as a cyclical condition of governable precarity. Through the concept of temporary resilience, this paper highlights resilience as a renewable technique of state power.

**Jessica Steinman** is Postdoctoral Researcher at Erasmus University Rotterdam. She earned her D.Phil in Global Studies from Universität Leipzig, where she taught courses on migration and diaspora studies. She has conducted extensive multisited fieldwork with Vietnamese migrants negotiating identity, belonging, and mobility across Vietnam, Germany, Taiwan, the United States, and Russia. Her current projects examine how ports, shipping schedules, contracts, and digital platforms produce temporal inequalities, labour precarity, and reordered practices of belonging. More broadly, her research explores how mobility within the global supply chains affect social lives. By tracing people, goods, and time across nodes and borders, her work links everyday social experiences to the political and economic structures that govern movement.

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## **Towards Resilient Ageing Futures: Anticipatory Strategies amongst Older Migrants in Singapore**

**Elaine Lynn-Ee HO**

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Migrant integration and advanced societal ageing trends present twin demographic challenges to societies which have been reliant on replacement migration to meet their labour force needs. This presentation explores the dynamic interplay between migration and resilience, focusing on anticipatory actions which older foreign-born adults in Singapore (henceforth older migrants) undertake to enhance their future well-being, particularly in the context of ageing. By bringing together the scholarships on anticipatory action and resilience, this paper situates discussions of older migrants' "anticipatory resilience" within broader discussions on governance, affect, and social practice. Through qualitative interviews with 28 older migrants from China and India, this presentation highlights how they articulate anticipatory strategies to navigate their transnational lives (which may caregiving duties for ageing others) and plan for future ageing scenarios. The findings emphasise that "anticipatory resilience" involves careful consideration of caregiving/care receiving logistics, social integration, and balancing practical needs with emotional well-being. The paper underscores the importance of understanding how strategies for anticipatory resilience are meant to facilitate goal attainment, adaptive capacity, and future security in older age. These insights contribute to advancing scholarship on the ageing-migration nexus and geographies of the future.

**Elaine Lynn-Ee Ho** is Provost's Chair Professor at the Department of Geography and Research Leader of the Migration and Mobilities Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. Her research examines the geographies of citizenship through studying various transnational migration streams as well as the ageing and the wellbeing of non-migrant and migrant older adults. She is Editor of the journal, *Social and Cultural Geography*, and *Routledge Series on Asian Migration*. She also serves on the editorial boards of geography, citizenship, migration and area studies journals.

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## Culinary Infrastructures and Migrant Resilience: A Case of Indonesian Migrants in Sydney

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This paper examines how Indonesian migrants in Sydney experience being expected to be resilient and how they respond to, negotiate, and rework this expectation through culinary infrastructures during periods of precarity, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic. Engaging with migration and governance scholarship that examines resilience as a mode of governing insecurity and responsibility under neoliberal and mobility regimes (e.g. Chandler 2014; Joseph 2013), the paper conceptualises resilience not as an innate migrant capacity but as a condition migrants are expected to perform in the face of structural insecurity. Extending Jeffrey Pilcher's concept of culinary infrastructures, I analyse food practices as multi-scalar assemblages through which this demand is both enacted and exceeded, especially among migrants with limited access to state protection. The analysis is based on a hybrid ethnography conducted between 2021 and 2023. It combines qualitative fieldwork in Sydney in 2022–2023, including interviews with 16 Indonesian migrants, with social media analysis of an Indonesian Facebook group, The Rock Sydney. The group functioned both as a site for recruiting informants and as an empirical space where interactions among Indonesian migrants during periods of precarity were observed and recorded. The findings show that international students and casual migrants are among those most exposed to economic and emotional risk, and most strongly positioned as self-reliant subjects within Australia's migration regime. Food sharing and homemade food selling became key ways to secure income, access familiar food, and maintain everyday support. I argue that resilience here is best understood as an ethical accomplishment: a collective form of labour grounded in care, obligation, and reciprocity, rather than individual adaptation alone.

**Arum Budiastuti** is a lecturer in the Faculty of Humanities, Airlangga University – Surabaya (Indonesia), who recently completed her PhD at the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies, The University of Sydney. Her main research interests are material culture, food studies, religion and culture, migration, and science, technology, and society. She recently presented her paper on *jastip* (shopping-entrusted service) and food mobility practice in Australia at a workshop by the Asia Research Institute at National University of Singapore (March 2025) and working on the manuscript for publication. Her publications include topics ranging from traditional aquaculture as a practice of care to herbal drink consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia. Prior to her doctoral study, she actively participated in the Consortium of Inter-Asia Cultural Studies representing Airlangga University, and co-hosted the Inter-Asia Cultural Studies Conference in 2015. In Airlangga University, she is a member of the Border, Mobilities, and Area Engagement research cluster. She also serves as a peer reviewer for *Science, Technology and Human Values* (Sage Publications) and *Policy Futures in Education* (Sage Publications).

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## Social Network, Digital Infrastructure, and Urban Life: Resilience among Overseas Chinese in Singapore

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This paper examines everyday practices through which overseas Chinese develop resilience in Singapore. It defines “overseas Chinese” broadly to include PRC citizens who study or work in Singapore, and non-PRC individuals who self-identify with China, regardless their length of residence in Singapore. Drawing on ongoing fieldwork, including ethnographic data from participant observation and semi-structured interviews with 15 participants, this paper answers two primary questions: What challenges do overseas Chinese face in Singapore? How do they respond to these challenges? It identifies three salient interconnected domains, social network, digital infrastructure, and urbanism, through which overseas Chinese alleviate hardship, adapt, and develop resilience vis-à-vis challenges at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Additionally, this paper identifies patterned distinctions across three domains between interlocutors with short-term stays (e.g., visiting scholars, exchange students) and those with longer-term employments (e.g., professionals, university faculty). The paper is situated within a larger geopolitical context, especially the US-China rivalry, in which Singapore (re)repositions itself as a global city capable of hosting highly skilled individuals channeled from the West who, nevertheless, encounter differentiated experiences due to structural challenges—for example, visa constraints and the rental market. Therefore, this study not only contributes empirically to scholarship on migration but also carries important policy implications for Singapore.

**Xiaoling Chen** is Postdoctoral Fellow in the Asia Research Institute (ARI) at the National University of Singapore. Her research employs multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork to examine the intersections of Chinese state power, infrastructure, and social life. She earned a PhD in Human Geography from the University of Colorado Boulder and master’s degree in medical Anthropology from the University of Colorado Denver. Her work has appeared in *Critical Asian Studies*, *Eurasian Geography and Economics*, *Made in China*, and *Human Organization*. She is currently revising her dissertation into a monograph titled *Zero-COVID: Infrastructure and State Power in Contemporary China*, based on ethnographic fieldwork across COVID-19 institutions, including public health offices, police stations, vaccination sites, public hospitals, and communities. At ARI, her research focuses on China’s extraterritorial governance strategies and their impacts on overseas Chinese.

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## Mediated Resilience among White Wives in Chinese Foreign Marriages: Negotiating Gender Roles, Whiteness, and (Trans)national Belongings on Douyin

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This paper examines how white wives in Chinese–foreign marriages enact *mediated resilience* as they navigate gendered, racialized, and national hierarchies in contemporary China. While Chinese state and platform media increasingly celebrate these women as symbols of cultural harmony and successful integration, their everyday experiences reveal more contingent and uneven forms of belonging. Focusing on Douyin, China’s leading short-video platform, the paper analyzes how white wives document domestic life, mobility, and cultural performance to negotiate legitimacy within families, platformed nationalist contexts, and transnational spaces.

Drawing on digital ethnography, visual content analysis, and discourse analysis of 2,316 videos and posts produced by a curated set of prominent white-wife Douyin accounts, alongside selected user comments collected between 2024 and 2025, the study conceptualizes resilience as *mediated* through intimate family relations, racialized privilege associated with whiteness, and dominant nationalist narratives circulating in platformed culture.

Empirically, the paper demonstrates how mediated resilience operates across three interrelated scales. At the intimate level, domestic labor, care work, and emotional management are translated into publicly legible performances that stabilize family relations without transforming patriarchal hierarchies. At the national scale, tourist–local performances convert racialized foreignness into conditional inclusion by aligning with narratives of Chinese modernity, development, and global standing. At the transnational scale, some white wives cultivate more durable forms of resilience by embedding visibility within transnational cultural routines, symbolic representation, and institutionalized cultural brokerage.

By theorizing resilience as a relational, performative, and recognition-dependent process rather than a personal trait, this paper highlights the stratified and contingent nature of migrant resilience in China and Asia more broadly. It contributes to scholarship on migration, digital media, and whiteness by showing how resilience is produced and unevenly sustained across intimate, national, and transnational contexts.

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## The New Kallang Roar: Volleyball, Community Resilience, and the Urban Commons

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Every Sunday, the quiet green expanse of Old Terminal Lane in Kallang is transformed into a vibrant hub of activity as hundreds of female migrant workers, primarily from South and Southeast Asia, gather to play volleyball. While the scene may appear as an informal leisure event, this paper argues that these weekly games constitute an emergent urban common and a sustained practice of community resilience within Singapore's hyper-regulated cityscape. Drawing on long-term fieldwork that began in 2018, the paper examines how collective play operates as a form of grassroots placemaking through which migrant women negotiate space, forge social infrastructure of care, and assert presence in a city where they are often rendered invisible. Conceptually, the paper contributes to scholarship on urban resilience by shifting attention away from state-led, technocratic, and crisis-oriented frameworks toward an understanding of *community resilience* as an everyday, relational, and embodied practice. Through the lens of sport and play, resilience is shown to be enacted not simply as coping or survival, but as collective world-making, producing affective bonds, cultural expression, and shared claims to urban space without formal recognition or institutional support. In foregrounding migrant women's agency and the political potentials of play, the paper extends debates on urban informality and placemaking by demonstrating how seemingly ephemeral practices can generate durable forms of belonging and spatial meaning. "The New Kallang Roar" thus reimagines sport not only as spectacle or leisure, but as a quiet yet powerful mode of everyday resistance and community resilience.

**Amanda Wise** is Professor of Sociology at Macquarie University where she teaches Urban Sociology, Race, Migration, and 'Diversity'. She has published widely on everyday multiculturalism urban diversities and among workers. She is currently researching the nexus between global cities and the everyday sociology of urban marginality through research on the leisure practices and working lives of migrant workers and culturally diverse communities in Sydney and Singapore.

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## **In Pursuit of the ‘Australian Dream’: Strategies of Resilience by Young Disabled Migrants from Asia**

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In pursuit of the ‘Australian Dream’, young disabled migrants begin life in Australia while learning that an exception persists to Australian egalitarianism: the disabled temporary migrant (Choo, 2025). Largely under-represented within migration studies, disabled migrants disprove assumptions of immobility (Burns, 2024), where disability has been typically associated with “forced (im)mobility” (Goggin, 2016, p. 534; Imrie, 2000). Despite having acquired a temporary visa, disabled migrants face additional barriers within the Australian visa regime, where disability is regarded as a health cost leading to the denial of permanent visas. Following Qamar’s (2023, p. 1) conceptualisation of resilience as a product of dynamic “person-environment interaction[s]”, this paper focuses on the gaps in the ways in which the visa regime operates as a migration infrastructure (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). Specifically, I first examine how disabled migrants demonstrate varying levels of agency in disability self-representation as a strategy to minimise the risk of being denied their next visa (Estêvão et al., 2017). Next, I argue for the importance of social networks as resources that function as interpersonal migration infrastructures enhancing disabled migrants’ resilience (Cheng, 2023; Collins, 2013; Estêvão et al., 2017). To do so, I draw from approximately 115 hours of life-mapping interviews and search conferences with 11 disabled migrants from the Asia-Pacific region. In paying due attention to the lived experiences of disabled migrants, this paper highlights the possibilities and limitations on migrants’ agency as they seek to enhance their resilience in navigating uncertainties of an ableist visa regime.

**Bella Choo** (she/her) is a PhD candidate at The University of Melbourne (Sociology) and Young NUS Fellow at National University of Singapore (Geography). As a disability inclusion practitioner and researcher, her work is informed by past employment at international organisations including Special Olympics Asia Pacific and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Bella’s past academic training was completed at the National University of Singapore (B.Soc.Sci. Geography – Honours with Distinction) and the University of Manchester (MSc. International Development: Poverty and Inequality – Distinction). As a lived experience researcher, Bella’s interdisciplinary PhD project examines the notion of the “Australian Dream” for young migrants with disability from Asia-Pacific. Her research interests include disability, mobilities, well-being, care, technology, arts, intersectionality and participatory methodologies.

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## From Exit to Voice: Resilience and Resistance among China's Running Generation

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This paper examines how Chinese transnational migrants mobilize intertwined practices of resilience and resistance within the context of Runology (润学, a neologism about how to run away from China). It started in the COVID-19 pandemic under the Zero-COVID policy, and reached its peak after the White Paper Movement (TWPM), the largest scale protest in China after the Tiananmen protests. This paper is based on multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork in the Netherlands and California, the two emerging centres of the post-pandemic Chinese overseas civil society (Yuan, 2025), and 11 in-depth interviews with the Chinese Running generation migrants (including activists, human rights practitioners, undocumented migrants and asylum seekers). Grounded in civil spaces such as independent bookstores, memorial events, artistic spaces, and various online communities/forums, this paper traces the ways this new generation of Chinese immigrants enable a broader scope of voicing out through strategic actions of exit.

In times of crisis, resistance and resilience are mutually reinforcing the process of community-building (Bourbeau & Ryan, 2018). Resistance emphasises the act of standing up against repression, and resilience emphasises the ability to respond and adapt to the socio-political changes (Koliou et al., 2020). In the context of COVID-19 pandemic and TWPM in China, resistance against political suppression is also a strategy to sustain community resilience. The Running generation introduces new strategies of resilience and resistance, with interethnic and global solidarity in organizing social movements against authoritarian suppression, and various public engagement events such as feminist and queer stand-up comedy shows, anti-surveillance and protest workshops. This paper argues that these different strategies invented by the Chinese Running generation are essentially different from previous strategies of resistance and resilience for its decentralizing and decolonial efforts, and the potential to move away from the Han-centrism deeply embedded with Chineseness.

**Fangyuan Liu** (she/her) is a PhD candidate in the School of Communication at Hong Kong Baptist University and a recipient of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme. Her research is interdisciplinary, spanning identity politics, nationalism and transnationalism, Chinese journalism and international communication. Her doctoral thesis examines identity contestations among post-pandemic Chinese transnational migrants. Her work has appeared in *Journalism*. For more information, please visit <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4017-1547>.

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