## Contents

Preface vii  
Publisher's Acknowledgements ix  
List of Abbreviations xi  

Introduction: The Great Transformation in the Setting of Asia 1

### I The Agrarian Background

1. Labour and Landlessness in South and Southeast Asia 29  
2. The Political Economy of Agrarian Change 47

### II Leaving the Village Behind

3. Coming to Kolkata: Pathways to a Better Life or Lost in Dead-end Alleys? 75  
4. How to Find Space, Shop Around, and Move Up in the Informal Sector 98  
5. Slumlands 119

### III The Urban Economy and its Workforce

6. Industrial Labour in Post-colonial India: The Early Beginnings 131  

### IV The Exodus of Rural Labour

8. The Informal Sector of India's Economy 201  
9. Labour Migration from Rural to Urban China 234
V THE DYNAMICS OF EXCLUSION

10. Social Exclusion in the Context of Globalization 287
11. The Political Economy of Unfree Labour in South Asia: Determining the Nature and Magnitude of Debt Bondage 329
12. Myths of the Global Safety Net 361
13. The Eventual Return of Social Darwinism 369

Index 379