



INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION, UNEVEN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLARIZATION



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Abstract

This article explores four aspects of the underdeveloped conceptualization of the role of international migration in uneven regional development and polarization in cities. First, it emphasizes the way in which human mobility transfers not only human capital but also knowledge and material capital, and that these are interrelated. Second, it considers how changes in the nature of mobility have implications for uneven regional development. Third, it develops the concept of enfolded mobilities, as a way of understanding how individual migrations are directly enfolded with

those of other individuals, either through associated or contingent movements, or through consequential migration at later stages in the life course. Finally, it discusses how governance impinges on and mediates the key relationships between mobility and uneven regional development.

KEY WORDS ★ enfolded mobility ★ governance ★ human capital ★ knowledge ★ regions ★ uneven development ★ urban polarization

Introduction

Changes in international human mobility contribute in increasingly complex ways to shaping interconnections between local, regional and national economies. Migration both contributes to and is influenced by the porosity of borders. International mobility increases the potential for earnings, profits and other forms of wealth which have been accumulated in one region to be consumed, saved or invested in other regions – both in the short term, and over the life course (for example, via pensions as deferred income). Additionally, international mobility plays an increasing role in the transfer of skills and knowledge across borders, often via complex routes, involving circular, secondary or serial migration, as well as various forms of short-term mobility (King, 2002). Consequently, international migration is a significant component of interregional economic relationships, sometimes complementing and sometimes contradicting trade and foreign direct investment flows. However, international human

mobility is different to other ‘factor mobilities’ because of how it is socially and culturally constructed, and politically contested.

Much of the writing on uneven economic development fails to engage adequately with the changing complexities of international migration (Herod, 2001; Williams et al., 2004). Neo-classical theories have different strands. One strand, drawing on Solow’s (1956) pioneering work, recognized capital, labour and technology as the key determinants of growth, and envisaged territorial flows of capital and labour as responses to different returns across space. This approach was deepened by emphasizing the role of human capital in economic development (Becker, 1964). In terms of economic growth theorization, particular emphasis was placed on the relationship between the stock of human capital and the absorption of new technology, as well as the capacity to generate new technology (Armstrong and Taylor, 2000: Ch. 3). Another strand is represented by Lewis’s (1954) growth model which posits a two-sector economy (which can be extrapolated to be border spanning), with

accumulation in the capitalist sector being sustained over time by transfers of seemingly unlimited supplies of labour from a subsistence sector. Only when these labour supplies are exhausted do wages start to rise in the subsistence sector, leading to profits falling in the capitalist sector, and to a position where wages and profits are determined by marginal productivities in an integrated economy (Kirkpatrick and Barrientos, 2004).

Subsequent research has led to consideration of how cumulative causation mechanisms mediate the predictions of the earlier neo-classical models. Myrdal (1957) provides probably the best-known exposition of the cumulative causation argument, and specifically identifies the key role played by international migration. Kindleberger (1967), drawing on Lewis's ideas, argued that the transfer of surplus labour to Northern Europe from the Mediterranean countries was the key to rapid economic growth in Europe up to the mid-1960s.

The work of Myrdal and others emphasized the need to consider not only internal economies of scale, but also external economies. This has led to a number of attempts to identify the nature of external economies (for example, Krugman, 1991) which have paid varying attention to the role of (mobile) labour. These have progressively broadened out from the original neo-classical framework, focused particularly on technology. Castro and Jensen Butler (1999) capture this shift in their distinction between embodied (in technology) and disembodied knowledge. The latter emphasizes the role of institutions in shaping knowledge creation and transfer, a notion which has been explored in recent years in the literatures on learning regions and associational economies. Much of this literature has emphasized the role of knowledge transfers within regions, relatively neglecting the role of extra-regional learning and knowledge sources, until recently (for example, Bathelt et al., 2004). However, although the interfolding of distanciated and localized knowledge transfers and learning has been recognized in recent writings (Amin and Cohendet, 2004), the role of international migration in uneven regional economic development remains relatively undertheorized, especially compared to the national level.

The article makes a contribution to understanding the changing relationships between international migration and uneven regional

development and urban polarization. Its starting point is human capital research in migration studies, which provides a link with the evolution of research on regional economic growth, outlined above. However, the paper provides a more nuanced analysis of the complex relationships between migration and uneven development by exploring four main themes. First, the need to understand how international human migration is economically constituted as interwoven flows of labour, skills, material capital and knowledge. Second, how relative shifts to temporary and circular mobility reshape the role of migration in interregional economic relationships, producing new forms of polarization within and between regions. Third, individual migrations are embedded in 'enfolded mobilities' both in space and time: individual mobilities are enfolded together, and shaped by prior mobilities, with consequences for production and consumption, and the reproduction of economies. Fourth, these relationships are both shaped by and transformative of local, regional and national governance.

Human mobility: the interweaving of labour, knowledge and material capital

International migration is a vehicle for transfers not only of skills (human capital) but also of knowledge more broadly and capital (Williams et al., 2004). Researchers have mostly considered these separately, and only rarely in relation to uneven regional development. Such transfers are not simple linear transactions between places of origin and destination but, as with migration flows, need to be understood as diverse forms of mobility which may also be transnationalized.

Human capital theories, which have been particularly influential in migration studies, provide our starting point. This research largely focuses on individual skills and decision making. First, individual migration decisions are understood as investment decisions based on returns to human capital in different places. Potential lifetime economic returns are balanced against the known and unknown costs and risks associated with migration (Stark, 1991), calculated in both pecuniary and non-pecuniary forms. Second, the distribution of the migration/staying decision – that

is, who migrates to where, and who stays – is explained in relation to individuals' human capital (Borjas, 1987) and socio-economic characteristics. Third, migrants are identified as having an earnings function based on the time required to accrue nationally specific human capital, such as language skills or knowledge of localized social practices (Chiswick, 1978). Initially lacking such nationally specific capital, migrants' productivity and therefore their wages are assumed to be lower than those of indigenous workers with similar generic skills. As migrants acquire nationally specific human capital, their wages converge with those of equivalent indigenous workers. Fourth, most human capital research on migration has focused on long-term individual immigration and settlement, relatively neglecting other forms of mobility, including temporary and return migration (but see the excellent review of return migration in Dustmann and Weiss, 2007).

The above conceptualization of skills transfers offers ideas which are appealing in their internal logic while necessarily being unable to engage with the specificities of labour markets and migrants, as well as institutional differences between territorial economies, in other words with some of the central concerns of recent research on regional economies. Additionally, human capital models cannot incorporate how transnational capital structures international mobility, through inter-company transfers. They also do not seek to engage with the complexities of migration, whether in terms of motivations or independence of migrants' decision making. Finally, they do not address the socially constructed nature of skills, which usually reflect the interests of dominant groups of (often male and indigenous) workers or employers. In other words, they assume away the institutional inequalities of capitalist labour markets.

While human capital research on migration largely focuses on individuals, it can also address aggregate redistributions, typically in terms of debates about the costs and welfare outcomes associated with brain drain versus brain gain. In essence this is about productivity differences, and returns to human capital, in economies providing contrasting opportunities for matching individual skills to jobs under conditions of uneven development. To some extent, it is an advance on the Lewis (1954) dual sector theory in focusing on a range of migrant skills, but the latter has the

advantage of focusing on aggregate wage levels and capital accumulation.

A weakness of human capital theories is that a gap exists between their focus on skills and the growing debate relating to knowledge in the analysis of regional economies, (Amin and Cohendet, 2004). International migration is a vehicle for such interregional knowledge transfers across borders, but this remains significantly under-researched (Williams, 2006b). The existing, highly selective research in this field has three main strands. First, research on scientific mobility, which is epitomized by the roles of Indian and Chinese migrants in Silicon Valley, and reverse flows of knowledge via return migration or more effective utilization of the knowledge reserves represented by diasporas (Biao, 2006; Saxenian, 2006). European research has focused especially on the mobility of scientific researchers, particularly in higher education (Ackers, 2005). Second, there is extensive research on how transnational companies utilize human mobility to distribute corporate knowledge from the centre to their branches, or to transfer tacit knowledge from dispersed international branches to the organizational level (Perkins, 1997). And third, there is research on advanced business services, and the role of human mobility in acquiring knowledge about, and from, global centres in these industries (Faulconbridge et al., 2009, this issue).

These significant literatures help situate corporeal mobility in the context of overall knowledge flows in the economy, and pose significant questions in relation not only to the territorial redistribution of tacit versus codified knowledge, but also about different forms of tacit knowledge (Williams, 2006b). However, in contrast to the highly selective industrial and occupational focus of the above research, this article contends that *all* migrants are knowledgeable, not only the so-called 'highly skilled'. Drawing on Thompson et al.'s (2001) concept of 'the knowledgeable worker', it is more useful to think of 'the knowledgeable migrant' rather than the knowledge economy migrant (Williams and Baláž, 2008). This conceptualization emphasizes that all migration flows involve knowledge transactions between pairs of regions, and not only those that are focused on high-tech regions, or global financial centres.

Human mobility is also interwoven with material capital transfers. First, and most obviously,

migration requires minimum levels of resources, including material capital, drawn from their own or their family's resources, or from a loan. Payments may be required to transport companies, or to intermediary migration agencies, operating in the formal or informal sectors, as well as for initial living costs. Second, many immigration regimes prioritize migrants who possess substantial material capital, particularly if they intend to invest in businesses in the destination economy. Third, as migrants (eventually) accumulate material capital, whether via wages or profits from entrepreneurship, decisions are taken about both the division between savings/investment and consumption, and their distribution across borders. These financial practices are shaped not only by differences in costs and returns, but also by motivations, labour market roles and family obligations (Taylor, 1999), and often have transnational dimensions. Remittance transfers can have major economic impacts at the local and regional scales, exemplified by the high level of dependence on remittances in some, particularly remoter, regions in the return countries (León-Ledesma and Piracha, 2004). Migrant investments also impact on housing, particularly in inner cities and other areas of relatively deprived housing in destination countries (Glytsos, 2002).

The interweaving of human capital, knowledge and material capital transfers is most visibly interrelated through migrant entrepreneurship. Migrants are more likely than the economically active indigenous population to be self-employed or small business owners in many European regions, but the form this takes is highly variable (Labrianidis and Sykas, 2009, this issue; and Mingione, 2009, this issue). Increasingly, these differences are understood to be institutionally shaped (Kloosterman and Rath, 2003).

There are two ways of telling the stories of migrant self-employment and small business ownership (Waldinger and Licher, 2003). First, the positive story contends that ethnic entrepreneurship (not necessarily the same as migrant entrepreneurship) creates jobs and overcomes some of the barriers and glass ceilings faced as employees – for example, employers' failures to recognize migrants' formal qualifications or their different knowledge. These enterprises can be either in the mainstream or the ethnic enclave economy. If they succeed, they create jobs for others, whether from

their own families, ethnic group or other ethnic groups. They can also rejuvenate sectors, such as garment production, which indigenous entrepreneurs have been abandoning (Mingione, 2009, this issue).

In contrast, the negative story emphasizes that many migrants have been compelled to take this route because of difficulties faced as employees, including outright racism and the 'othering' of all 'newcomers' in some settings. They survive in increasingly crowded specialist markets (for example, the multiplication of imitative ethnic restaurants) through long hours, low incomes and intense self and family-exploitation. Even if they survive, they lack the resources, both in terms of knowledge and capital, to break out from an economic cul-de-sac in the enclave economy (Waldinger and Licher, 2003). Reality is more complex than this simple positive versus negative dichotomy suggests and, for example, migrant businesses are found not only in low-productivity consumer service sectors, but also play a key role in high-tech complexes such as Cambridge, UK (Mahroum, 2002). Moreover, break-out may be constrained not only by ethnicity but also by class, in terms of access to resources (Light and Rosenstein, 1995).

Waldinger et al.'s (1990) 'interactive model' is particularly useful for our discussion, suggesting that ethnic entrepreneurship is the outcome of a combination of opportunities and group characteristics, and that these can be interpreted in terms of the interweaving of capital, human capital and knowledge. There are two types of 'opportunities' – market openings (for example, serving particular ethnic market segments, and requiring specific knowledge of these) and access to ownership (for example, vacant properties in the inner city, or in rural areas suffering from population decline). There are also two types of group characteristics: predisposition factors, and resource mobilization. Resource mobilization may be localized within the migrant community in the destination, or may draw on family and friends in the country of origin. These resources may be financial or other material capital, or knowledge – for example of suppliers, whether in the origin or destination. Migrant enterprises may focus on the migrant (ethnic minority in the Waldinger et al., 1990 model) community, or the wider community.

Break-out from the former depends on having the knowledge and capital to shift the business focus across this divide. Prior to break-out, migrant businesses can be highly concentrated in particular areas and sectors – traditionally in inner cities, and industries like garment making and consumer services. If successful in ‘breaking out’, they can become motors of economic growth and renewal in such areas. Additionally, as many such businesses are transnationalized (Portes and Guarnizo, 2001), their economic impacts can extend across national borders, creating or re-creating regional economic interrelationships.

International migration has become a significant feature of many European regional economies, ranging from the financial services sector of world cities such as London, where migrants occupy jobs ranging from chief executives of transnational corporations to contract cleaners (Wills et al., 2009, this issue), to agricultural regions in Greece (Labrianidis and Sykas, 2009, this issue). Migrants have specific, and sometimes distinctive, human capital, knowledge and material capital which shape their contribution to regional economies, both in destination and sending regions. This is both conditioned by regional economic structures (such as the distribution and characteristics of both declining and growth sectors) and contributes to restructuring these economies. For example, Mingione (2009, this issue) reports on how ethnic entrepreneurs fill a gap in Italy’s industrial districts, accepting conditions which are unacceptable to indigenous entrepreneurs. The relationship between migration and uneven regional development is complex and depends not only on the migration characteristics, but also on differences in government and governance, as discussed in the remainder of this article.

Changing forms of mobility and the consequences for uneven regional development and polarization

Although there have been growing levels of human mobility, and higher levels of circulation as opposed to long-term migration and settlement, in recent decades, this is not as exceptional as is sometimes asserted (see Chiswick and Hatton, 2003 for an

overview, and King, 1998 on the diversity of mass migration in the 1960s and 1970s). However, the nature of migration in recent decades has been changing due to some diverse factors. At the more privileged individual level, there is greater emphasis on individualization (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002), with migration being instrumental for many individuals to take more responsibility for their employability; for example, individuals increasingly view overseas experience as valued contributions to CVs. At the corporate level, Millar and Salt (2008) report that companies increasingly use a portfolio of mobility types, with a shift from longer to shorter work placements, including long-distance weekly or monthly commuting. This is informed by the costs of different forms of mobility and the demands of family life. Arguably, firms also rely more on migrant labour in seeking to enhance their flexibility; there is evidence of this, for example, for both highly skilled IT professionals (Barley and Kunda, 2004) and relatively less skilled hospitality work (Wills et al., 2009).

As well as these shifts at individual and organizational levels, several meta factors have influenced the scale and forms of mobility. Some are enabling factors, notably low-cost airlines which, directly and indirectly, have redrawn the European map of accessibility and redefined labour markets, at least for some workers. Their low-cost model has increased the volume of air travel, and extended the possibility of long-distance commuting to more and lower-income social groups (Williams and Baláz, 2009). They have also changed the geography of labour market access through developing point-to-point linkages as opposed to the previous hub and spoke models of the scheduled airlines. This has started to break down the traditional hierarchical structuring of access around a few key hub (metropolitan) airports. While their growth has been limited in the more peripheral European regions, they have grown faster in intermediate urban regions than in the core metropolitan areas (Dobruszkes, 2006). In addition, increasingly, but selectively, exclusionary European immigration regimes have also shaped migration flows, leading to a polarization between preferential access for skilled migrants (or those with material capital), and the growth of ‘unskilled’ migration on short-term specific visas (for example, for agricultural harvesting), or as undocumented migration.

The outcome of these mobility shifts has been a changing migration landscape that reflects and contributes to broader globalization tendencies. This can be illustrated in relation to Cochrane and Pain's (2000: 15–17) four key aspects of globalization. 'Stretched social relations' are evidently manifested through international migration, especially transnational migration (Vertovec, 2004). 'Regionalization', or the increased interconnection of states which border each other, or lie within Europe, is illustrated by post-1989 Central European migration in particular, much of which is based on relatively shorter-term migration. 'Intensification', or the strengthening of transborder economic impacts, is evident in increased remittance flows, and especially their vulnerability to structural economic and regulatory changes in the destination countries. Finally, 'interpenetration', as apparently distant cultures and societies come face to face with each other at the local level, creating increased diversity, is illustrated by Cohen's (1997: 162) comment that 'In the age of globalization, unexpected people turn up in the most unexpected places.' This is illustrated by the widespread geographical distribution of A8 migrants across the UK in the 2000s, as opposed to the stronger metropolitan concentration which characterized most earlier immigrations (Stenning and Dawley, 2009, this issue).

How do these shifts in mobility play out at the regional and urban levels? First, they are increasingly important components in the production and reproduction of centres of knowledge, which are increasingly recognized in policy debates surrounding the attraction of the most talented students, scientists and other key workers in the knowledge economy, either to destinations or as return migrants (Kuptsch and Fong, 2006). This may be as substitute skilled labour (in the face of indigenous shortages of scientists and engineers in the USA and Germany, for example) or, more contentiously, through contributing to creativity via enhancing social and cultural diversity (Florida, 2005); this is necessarily regionally selective. Second, international migration also plays a significant role in non-metropolitan regions. For example, while the detailed geographies remain highly contingent, their migration within Europe is becoming less focused on the dominant metropolitan regions (see

Labrianidis and Sykas, 2009, this issue; and Stenning and Dawley, 2009, this issue). Third, enhanced accessibility and mobility mean that the reserve army of labour in the modern economy is increasingly dependent on international mobility, with labour market boundaries becoming blurred and spatially discontinuous.

Despite these discernible urban and regional trends, migration is increasingly characterized by both superdiversity (Vertovec, 2006) and the increasingly widespread distribution of particular migrant groups (Cohen, 1997). Moreover, migration flows need to be carefully deconstructed in any regional economic analysis, recognizing that migration is spatially constituted. For example, amongst Slovak au pairs working in the UK, those from the capital city, Bratislava, are relatively well-educated individuals whose sojourn abroad was designed to add to their CVs in order to reposition them within the Slovak labour market. In contrast, au pairs from the poorer regions were driven more by economic survival and overcoming regional employment constraints (Williams and Baláž, 2004). This also has implications for post-return economic behaviour. Both groups fit the individualization thesis (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) with individuals increasingly taking responsibility for finding their own economic solutions, while also emphasizing the greater availability of resources to those from Bratislava.

Reflecting back on the theorization of the spatial economic impacts of migration, it is clear that the Lewis (1954) model was not designed to describe some of the complexities of modern migration which were addressed in this section. Similarly, the brain gain–drain debate initially assumed relatively permanent international labour migration, but recent research has produced notions such as brain circulation or brain training, in recognition of the complexity of migration flows (reviewed in Lowell and Findlay, 2002). Similarly, much of the research on external economies of scale, and cumulative development, did not address international migration (with the notable exception of Myrdal, 1957), let alone the complexities of temporary and circular migration. These challenges are extended in the following section, which adds a further layer of complexity to our understanding of migration.

Enfolded mobilities

While economic analysis of migration has largely focused on labour migration and employment and output in the waged economy, this fails to recognize the economic implications of the temporal and co-associational embedding of individual mobilities.¹ The concept of ‘enfolded mobilities’² is introduced here in order to extend the focus of analysis beyond individual ‘lead’ migrants. Enfolded mobilities are, in part, based on networks which ‘produce complex and enduring connections across space and through time between people and things’ (Urry, 2000: 34). But enfoldment is also based on the notions of ‘contingent mobilities’ (e.g. ‘consequential’ mobility when skilled migration generates demand for less skilled migrants in the service industries) and collective mobility (e.g. dependents moving with lead migrants). Five types of enfolded mobility are identified which have different implications in terms of uneven regional development and polarization: discovery mobility, accompanying mobility, servicing mobility, visiting friends and relations mobility, and post-work mobility.

Discovery mobility is understood as relatively short-duration mobility, typified by students, au pairs, or rites-of-passage migration (for example, the Big OE or overseas experience sought by young New Zealanders). These, typically youthful, migrants come for specific purposes – to study, acquire cultural knowledge, or learn from and express their identities through mobility. However, discovery mobility may also become enfolded into subsequent longer-term migration. This can be intentional or unintentional. The discovery trip may give individuals the motivations and/or knowledge to extend their mobility into longer-term migrations. This is typified by student migrants who ‘stay on’, perhaps taking advantage of facilitating state immigration policies, particularly for science graduates (Kuptsch and Fong, 2006).

Discovery mobility is an exercise in knowledge accumulation, and social network construction, which potentially informs subsequent mobilities. The student becomes a salaried researcher, the au pair returns as a labour migrant, and the tourist stays on to develop his or her career. The extent of discovery mobility should not be underestimated. For example, in the USA almost 9,000 doctorates were completed by European students between 1988

and 1995, and over half remained in the USA five years later (Johnson and Regets, 1998). The conversion of temporary ‘discovery’ migration into permanent migration has been a particular concern in Central and Eastern European countries, which have experienced high levels of short-term, youthful migration since 1989 (Wallace and Stola, 2001). Such mobility tends to focus on metropolitan areas which provide diverse cultural opportunities. There are also connections between such migration, cosmopolitanism and the reproduction of creative regions (Florida, 2005; Williams, 2006b).

Accompanying mobility most obviously involves partners, but also children, grandparents and, exceptionally, care and domestic service workers who accompany migrants. They are ‘trailing migrants’ whose mobilities are directly enfolded with that of a ‘lead’ migrant (often male). Of course, many migrants fall outside these groups, including single, ‘independent’ lead migrants who typify discovery mobility. Enfoldment is articulated through collective mobility decision making, and involves either simultaneous or temporally lagged mobilities (for example, family-unification migration at a later date). Family migration has been relatively neglected and Kofman (2004: 249) emphasizes a need to rethink ‘... conceptualisation of the economic, its separation from the social, and the dynamic of familial relationships’. Yet specific family relationships can be a critical precondition for the ‘lead’ migrant to perform his/her role in the waged economy. Accompanying spouses provide a range of highly gendered and age-specific care, practical, economic, housing and emotional support to other family members. Grandparents, or other relatives, may also move in order to provide support for their children, such as caring for grandchildren, or to receive care from their children.

Accompanying mobility is also a source of labour in the waged economy. Accompanying persons may enter labour markets under very different visa and other regulatory conditions than the lead labour migrant. These may restrict their rights to independent residence, employment and mobility within a national state or the EU. But trailing migrants can, and do, engage in the waged labour market, whether formally or informally, depending on the migration regime (McLaughlan and Salt, 2002). There are significant career consequences for ‘trailing spouses’ (Clark and Withers, 2002),

irrespective of whether they obtain immediate or delayed labour market access, and depending on the transferability of their skills and knowledge.

However, although trailing spouses are not necessarily passive career victims of accompanying mobility, 'at most the breadwinner model may have been modified rather than transcended' (Bruegal, 1996: 250). As their children grow up (and acquire residence rights), they may also enter the labour market, contributing to the future reproduction of labour power. The spatiality of such mobility necessarily largely reproduces that of the 'lead' labour migrants, at least initially.

Servicing mobility is the migration response to the demands generated by highly skilled workers (including highly skilled migrants) and others (including tourists) for services, ranging from domestic care and cleaning, to retailing, hospitality and office cleaning. These demands tend to be highly spatially concentrated, notably in the central areas, business districts and high-income inner residential areas of global cities where, in essence, a dual labour migration system may evolve (Sassen, 2000). Given the structural constraints of low wages in service industries and high housing costs, indigenous labour may not be able or willing to provide the services required in global cities, thereby generating demand for 'servicing mobility' to fill the labour market gap.

The migrants who occupy these service jobs are from diverse backgrounds, and have varied motivations: from being 'discovery migrants' originating from more developed countries, to economically desperate migrants from some of the poorest countries. Despite the enormous differences in their backgrounds and motivations, they can end up working alongside each other in fast-food outlets, hotels and contract cleaning (see Wills et al., 2009, this issue). However, labour markets tend to be highly ethnicized and racialized, and they are more likely to be segmented in different labour submarkets in the face of structural disadvantages.

Visiting friends and relations (VFR) mobility, which can be enfolded with individual labour migration, is often dismissed as an economically inconsequential form of tourism, but is significant for many economies.³ For some visitors, the place visited is the key attraction and this is a form of leisure tourism, with subsidized accommodation. However, VFR can also be a means of providing or

obtaining emotional support, or renewing social networks for economic purposes. Family are more likely than friends to deliver mobile care: for example, grandparents looking after children when one or more parent is away or incapacitated, thereby supporting their contribution to the waged economy. They may also deliver practical help (redesigning a bedroom), emotional or economic (gift giving) support (Finch, 1989). In other words, they provide virtually zero-cost labour to other family members, as well as other support. Friends may visit for the same reasons as family: as affirmations of, or to develop, emotional attachments, or to provide similar practical support. Additionally, VFR plays a role in social networking among friends; indeed, the maintenance of social networks usually assumes some mutual travel obligation.

In turn, VFR mobility can become enfolded into longer-term mobility plans whether as accompanying mobility or as independent labour migrants. The VFR trips become exercises in local knowledge gathering that facilitate subsequent migration. In terms of spatiality, these flows reinforce and reproduce the regional distributions of the lead labour migrants, although human agency may lead to creation of new regional distributions.

Post-employment mobility. There are high levels of post-work or retirement mobility in Europe, which is increasingly internationalized. For example, about a million pensions are paid by the British government to individuals resident outside the UK. This has several strands, including returning labour migrants, family reunification as parents follow emigrant children, and amenity-seeking migrants. Each has a distinctive spatiality (Warnes and Williams, 2006). They are enfolded temporally with earlier labour migrations (returnees), are forms of accompanying mobility (family reunification) or linked to VFR mobility (amenity seeking, based on tourism experiences). Individuals' motivations, or resources, to engage in post-work mobility may have been influenced in two ways by previous labour migration experiences. First, by providing them with country-specific knowledge that shaped their search spaces in retirement. Second, through having acquired a 'generic knowledge of how to migrate' successfully, which is an amalgam of self-knowledge, self-confidence, and expertise in accessing and evaluating explicit and tacit information about a (any) destination.

All forms of post-work mobility inevitably involve transfers of knowledge and capital as well as labour (either through part-time waged work, or services provided to family or community). In extremis, they result in the creation of new arenas of consumption, exemplified by Northern European retirement migration to Europe's Mediterranean regions. In turn, these can generate new labour immigrations to provide services to support the expanding consumption in these areas, another form of servicing mobility, as Salvà Tomàs (2002) illustrates in the Balearics.

The concept of enfolded mobility shifts analysis away from the individualized focus of much of the research on human capital and migration. It emphasizes the ways in which social networks fold together different forms of mobility, and how migration generates consequential migrations over the life course. However, this approach still necessarily focuses on individuals rather than institutions, which is selectively addressed in the following section through a discussion of governance.

Europeanization of national migration regimes, through the incorporation of EU decrees and treaties (Geddes, 2003) is a powerful illustration of how different levels of governance are folded⁴ into each other.

Other than the freedom of movement and employment rights of EU citizens, the national remains the key site of governance of international labour migration. Different national migration, employment, welfare and integration regimes have significant implications not only for crossing borders, but also for accessing (formal and informal) employment. Most national immigration policies differentiate between skilled and unskilled migrants, and between 'lead and accompanying' migrants (McLaughlan and Salt, 2002). They also differentiate between EU and non-EU, as well as individual countries. Diverse national migration regimes are characteristically gendered and racialized. Skilled migrants face additional employment barriers in the professional regulations of some occupations, such as medicine or accountancy, despite EU attempts to harmonize these. These immigration, employment and professional regulations determine migrants' labour market rights (Cassarino, 2007), and – in some countries – access to health and welfare services. In turn, these shape identities and imaginations of home versus away, influencing decisions to stay or return, social integration and employment. In some countries (e.g. Australia), immigration policies prioritize visas for migrants taking up jobs in less developed regions (McLaughlan and Salt, 2002), but most immigration policies are not explicitly spatialized in this way.

Welfare regimes determine the costs of migration to individuals and their economic integration. Most welfare and health rights are conditional on visa and rights of residence status. Rights may be allocated to families or individuals (usually privileging lead labour migrants). Generalized national variations in welfare and employment rights are captured in Hall and Soskice's (2001) 'variants of capitalism' but surprisingly little research systematically links migration and employment/welfare regimes to migration, let alone uneven regional development. One exception is Hjarno's (2003) work on Denmark, which demonstrates how strong

International migration and governance

The influence of migration on uneven regional development and polarization in cities is mediated through multi-level governance, ranging from the community level through to the national and EU levels, while also shaping these. Governance varies from nationality or ethnically specific agencies, through the general governance of migration, to the overall forms of governance, as well as incorporating transnational forms of governance such as hometown associations.

The EU is the highest-order, effective level of migration governance within Europe; freedom of movement as well as employment and residence rights are written into its treaties. This is supplemented by decrees and agreements relating to refugees and asylum seekers in particular, the common external boundary of the EU, and the Schengen accord. More indirectly, the EU's structural and agricultural policies also mediate labour migration – for example, creating demand for labour in rural areas, or stimulating migrant enterprises within urban regeneration schemes. The

employment regulation reduces informal employment of migrants, in contrast to say Italy or Spain. Migration therefore has implications for how the dual system of labour (Piore, 1979) is played out, particularly in cities. Similarly, Kloosterman (2000) demonstrates how national regulations, for example relating to firm formation or minimum wages, mediate migrant self-employment and employment.

Another nationally specific influence may be termed the regime of social integration and cohesion. IntegraRef (2008) identifies four dimensions of social integration. First, citizenship rights, at the core of social integration, are essentially determined at the national level (although there are putative EU citizenship rights). Second, the 'facilitators' of social integration include language and cultural knowledge, and safety and stability, which are determined at multiple scales, ranging from the national to the community, to the workplace. Third, 'social connections' (social bonds etc.) also evolve at these multiple scales. Finally, the 'markers and means' of social integration – e.g. housing, education, or health – are shaped by the interaction of the local and national levels of government. Immigrants are not passive dupes but play active roles in all four dimensions. The social integration regime has implications for how migrants engage with the economy, for example in terms of overcoming housing constraints on moving to new jobs, or accessing education and training. Despite moves towards a common values framework (Joppke and Morawska, 2003), national and local differences persist in the migration and integration regimes of EU member states.

The neo-classical approach to explaining regional growth necessarily has limitations because it does not seek to address the role of institutions. Governance plays a critical role in shaping how such institutions mediate the role of migrants in regional economies. Governance directly mediates the level and composition of migration, and the changing ways in which migrants are both economically and socially engaged in the destination country, whether at home or in the community. Activities in the workplace, home and community are, of course, interrelated (Voydanoff, 2001) and contribute to migrants' knowledge transfers, mustering of material capital, and more generally to the cosmopolitanism and creativity of regions.

Conclusions

International migration plays an important role in the production, reproduction and contestation of uneven urban and regional development in Europe. It is a complex process which does not lend itself to simplistic models and although we have emphasized the limitations of the many variants of the neo-classical approaches, these clearly acknowledged their limiting assumptions. It is, however, of concern that neo-classical approaches still infuse policy thinking, including a recent UNU–Wider study of regional uneven development (see Kanbur and Venables, 2007) which sees migration as one of the solutions to development weaknesses in less developed regions. This represents neglect of externalities, cumulative causation, and institutional differentiation and, as Perrons (2009) argues, of the fact that it is precisely the way in which global interconnections of 'superstar regions' allow them to appropriate greater shares of value added which differentiates them from the metropolitan centres of the past.

In addition, much of the theorization of the role of migration in urban and regional development fails to engage with the complexity of international migration. Migration shapes not only skills transfers but also the reserves of knowledge and creativity in major metropolitan areas, while also providing the labour (skilled and unskilled) that is essential to the reproduction of economic and social relationships. However, one of the defining features of migration in recent decades has been its contribution to the intensification and stretching of social relationships, globally and in Europe, contributing to the interpenetration of most regions and cities.

Although international migration has a serendipitous element, it is closely entwined with but not dictated by the trajectories of regional and urban economic development. There are unlikely people performing unlikely economic roles in unlikely places, but there are far more migrants working in broadly predictable positions in particular places – predictable, that is, if we have sufficiently nuanced understandings of the complexities of both migration and regional development.

One such nuance is that international migration involves not only the transfer of skills but also of tacit knowledge and material capital. Migrants may possess tacit knowledge for which a premium is

paid in the destination country (e.g. the financial analyst who arrives in London with detailed knowledge of Milan's markets and institutions). Rather than seeing some migrants as possessing different and competitive knowledge advantages, human capital theories tend to emphasize their initial lack of nationally specific skills, and the resulting earnings function as their wages rise in line with acquiring nationally specific knowledge. An additional complexity arises from the circularity of much migration: acquiring knowledge that can be commodified after returning to their country of origin (perhaps scarce language or professional skills), rather than high wages while abroad, may be the main objective of many migrants. Migration also requires and generates material capital, and migrants make decisions as to the balance between saving/investment and consumption, in places of origin and destination, and across current and deferred time frames. These interwoven flows of capital, skills and knowledge can play a significant role in local and regional economies (Kloosterman and Rath, 2003), whether in rural areas or global cities.

The transfers of skills, knowledge and capital via international migration have been changing in terms of scale, intensity and the interpenetration of regions and cities. This is reinforced by the shift from longer-term to shorter-term mobility, and the emergence of complex patterns of secondary and circular migration. The spatial outcomes are highly contingent but there are discernible trends, some of which favour more metropolitan regions, while others favour intermediate and peripheral regions. These are being shaped by changes in technology, culture and migration regimes, contributing to increasingly fluid economic relationships between and within cities and regions.

While analyses of the economic impacts of migration largely focus on labour migration, this article has argued for the need to consider how this is embedded in 'enfolded' mobilities, especially discovery, accompanying, VFR, servicing and post-work mobilities. These have significant economic implications, whether in terms of production or consumption, which mostly reinforce the broad regional and urban impacts of labour migration, both short and long term. However, they may also contribute – as in the case of later-life or retirement migration – to creating new regional economies that are arenas of consumption.

The recent growth of international migration means that it increasingly mediates as well as being shaped by governance. Despite the emerging EU level of regulation, the national remains the key site for determining many of the fundamental mobility, residence, employment and welfare rights of migrants. However, these are mainly articulated through the intersection of the national and the local levels of governance, with migrants and migrant associations also playing an active rather than a merely passive role in most regions. This is particularly evident in social integration, and emphasizes the need to avoid portraying migrants as passive actors in governance.

Turning to the future, it is likely that the uneven regional and urban impacts of migration will continue to shift in responses to migration changes and to economic, political and social changes within particular places. There is no inevitability about how these will be played out in particular regions or cities, which emphasizes the need to deepen and widen our understanding of this phenomenon through both theoretical and empirical analyses.

Notes

¹ Another source of difference is the blurring of the motivations and experiences of some refugees and labour migrants under differing regulatory regimes, but this is not explored here.

² The concept of enfolded mobilities was first explored in Williams (2006a).

³ For example, Visiting Friends and Relatives accounted for 20% of overnight domestic trips made in the UK in 2007 (Visit Britain, 2008). Some forms of this tourism involve return visits by labour migrants to families, but these are not considered here.

⁴ 'Folded' is the term Amin (2002) uses for the interrelationships between different scales.

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