**Urban Studies**

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**1. Title: Making cities through migration industries: Introduction to the special issue**

**Authors: Nir Cohen, Tatiana Fogelman, Henrik Lebuhn**

**Abstract:** Migration industry has recently emerged as a lens through which to theorise the intertwinement of non-state actors who aim to provide diverse migration-pertaining services. However, while much of their work is done in and through cities, consequently (re)forming variegated urban landscapes, scholarly literature has thus far neglected the nexus between cities and the migration industry. In this special issue, we begin filling this gap by exploring the significance of migration industries – as a resurgent concept and an area of research from migration studies – for understanding the urban. We start by reviewing the urbanisation of migration studies, highlighting its key limits. We then move on to introduce the migration industries debate, pointing out its existing implicit urban dimensions. We proceed by elaborating our main argument about why and how migration industries provide an especially productive lens for urbanists to consider. Specifically, we stress the three key analytical vantage points that the attention to migration industries enables us to see as central to contemporary city-making. These are its political-economic embeddedness, the urban-constitutive nature of trans-local connectivities, and how business-driven city-making dovetails with more serendipitous, bottom-up shaping of the arrival city. Each of these points also describes how individual papers speak to them. We conclude by briefly outlining a research agenda for migration industries that is thoughtfully embroiled in the (post-)pandemic urban.

**2. Title: ‘Unpleasant’ but ‘helpful’: Immigration detention and urban entanglements in New Jersey, USA**

**Authors: Deirdre Conlon, Nancy Hiemstra**

**Abstract:** As a reflection of changing geographies of US migration control, when Essex County, New Jersey’s local government adopted a new immigration detention contract with the federal government, an elected official noted: ‘This is a very unpleasant way of getting revenue…But it’s going to be helpful.’ Despite politically liberal leanings as well as active and expanding resistance to a persistently conservative immigration enforcement agenda from the national level, New Jersey has been a leading provider of detention in the United States, with numerous counties benefiting significantly from immigration crackdowns. This article examines local debates in three New Jersey municipalities alongside public records data that detail financial relationships central to immigration detention operations, to argue that the ensuing relationships intersect and intertwine in ways that make detention economies a critical facet of municipal development. Further, following a 2021 paper by Lauren Martin, we argue that attention to the array of entities that are linked through detention economies demonstrates the usefulness of understanding the migration ‘industry’ as an assemblage. Using a site-specific investigative focus we trace myriad entities’ involvement in immigration detention and reliance on income from Immigration and Customs Enforcement. We detail how these multifarious actors, sometimes with opposing views on detention and distinct rationalities, converge in ways that contribute to the further entrenchment of detention in municipal areas. Through this focused case study, our analysis advances a critical migration industries approach and details how detention economies are ‘assembled’ and entangled with urban areas.

**3.** **Title: The interurban migration industry: ‘Migration products’ and the materialisation of urban speculation at Iskandar Malaysia**

**Authors: Sin Yee Koh**

**Abstract:** Iskandar Malaysia (IM) is a 4749 km2 urban conurbation and development region located at the Malaysia–Singapore border. State-led development of this regional economic corridor has attracted inflows of foreign investments and spurred the rise of mid- to high-end urban developments by foreign developers. This has resulted in the emergence of an interurban migration industry consisting of intermediary entities that are co-developing and co-marketing ‘migration products’ (real estate, education and lifestyle migration) as an integrated package to middle-class, aspiring transnational investor/lifestyle migrants from the region. This article argues that this middlemen industry is crucial to the materialisation of urban speculation, for state actors and investor/lifestyle migrants alike. Through interurban alliances that capitalise on the broader state-led speculative urbanism landscape, the industry co-creates an imagined urban future that is grounded in transnational lifestyle mobilities. This article highlights the need to analyse speculative urbanism and transnational investment/lifestyle migration as intertwined processes.

**4. Title: Internal migration industries: Shaping the housing options for refugees at the local level**

**Authors: Matthias Bernt, Ulrike Hamann, Nihad El-Kayed, Leoni Keskinkilic**

**Abstract:** In this article, we focus on ways in which ‘internal migration industries’ shape the housing location of refugees in cities. Based on empirical studies in Halle, Schwerin, Berlin, Stuttgart and Dresden, we bring two issues together. First, we show how a specific financialised accumulation model of renting out privatised public housing stock to disadvantaged parts of the population has emerged that increasingly targets migrant tenants. With the growing immigration of refugees to Germany since 2015, this model has intensified. Second, we discuss how access to housing is formed by informal agents. While housing is almost inaccessible for households on social welfare, the situation is even worse for refugees. This situation has given rise to a new ‘shadow economy’ for housing that offers services with dubious quality for excessive fees. Bringing these two issues together, we argue that housing provision to refugees has become a new business opportunity. This has given rise to a broad variety of ‘internal migration industries’ that provide the housing infrastructure, but also control access to housing. This not only results in new opportunities for profit extraction, but actively shapes new patterns of segregation and the concentration of refugees in particular types of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

**5. Title: From global city makers to global city-shapers: Migration industries in the global city networks**

**Authors: Sakura Yamamura**

**Abstract:** Recently, increasing migrant-led diversity of urban spaces can be expected to be especially observed in global cities, where global flows of capital, goods and people are concentrated. Although this connection between the global phenomenon of transnational migration and the local socio-spatial impacts on the cities appears evident, empirical research on the ‘relationship of migrants and cities’ remains underexplored. Discussions on global city makers have focused primarily on global economic actors, and have paid little attention to actors involved in shaping these global cities locally. This paper sheds new light on the role of migration industries in shaping global cities on the local level, being based empirically on qualitative interviews with transnational migrants and service providers in Tokyo. It discusses how the novel constellation of service firms for the transnational migration from above and below, that is, corporate migration industry in contrast to the conventional migration industry of labour migration, not only contributes to the global flow of transnational migrations into specific cities, but also draws them into specific socio-spatial patterns within the local urban space. By bringing these different types of migration industries conceptually together, it illustrates how socio-spatial diversification processes within global cities are embedded in the global economy (global city makers) but also locally directed by intermediary actors of migration industries (global city shapers). Embedding migration industries into the global cities perspective, it bridges the gap on urban transformation from the global to the local.

**6. Title: Urban ethnic enclaves and migration industries: The urban choices of mobile people**

**Authors: Hila Zaban**

**Abstract:** When migrants come in large numbers, they tend to segregate in enclaves where they lead a familiar lifestyle alongside people who can provide a support system. But how do these enclaves come about? This paper engages with migration industries literature, saying that it is ‘the labour involved in managing, facilitating and controlling migration’ that makes it an industry. Relying on the case of privileged Jewish migration to Israel, I argue that while the state remains central in facilitating and controlling migration, migration industries and migrants’ social networks dictate in which urban areas privileged migrants settle, creating unequal urban geographies. To illustrate this, I rely on qualitative data gathered in two research projects I completed in Israel over the past decade, in various Israeli cities relating to migrants and second-home owners from Western countries. I look at how and why people decide where to settle upon migrating and the role of various migration industries actors in their choices. I argue that what seems like individual decision-making is in fact a ‘structured agency’, repeating patterns of the imagined urban geographies produced by agents of migration and various urban stakeholders. The result is unequal patterns of location and consumption, where privileged migrants locate in urban enclaves, distancing themselves from other groups and causing gentrification.

**7. Title: Recruiting international students: Analysing the imaginative geographies of three urban encounters**

**Authors: Suzanne E. Beech**

**Abstract:** International students are a critical source of income for UK universities, and yet reports indicate that their numbers have been in decline since academic year 2010–2011. Consequently, UK universities need to work harder to attract international students than ever before. This paper uses qualitative interviews with international office staff based at UK higher education institutions together with observational research at recruitment events which took place in Hong Kong in 2017 to demonstrate how the urban has a critical role to play in the international student migration industry. The paper showcases three urban encounters in the recruitment process: the higher education recruitment fair; the connections universities draw between themselves and other urban locations; and by considering how predeparture events mobilise the urban landscape to communicate dynamic learning experiences. The retelling and analysis of these encounters demonstrate how universities, and the UK, create, foster and embed the geographical imaginary in their recruitment processes in order to entice and encourage brand loyalty from prospective students.

**8. Title: Moving nurses to cities: On how migration industries feed into glocal urban assemblages in the care sector**

**Authors: Felicitas Hillmann, Margaret Walton-Roberts, Brenda S.A. Yeoh**

**Abstract:** Migration industries include a diverse array of migration-related services provided by the state, commercial agents, humanitarian organisations and migrant social networks. The work performed by this array of providers, both non-state and state actors, includes facilitating, filtering/channelling and constraining migration. As a powerful example of how migration industries work in general, we examine their dynamics in the care sector as part of glocal (care) chains involved in the migration of nurses. The article provides a conceptualisation of the role of the ‘migration industry’ as part of a changing global business in the field of care work. We direct our attention to the drivers and institutions that facilitate and shape the arrangements of international care mobility and the constitution of glocal urban assemblages. Drawing on three models of nurse migration – bus stop (Philippines–Singapore), two-step (India–Canada) and triple-win (Vietnam–Germany) – we show how the socio-spatial configurations of glocal urban assemblages linked to the three models yield different social integration outcomes for migrant nurses.

**9. Title: Making ways for ‘better education’: Placing the Shenzhen-Hong Kong mobility industry**

**Authors: Maggi WH Leung, Johanna L Waters**

**Abstract:** Tens of thousands of children living on Mainland China cross the border between Shenzhen and Hong Kong for a ‘better education’ every day. A well-oiled industry is in place to manage, facilitate and control this education mobility field. It involves schools, diverse businesses and non-governmental organisations that, in articulation with the Chinese and Hong Kong states, stimulate and regulate the movement of people, materialities, ideas and practices. Drawing on our fieldwork and media analysis, this paper unpacks the transurban mobility industry to illustrate the role of the various players and how they work in conjunction to facilitate cross-border schooling, especially among the very young children. We map out and visualise with photos the workings of the schools, buses, escorts, tutoring centres, day care and boarding houses. We show how the mobility industry, intersecting with other business networks and mobility systems, links Shenzhen and Hong Kong, taking and making places in these cities, especially in the border region. Our paper illustrates the role of this mobility industry in the making of the political-economy and socio-culture of the border area, which constantly connects, divides and redefines the two cities and regions it bridges. We end with some reflections on the implications of the recent political challenges and COVID-19 pandemic on this cross-border education mobility system.

**10. Title: An enclave entrepôt: The informal migration industry and Johannesburg’s socio-spatial transformation**

**Authors: Tanya Zack, Loren B Landau**

**Abstract:** The spatial concentration of production in cities attracts international and domestic labour in ways that change the character and scale of urban space. Drawing on two decades of research on migration and informal trading in Johannesburg, South Africa, this article argues that the global trade in Chinese ‘fast fashion’ interacts with South Africa’s immigration policy, transportation networks, informal trade and established migration infrastructures to transform the city’s Park Station neighbourhood into an enclave entrepôt. Operated and supported by a network of informal logistics services that keep the enclave within but apart from the city, it is exquisitely tailored to cross-border shoppers. At the social and legal margins but at the city’s geographic core, it enables fluidity in an otherwise hostile space; it is at once highly visible and invisibilising. Formed in the shadows of formal institutions and law enforcement, this entrepôt is migrant-driven and serves the needs of people often seeking to remain invisible from the South African state and citizenry. As such, its services are adapted from the infrastructures that service legal and irregular migration in the subcontinent. Unlike ethnic enclaves or neighbourhoods that work as arrival zones, it provides the means to move ‘through’ rather than ‘into’ the city. The entrepôt is a form of migrant space-claiming by vulnerable and mobile people wishing to be in but not of the city. It acts as portal into, through and beyond national territory.

**11. Title: Resonance beyond regimes: Migrant’s alternative infrastructuring practices in Athens**

**Authors: Mirjam Wajsberg, Joris Schapendonk**

**Abstract:** In migration studies, there is an increasing interest in understanding how migration processes are shaped by different forms of brokerage and mediation. We relate these debates to the everyday struggles of migrants in the city of Athens. In so doing, we propose a shift from the all-encompassing view on infrastructures, that is, as systematic entities of facilitation/control to the infrastructuring practices of migrants. This implies a focus on how migrants create dynamic social platforms, and how these platforms relate to formal infrastructures and industries. We analyse these infrastructuring practices through a conceptual lens of resonance that is sensitive to the constitutive (how things, people and processes are brought together) as well as travelling capacities of these practices (how the platforms shift to other places). With an ethnographic approach, we create in-depth insights into the ways in which migrants mediate im/mobility in the urban environment of Athens through infrastructuring practices. The paper concludes by reflecting on the promises and limitations of the infrastructuring practices as sites of solidarity. We thereby argue that there are many links to make within the mobile commons debate. At the same time, our findings highlight that the transformative potential of infrastructuring practices does not always go along with a clear claim on solidarity.

**12. Title: Welcoming the unwelcome: Migration industries and border control for homeless job-seeking migrants in central Copenhagen**

**Authors: Kristine Juul**

**Abstract:** As modes of border control increasingly shift to cities, private charities that engage in caring for non-national homeless migrants risk, unintentionally and unwillingly, serving the so-called ‘migration industries’ as front agencies for the European border regime. Since the 2008 financial crisis, which hit migrant populations in southern Europe particularly hard, the number of homeless migrants sleeping rough in northern European cities has increased. In Copenhagen, these new homeless include jobless West African men who reside in Spain or Italy but are transiently in the city to reboot their lives by collecting empty deposit-carrying bottles left on the streets. Political will to address this rising social problem at state and city levels has so far been limited, leaving the private non-profit charities of central Copenhagen as sole providers of care for homeless migrants. This article examines how these long-established institutions, which used to provide care primarily to locals with substance dependencies or mental health problems, have transformed into migrant industries shaped by the logic of the European border regime. For this purpose, prior research on urban borderlands and homeless migrants is reviewed, and documents issued by non-profit charities operating in the field of urban homelessness are analysed. The article focuses on the increasingly hostile elements of state and municipal policies on non-Western migrants, which work to divide ‘our’ homeless from the migrant ‘others’. It also considers the various ways in which charities work to enable different survival strategies to emerge and be maintained among migrants without access to the formal labour market, and finally how charities’ transformed role affects their relationships with local residents.

**13. Title: Translating the nation through the sustainable, liveable city: The role of social media intermediaries in immigrant integration in Copenhagen**

**Authors: Tatiana Fogelman, Julia Christensen**

**Abstract:** This article explores settled Western migrants whose digital content provides recent, mostly Western migrants in Copenhagen with local know-how and city-related information. This new type of informal integration intermediary functions as an emerging digital component of wider urban integration industries that assist migrants with settlement and social integration. We draw on the sociological theory of translation as a social, productive practice that constructs new meanings through selective interpretations and conceptualise the work of these bloggers as translation. Relying on the analysis of their blog and Instagram posts, and on interviews, this article shows how their translations of the city, and through it Danishness, play a critical role in mediating narratives of ‘becoming local’. Despite the differences between the bloggers’ respective translations (including those afforded through blogs vs Instagram) and despite criticism of a lack of inclusion of the socio-cultural differences in Denmark, these intermediaries ultimately reinforce for newcomers the expectations of the ‘green-city citizen’ and integration into Danish culture and lifestyle. We argue that what makes their translations resonate is not only that social media itself allows them to perform their having become (almost) local, but also that they carefully use their personal reflections as migrants. At the same time, the fact that their personal experiences of the city have been shaped by their positionality as white migrants feeling very welcomed, and even passing for locals, in the city curtails these bloggers’ wider potential as informal intermediaries filling a gap within Copenhagen’s urban integration industries.