

Mobilities of Labour and Capital in Asia

The mobilities of capital and labour in the global economy are intricately and persistently linked, but they have hitherto mostly been analysed as separate processes. On the one hand, research on capital mobility has largely asked questions that are internal to the logics and motivations of firms, investors, and other movers of capital. On the other hand, studies of labour migration have generally not been concerned with the structures of capital accumulation and mobility that drive most labour processes. This book attempts to bring both types of mobility into the same analytical frame by arguing that the relationship between the two is best conceived as both an interdependency and a tension. In the context of Asia, the chapters examine when and how capital mobility can be generative of labour migration, but also how it can be disruptive of human mobility when the logic of accumulation demands it. Similarly, labour mobility and migration can be a generative precursor to capital flows, but they can also represent a form of disruptive resistance to mobile capital. Asia's growing importance in the global economy as a contributor to major flows of capital, the venue for significant migration corridors, and a context with diverse institutional actors make it a compelling region in which to explore the interconnections between labour and capital mobilities. Drawing on contextualized studies based in China, India, Japan, Nepal, the Philippines, and mainland South East Asia, the chapters in this book collectively make the case that capital and labour mobilities need to be viewed as systemically connected and mutually constitutive processes.

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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-48232-5 — Mobilities of Labour and Capital in Asia
Edited by Preet S. Aulakh, Philip F. Kelly
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi–110025, India
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108482325

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First published 2020

Printed in India

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Aulakh, Preet S., 1962- editor. | Kelly, Philip F., 1970- editor.

Title: Mobilities of labour and capital / [edited by] Preet S. Aulakh and Philip F. Kelly.

Description: Cambridge; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2020. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019020554 | ISBN 9781108482325 (hardback)

Subjects: LCSH: Labor mobility--Asia. | Capital movements--Asia. | Globalization--Economic aspects--Asia. | International economic relations.

Classification: LCC HD5717.5.A78 M63 2019 | DDC 331.12/7095--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2019020554>

ISBN 978-1-108-48232-5 Hardback

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Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	vii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>List of Appendices</i>	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xi
1. Introduction: Conceptualizing Labour and Capital Mobilities In and Out of Asia	1
PREET S. AULAKH AND PHILIP F. KELLY	
SECTION I From Capital to Labour Mobility	
2. Offshore Spaces: Multi-scalar Bordering Processes and the Segmented Mobilities of Capital and Labour in Asia	31
JANA M. KLEIBERT	
3. Japanese Multinational Companies and the Control of Overseas Investments: Expatriates, Foreign Employees, and Japan's Soft Power	48
HARALD CONRAD AND HENDRIK MEYER-OHLE	
4. Accumulation at the Margins? Mineral Brokerage and Chinese Investments in Philippine Mining	72
ALVIN A. CAMBA	
5. Soft Power and Transnationalism Affecting Capital and Labour Mobility: Chinese Diaspora in Mexico and Peru	98
FRANCISCO J. VALDERREY, MIGUEL A. MONTOYA, AND MAURICIO CERVANTES	
6. The Spatial Decoupling and Recombination of Capital and Labour: Understanding the New Flows across the China–South East Asia Borderlands	120
XIANGMING CHEN, NA FU, SAM ZHOU, AND GAVIN XU	

vi *Contents*

SECTION II From Labour to Capital Mobility

7. Skills Development Initiatives and Labour Migration in a Secondary Circuit of Globalized Production: Evidence from the Garment Industry in India	153
ASHA KUZHIPARAMBIL	
8. The Counter Geographies of Globalization: Women's Labour Migration along the Nepal–Persian Gulf Migratory Corridor	172
HARI KC	
9. Migration and Developmental Capital in a Punjab Village	194
ROSY HASTIR	
10. The Production of Nurses for Global Markets: Tracing Capital and Labour Circulation In and Out of Asia	211
MARGARET WALTON-ROBERTS	
11. The Mobility–Oligopoly Nexus in Philippine Property Development	233
KENNETH CARDENAS	
<i>Notes on Contributors</i>	262
<i>Index</i>	266

Figures

1.1	Inward foreign direct investments	5
1.2	Outward foreign direct investments	6
1.3	Migrant remittances inflows	7
1.4	Migrant remittances outflows	7
3.1	Reasons of foreign students and foreign employees enrolling in a Japanese university	58
3.2	Reasons of foreign students studying in Japan seeking employment with Japanese companies in Japan	59
4.1	Zambales in the Philippines	81
4.2	Grinder in artisanal small-scale mining site	93
6.1	China's trade with five Greater Mekong Subregion countries in South East Asia, 1990–2015	126
6.2	The movement of capital and labour from China to South East Asia	127
6.3	The cross-border China–Myanmar oil and gas pipelines, from Kyaukpyu to Kunming and beyond	129
6.4	The planned route of the cross-border China–Laos Railway	131
6.5	A China–Cambodia-based global shoe production and distribution system	141
6.6	The scale and type of a Chinese shoe company's two factories in Cambodia and China	143
7.1	District-wise registered garment manufacturer/merchant exporters	156
7.2	Education of SEAM trainees	163
7.3	SEAM training centres across India	164
7.4	District-wise enrolment of the SEAM trainees across India	165
7.5	District-wise job placement of SEAM trainees	167
8.1	Top destination countries for women migrant workers, 2008/09–2016/17	176
8.2	Share of total labour migrants by sex, 2008/09–2016/17	178
8.3	Remittance as share of GDP, 1993–2018	182
9.1	A hoarding of Village Kharoudi Lifestyle Improvement Project	200
9.2	Indicates the number of donations given by Kharoudi NRIs for the infrastructural development of the village	202

viii *Figures*

9.3	A poster of Village Life Improvement Program	203
9.4	Primary school with computer facilities, village Kharoudi, October 2011	204
11.1	The decline of cash-crop agriculture as a basis of accumulation, 1970–2015	236
11.2	The stagnation of domestic Philippine industry, 1970–2015	237

Tables

1.1	Generative and Disruptive Interdependencies between Capital and Labour Mobility	17
3.1	Location and Number of Persons Taking the Japanese Language Proficiency Test	61
4.1	Chinese Investments in the Philippine Mining Sector, 2010–2016	79
4.2	Chinese FDI in the Philippine Investment Promotion Agencies, 2003–2015	82
5.1	China Bilateral Trade with Mexico and Peru, 2016	112
5.2	A New Governance for Chinese Mining Enterprises in Peru	113
8.1	Restrictive Policies Enforced by the Government of Nepal on Women Migrant Workers	186

Appendices

3.1	Details of Interviewed Companies	67
3.2	Details of Interviewed Young Foreign Employees	68
11.1	The Largest Philippine-Nationality Conglomerates	254

Acknowledgements

The work of a number of people went into the preparation of this book. Each of the papers was originally presented at a workshop—Asian Connections: Linking Mobilities of Capital and Labour in Theory and Practice—which took place at the York Centre for Asian Research (YCAR), York University, on 12–13 May 2017. A joint initiative of YCAR and the Schulich School of Business, the purpose of the workshop was to bring together scholars working in diverse theoretical frameworks, disciplinary traditions, methodologies, historical periods, and geographical contexts to engage in discussions that would reunite the study of corporate and migrant transnationalism in Asia. Based on the response to a global call for papers, 12 were selected for presentation at the workshop, of which 10 papers appear in this volume, along with the editors' introduction.

Over the course of the two-day workshop, the authors read and commented on all the papers. In addition, a number of other scholars volunteered to participate in the workshop and led the discussions. We are particularly thankful to Derek Hall from Wilfrid Laurier University, who was instrumental in laying out some possible frameworks in the opening panel. His comments and the subsequent engagement with the individual papers were extremely useful in seeing interconnections between scholars from diverse disciplinary backgrounds. We also wish to thank Shubhabrata Basu, Geraldina Polanco, and Nguyen Tran Lam for their participation in the discussions.

The workshop would not have been possible without the excellent skills of Alicia Filipowich at YCAR. We thank her for facilitating the travel arrangements of the participants, the logistics of the workshop, and taking care of the budget. We also would like to acknowledge the diligent note-taking of Cindy Maharaj, which was immensely useful as the participants incorporated comments and discussion from the workshop in their revised papers. All the chapters in the volume subsequently went through multiple revisions, and we wish to thank the authors for their openness in incorporating our suggestions and for their timely revisions. Thanks also to Neil Coe (National University of Singapore) for comments on the introductory chapter.

Finally, we wish to thank our Commissioning Editor, Anwesha Rana, at Cambridge University Press for her enthusiastic response to our initial proposal, her efficient management of the review process, and in helping us manage the deadlines at various stages.