Recent debates in migration studies have emphasized the importance of attending to the urban as part of an effort to respatialize the study of mobility and transnationalism. This re-emphasis on urban place has significant relevance for human geographers, with implications for conceptualizing spatial relations in ways that reach beyond the study of migration per se, raising important questions about what constitutes urban space and its relation to processes of mobility. Yet, these interventions have also been somewhat spatially bereft: they have foregone a detailed engagement with ideas of relationality and territoriality, have remained centered on forms of permanent settlement that are decreasing in relevance, and focused almost exclusively on urban centres in North America and Europe in a world of increasingly diverse migratory processes. Drawing on a range of research engagements over the last five years this presentation critically expands on these interventions through a focus on cities in the Asia-Pacific, an emphasis on temporary migrants, and a focus on the dynamic relationship between transnational mobilities and urban spatialities. The presentation incorporates theoretical development, research findings and documentary film to explore to two potential avenues for more sophisticated analysis of these issues: a more fluid and dynamic analysis of migrant settlement and an examination of the role of the transnational in daily urban mobilities. I use the presentation to chart some elements of my research trajectory over the last five years and point to some potential avenues for future research.

Enquiries: Luitgard Schwendenmann  l.schwendenmann@auckland.ac.nz  · ext 84301