CONCLUSION

Empirical Insights, Policy Implications, and COVID-19 Influences

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This volume showcases the effectiveness of an ethnographic approach in capturing the tangled nature of mobilities in diverse contexts. In this concluding chapter, we highlight the insights from the case studies in our volume to outline some future research directions on tangled mobilities. We also discuss the policy implications of the volume's empirical insights. Although our case studies were conducted before the global outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus disease discovered in 2019), we offer some reflections on the impact of this pandemic on tangled mobilities.

Empirical Insights from Asian Migratory Movements

Mobility as an Emotional Journey

The international workshop that eventually set off the process of putting together the present edited volume was entitled "Intimacy, sexuality and family in the process of migration: European/Asian experiences compared." In organizing this event in 2018, and embarking afterwards on the publication of our volume, we understand that intimate relationships, both their

presence and absence, have potent emotional consequences that drive people's mobility decisions.

The chapters in this volume collectively demonstrate that the emotions of intimate partners and family members are entangled, exercising influences on one another's migration decisions. Emotions, developed through the practical experiences in the mobility process and physical environments of the places, can also be a powerful driving force for migration or settlement decisions. Highly educated migrants' mobility decisions often boil down to the choice of places (Liu-Farrer, this volume). The uneven mobilities cause migrants to have different emotional responses toward the places they move to; however, negative emotions about that place or, in particular, their life in that place, compel individuals to move despite instrumental rationality. In the case of mixed marriages and transnational families, the exchanges of money, objects, information or services from the kin construct the affective circuits (Cole and Groes 2016) across borders, perpetuating mobilities by sustaining material and emotional bonds. The Japanese-Filipino adult children returning to Japan feel obligated to repay the emotional debts of their kin caregivers in the Philippines (Celero, this volume). A son of a Japanese mother and a Pakistani father who grew up in Karachi forsook his education opportunity to study in the UK and enrolled into a Japanese university instead to allow his mother and sister to move back to Japan. He did so partly because he felt indebted to his mother, who had raised him alone in his father's natal home in Pakistan, and because of his sympathy toward his mother's and sister's suffering in a social environment where women's freedom is severely restricted (Kudo, this volume).

It is evident that emotions are simultaneously the causes and consequences of mobilities. Emotions reveal affects—that is, the "intensity" and "duration" (Massumi 1995) of the impact of im/mobilities on the lives of migrants and/or their family members. The emotional and affective aspects of tangled mobilities appear therefore indispensable in the study of transnational migration. To easily grasp them, emotions/affects-focused data gathering and analytical methodologies should be encouraged and further developed alongside an ethnographic approach and thematic analysis, as the contributors in this volume have adopted.

Uneven Mobilities in Multiple Social Fields

Our volume unveils that mobilities in all their forms (spatial, legal, social, economic, educational, intimate, and sexual) are uneven across multiple social fields, as all have different directions, degrees and speeds. These uneven mobilities go beyond a dichotomy of movement and stasis.

Migration policies can explain uneven mobilities and their tanglement. Some individuals have the facility to move from one country to another due to their (former) legal unions with citizens inside their destination country (Celero, Fresnoza-Flot, Kudo, and Seiger, this volume) and/or due to their socioeconomic resources and cultural capital (Farrer, Kawashima, Liu-Farrer, and Tran, this volume). Others rely on their socioeconomic resources and social networks to make the transnational movement of their material possessions possible (Marilla, this volume).

Uneven mobilities can also be interpreted as resulting from the incompatible logics for (upward) social class mobility in distinct fields, as well as the values and significance of the various forms of "capital" (Bourdieu 1997) present in these fields. While such unevenness exists for all people, regardless of their migratory status, international migration intensifies and even distorts it. International migrants, by crossing national borders, also traverse sociocultural borders. They find themselves differently positioned in each context (Kawashima, this volume), and confronted with unfamiliar sets of logic for social class mobility. Consequently, in the migratory trajectory, migrants often experience trade-offs between mobilities.

This trade-off is manifested in Japanese senior salarymen's migration into a northeastern Chinese city where their previous professional experience of Japanese corporations allows them to recuperate the social status that they had been deprived of in their natal country, but at the same time depresses their economic earnings (Kawashima, this volume). Similarly, the middle-class Filipino women's desire for respectability—a form of social status in the Philippines—motivates them to become marriage migrants in Europe, only to then experience occupational downward mobility and be stuck on the lower rungs of the social ladder—and even have spatial immobility—in the destination countries (Fresnoza-Flot, this volume). Trade-offs also take place between economic gain, social recognition, and sexual opportunity (Farrer and Tran, this volume). In such instances, not only do countries have their distinct social and sexual fields, and migrants occupy different positions in these fields, but also countries undergo the complex evolution of their multiple fields and thereby the valuation of various forms of capital. We witness this process in the case of Japanese-Pakistani couples: the migrant men gain legal status and economic independence, which often means that their Japanese spouses experience decreased power in the family (Kudo, this volume). This takes place alongside these women's devaluated cultural capital and downward social class mobility.

Hence, uneven mobilities not only occur in multiple fields but also in different social spheres, notably within the realm of the family. They have gender dimensions that need to be unpacked in the future studies of tangled

mobilities as part of the engendering of transnational migration scholarship (see Pessar and Mahler 2003).

Temporality of Tangled Mobilities

Resonating with migration studies' increasing attention to the impact of life stages on migratory trajectories and outcomes, several studies in this volume show that different forms of mobilities have varied significance at each stage of one's life course, and that distinct priorities motivate migration or settlement accordingly.

While children of Filipino-Japanese couples migrate to the Philippines as receivers of care, they migrate back to Japan when they reach adulthood to be the caregivers for the extended families in the Philippines (Celero, this volume). While education, career, and economic gain might drive people to seek opportunities overseas while younger, sexual desire and a longing for marriage and family make them either return to their home country or drive them to search for a new place (Liu-Farrer and Tran, this volume). Similarly, unmarried middle-class Filipino women moved downward in terms of occupational or class hierarchy to marry men of lower socioeconomic standing in Belgium or the Netherlands to fulfill their religion-inflected normative gender expectations in their natal country. When their marriage ended in divorce, they pursued social class and spatial mobilities in the destination countries in order to regain respectability (Fresnoza-Flot, this volume).

Moreover, the migration project continues over generations, as revealed in several chapters in this volume. The legal and institutional constraints that have produced irregular migrants among the mothers continue to perpetuate the precarious migratory circumstances for the children (Madhavi, this volume). The shifting power positions in the marriage and the cultural negotiations taking place in Japanese-Pakistani households sometimes drive the children to continue the transnational mobility, either to conform to the cultural expectation of the father or to rescue the mother out of a powerless social position (Kudo, this volume). The Japanese-Filipino families also see the intergenerational continuity of the migration project: while the mother may have first migrated to Japan as an entertainer, and given birth to children fathered by a Japanese man, the children can later use the newly revised nationality law to claim citizenship and residency in Japan, thereby allowing the mother to re-enter Japan as a labor migrant (Seiger, this volume). Finally, the mobility of objects, both spatially and temporally, serves the purpose of enforcing the cultural identity and individual biography of the migrants themselves, as well as intergenerationally (Marilla, this volume).

In brief, the entanglement of individual trajectories across generations seems to characterize mobilities. This temporal dimension should be further examined to uncover at what point of an individual's life course two or more forms of mobility bifurcate, conflate, and tangle, as well as how these processes take place and shape family dynamics in a migration setting.

Policy Implications: Rethinking Suspension and Compartmentalization

The current migration policies, especially those in Asian countries, are driven primarily by the concerns about labor and marriage market demands. Migrants are primarily considered as either productive workers (with skills of varying desirability in different sectors of the economy) or reproductive laborers (with character traits suitable for marriage partners). These migration policies essentially demand the potential migrants to enter a state of "suspension" upon immigration—a condition in which migrants pause their routines and detach themselves from other human concerns and social attachments to focus on accomplishing a particular goal, be it economic accumulation, career building, or home making (Xiang 2021). In our volume, we witness how migration policies affect migrants' lives in the destination country, and make their residence contingent upon their employment or marital situation.

The policy that demands or imposes "suspension" is obviously unaware of the actual process of migration and the affective consequences of tangled mobilities. The empirical studies in this volume emphatically argue that migrants have complex desires and aspirations (for example, see Kawashima, Farrer, and Tran, this volume), and they are embedded in transnational households, kinship networks, and social relations. Migrants are not individual actors free of social contexts, and therefore it is impossible to "suspend" their complex needs and wants to extract their economic labor for long, or even at all. In particular, several chapters in this volume point out the centrality of sexual intimacy in a migrant's mobility decision, and how migrants might change their migratory trajectories to seek assurance of their sexual desirability or in pursuit of romantic relationships (Farrer and Tran, this volume). This reality has not been factored into government policymaking. Consequently, states are confronted with unexpected outcomes of their migration policies: either the inability to attract and retain workers that they desire, or the long-term stay of workers—in many cases without legal residency and in precarity (Mahdavi, this volume)—that they originally hoped to only use and dispose of, or even those that they try to get rid of.

Some labor migration policies make family reunification impossible, and force migrants to leave when they lose their employment. However, some migrants stay, look for other jobs, and sometimes start a new (single-parent or not) family in the receiving country (Mahdavi, this volume).

The increasingly diverse patterns of cross-border migration also challenge social institutions, notably marriage and divorce. In spite or because of their (former) mixed marriages, Filipino and Japanese women were able to migrate, create a family, and/or engage in productive labor (Celero, Kudo, and Seiger, this volume). The dissolution of a marriage might mean that the migrant spouse is not able to continue to stay, specifically if the years of marriage do not reach the receiving state's required duration for the migrant to apply for citizenship acquisition of their new country. It could also mean failing to obtain the custody of their children, losing their home, and having an unstable financial condition, any of which would put the woman in an economically challenging situation (Fresnoza-Flot, this volume).

In addition, our volume highlights the entanglement of mobilities among family members across generations, as well as the involvement of different actors interested in moving people across borders, which make policy attempts to restrict, select, or compartmentalize migration myopic, if not outright impractical. Families in economically developing countries often see emigration as an effective means to gain social mobility in economic terms, and so are willing to strategize around migration policies to achieve spatial mobility. In addition, a range of intermediary actors, such as labor recruiters, migration agencies, and non-profit organizations (NPOs), enter the migration industry to facilitate cross-border human mobilities. The Filipino-Japanese children's journey demonstrates this phenomenon: a revised nationality law has allowed diverse actors with different objectives and interests to participate in the migratory process of these children, who are seeking their Japanese fathers and Filipino mothers as guardians but aiming to engage in the labor market (see Seiger and Celero, this volume).

Migrants and material objects are tangled too, as state policies affect their spatial mobility. The emotional impact on migrants of separation of these two entities suggests that the spatial mobility of objects is equally important as that of human beings (Marilla, this volume). Hence, states should go beyond their anthropocentric policies on transnational mobility by becoming considerate of the impact of their policies on other non-human entities and the environment in which spatial im/mobility takes place.

Hence, our volume yet again highlights the importance of dialogues between policymakers and researchers. Bridging the gap between state migration policies and the reality of migrants' lives—in other words, between

law in books and law in action—is an urgent necessity, particularly at the present time of a global COVID-19 pandemic.

Tangled Mobilities in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since the first quarter of 2020, nation-states worldwide have implemented restrictive controls of their national borders to prevent the propagation of COVID-19 infections within their respective territories. These restrictions have slowed human geographical movements, with about "two million fewer international migrants" (IOM 2021: 1). This situation suggests that the pandemic and the border controls it triggered may have also affected different social spheres, other forms of mobility, and the entanglement of stasis with mobility.

Several studies have shown an important increase of gender inequality during lockdown periods in many countries, with women receiving the strongest blow in terms of reduced labor market participation and heightened reproductive role at home (see, for example, Inno, Rotundi, and Piccialli 2020; Landivar et al. 2020). In the context of migration, migrant women who are breadwinners to their stay-behind families and who work as carers for the elderly in their receiving countries chose to keep their employment, despite being locked up in their client's home, performing "heavy tasks without any external support ... no time off, permanent availability, isolation, no social contact" and "no access to basic services" (Giordano 2021: 146). Other migrant workers lost employment, returned to their countries of origin, or remained in their receiving countries without a possibility to go back home (Suhardiman et al. 2021). These situations affect migrants' capacity to financially support their stay-behind families. The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced "regimes of immobility" (Glick Schiller and Salazar 2013) everywhere, amplifying consequently not only socioeconomic difficulties among migrants but also family precariousness, characterized by an inability to fulfill the (re)productive role from afar. Hence, the private and public spheres, as well as the productive and reproductive realms, appear more tangled than ever during the global pandemic. How do migrants and their family members undergo this entanglement? As many of them become immobile in spatial and social class terms, how do they experience stasis or suspension? To what extent does this stasis modify or invigorate their emotional attachment to specific places and social spaces?

Pandemic-related border controls also affect other forms of mobility. On the one hand, they disentangle linked mobilities: for example, legal and economic mobilities incurred through migration pre-pandemic do not anymore facilitate other spatial movements or intimate mobility. As states

increasingly emphasize borders at regional, national, and city levels, they make these borders intricately entangled with one another, rendering spatial mobility more challenging for individuals and families. On the other hand, states' restrictions on the spatial movements of people intensify two specific mobility forms: virtual and material. As geographical mobility became almost impossible during lockdowns, individuals and families relied heavily on digital technologies to maintain contacts and support one another. Virtual mobility became a norm for migrant workers, as did material mobility—that is, the flows of material objects across borders. Many of these objects perhaps served as "proxy" (Baldassar 2008) to migrants whose physical absence from home became more uncertain than before the pandemic. The breadth of virtual and material mobilities in which migrants started to engage at the advent of the pandemic suggests that they are not individual footloose people but rather are connected to different networks and institutional contexts. This embeddedness of migrants in networks and contexts needs to be examined, most notably the question of how it complicates or facilitates their lives in times of global crisis.

Finally, the abrupt interruption to the global movements of people in the early 2020s due to the pandemic and the consequent border controls highlights the inseparability of mobility and stasis. It is stasis that makes mobility stand out, be socially valued, and be longed for. In other words, it is through stasis that one understands the importance of mobility, and vice versa. In the present times, the salience of stasis necessitates scholarly investigations to find out if stasis, like mobility, presents several forms, and if so, how they are related to those of mobility.

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