

## **Land, Remittance and Resistance: Social reproduction and politics across the Thailand- Myanmar labour migration corridor**

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### **Abstract**

This paper explores the intersection of remittance and social reproduction of migrant workers, and their socio-political reproduction in particular, in which land is treated not only as a productive resource, e.g., farmland, but also as territory and homeland. It is a broader perspective on the meaning of land in production and social reproduction. I locate my case study at Thailand-Myanmar labour migration corridor. In this paper, I argue that remittances from the Myanmar diaspora in Thailand play critical roles in shaping resistance within and beyond Myanmar. My exploration is embedded within the fourth political economy question regarding consumption and social reproduction, along Henry Bernstein's formulation. Secondly, I argue that migrant workers are not merely passive victims of exploitative systems, in contrast to many media and NGO's depictions. In fact, they use their political agency: resisting within the premises of their factory walls in Thailand, and beyond- actively organizing, fundraising, and supporting the social movements in their homeland. Myanmar migrant diaspora, engaging in farm and non-farm work, are generally poorly paid and badly treated at their multi-sited production and social reproduction spaces. They can survive these squeezes only because their family back home shoulder the burden of their social reproduction needs. Yet, it is baffling that they regularly send remittances for socio-political reproduction. I contend that this is partly an act of self-preservation by investing in a fight for a fairer political system that will protect their rights for socio-political reproduction and their territorial land. In conclusion, I question the static tendency in our notion of state, territory, and subjects, where, in reality, the boundaries are blurred by connectivity and the flow of people, money, and political participation, and at the heart of this is the challenge of rethinking the meaning and location of the politics of land.