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Translocal Ruralism

Mobility and Connectivity in European Rural Spaces

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The GeoJournal Library

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Translocal Ruralism

Mobility and Connectivity in European Rural Spaces

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ISSN 0924-5499
ISBN 978-94-007-2314-6 e-ISBN 978-94-007-2315-3
DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3
Springer Dordrecht Heidelberg London New York

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011936511

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Chapter 1
Translocal Ruralism: Mobility and Connectivity in European Rural Spaces

Charlotta Hedberg and Renato Miguel do Carmo

1.1 Introduction: Towards a Translocal Rural Space

If you imagine a rural space, you might think of the wide fields of an agricultural landscape, or the vast, forested parts of a sparsely populated region. Perhaps you think about small villages or townscapes, or an isolated house in a remote region. Rural spaces are often associated with an agricultural economy, outmigration and an ageing, decreasing population. This imaginary rural area is isolated from national and global processes, and is dependent on the proximate urban area.

If we examine rural space only a little closer, however, the setting is different. The residents of the small village seldom work in agriculture, but rather in the service sector. In the isolated house reside highly educated counter-urbanisers, who perform their work in the city through an internet connection. International migrants are lured to work in the agricultural sector as seasonal labour and migration authorities settle refugees in rural areas. Both internal and international migrants contribute not only to a younger population structure but also to a qualitative transformation of rural spaces. These are places that are changing through their connections to regional, national and global processes (Bell & Osti, 2010; Woods, 2007). Rather than being passive receivers of national and regional transfers, they are involved and connected on their own accounts.

Processes of globalisation, economic restructuring and continuing urbanisation have introduced new forms of spatial mobility (Sheller & Urry, 2006). In fact, the attention that has been devoted to globalisation processes has placed the issue of mobilities at the core of social sciences research, through the extended focus on flows of capital, ideas and people (Canzler, Kaufmann, & Kesselring, 2008). These phenomena, however, are not exclusive to densely populated areas. The progressive loss of the importance of farming, which has been replaced by other sectors (mainly the tertiary sector), and a resulting diffusion of more or less urbanised

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_1,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

ways of life, is one important explanation for the proliferation of moves in (and to) rural areas (Carmo, 2010; Masuda & Garvin, 2008). As a result of the diversifying mobility flows, the social composition of rural areas is becoming increasingly heterogeneous (Camarero, 1993; Kayser, 1990, 1996; Smith, 2007; Milbourne, 2007).

It is in this scenario, which is based on a relational space, that we find in rural areas not only contradictory processes of depopulation and ageing, processes of modernisation or reinvention of tradition and of marginalisation, but also a time for functional reconfigurations (some new, some not so new), the dynamics of which are in part underpinned by an information economy (Murdoch, 2000). For instance, new dynamics emerge and are reflected by an intensification and diversification of circulation between rural and urban areas, but also between distinct rural spaces situated in different regional, national or international geographies. Phenomena like back-and-forth migration, the return to home villages by migrants who left them during the rural exodus or the dynamics of outmigration are some of the situations that are becoming more generalised in European countries. The population movements are gradually losing their traditional shape and new spatial routes are being created. For example, territories are no longer defined by the existence of a rural-urban divide, where the former tended to be characterised by its fixity and social and spatial stagnation, and the latter by intense and diversified paths of mobility (Bell & Osti, 2010). On the contrary, at a time of globalisation, spaces are dealing with constant reconfiguration, one of its main expressions being the intensification of movement that simultaneously affects both rural and urban places. The acceleration of movement is a characteristic of our time, and has introduced a new complexity within rural areas in the sense that new functions are emerging, business activities are diversifying and new social groupings are appearing (Woods, 2007). This process relies on close interdependence between rural and urban areas, resulting in the metamorphosis rather than the disappearance of rural areas.

The main purpose of this book is to unveil a set of dynamics that tends to go against the general insistence on labelling rural areas as stagnant or declining and suffering from similar regressive problems. In order to achieve this purpose, it is essential to see them as places that are 'changing' and 'interconnected' rather than 'stagnating' or 'isolated'. By changing, we mean that there have been many social transformations in rural areas occurring over relatively recent periods. Many of these transformations are the result of intense, ongoing exchanges between different people, settings and geographies. Accordingly, rural-urban but also rural-rural interrelations on international and national scales contribute greatly to change. Incoming and outgoing migratory flows are perhaps the most visible phenomena, which occur on both very local levels and between widely global areas. Other examples include the activities of rural firms in national and global arenas, the spread of different forms of transportation and dislocation, and the growing information society that enables rural spaces to be connected to the world and that improves new ways of interconnection.

1.2 Translocal Ruralism: Mobilities on Various Scale Levels

Considering the processes described above, we have to look at rural spaces from a different perspective. It makes no sense to define them simply as marginalised territories of the globalised world. On the contrary, they are often deeply involved in the process of globalisation through their participation in networks and mobilities between localities on the global scale (Woods, 2007). In this way, they become crucial actors on the national level also. A rural place, like a village, is not completely immune to the flows and networks that circulate all over the world. Rural areas are relational and interconnected spaces, which are constructed by their interrelations with other spaces (Massey, 2005). As such, they should not be defined by their fixity and immobility aspects. Instead, relational spaces are 'open spaces' that are constantly changing through their interrelatedness. From this, it follows that we have to consider other mechanisms that produce and are being produced by these spaces (Lefebvre, 1974). One of them is certainly the dynamics of spatial mobility that are constantly interfering in peoples' everyday lives, not as an external feature but as a process that is locally embedded.

In this argument lies the idea that mobility cannot be defined by antagonism to the notion of fixity (Cresswell, 2006), as if it represented merely the other side. People are moving between different spaces but, once they have moved, they do not cease to engage with the texture and the materiality of the space they have left. They do not move as though they were mere flows; rather, they are translocal actors that connect places through their mobility (Brickell & Datta, 2011). Accordingly, they do not cease to be attached to the real places they move from, but they add the place of arrival to the place of departure (along with other, previous places where they lived). The influx of people to one place, the connections that are established through the migrants when they continue living in a place, and the connections to the remaining population at the place of departure mean that the 'fixity' in a place is part of mobility. Thus, fixity cannot be understood as the other side of stagnation and isolation, because fixity is itself related to mobility.

In line with this, we think that the notion of 'translocal' rather than 'fixity' better catches the idea of mobility and the production of relational space (Brickell & Datta, 2011; Hannerz, 1996; Appadurai, 1996). Central to this idea is the understanding of mobility as a way of connecting and transforming places. A translocal perspective of space brings the activities of mobile actors, such as migrants, to the fore, not only through the activities that occur as they move but also through the consequences that are produced in space through this activity (Smith, 2001). Consequently, a web of networks is established between places that is materialised through repeated communication, flows of knowledge and ideas, and political, cultural and economic activities (Faist, 2000; Hedberg, 2007; Featherstone, Phillips, & Waters, 2007).

A translocal perspective on rural space indicates that people not only move across the geographies of regional and international borders but that they also move beyond the geography of urban nodes and rural peripheries. Where the former have represented the spaces of attraction and the latter the spaces of repulsion, mobility flows and connections instead go in both directions. These processes are more complex

than a linear dichotomy between two sides; people do not act and live like that. Their trajectories are embedded within multiple constraints and motivations. To move to another place (a city, a village, and/or another country) is not only a question of dislocation to another geographical point on the map; it is also, and above all, a new relation that is being established between different localities (Montulet, 2005), which tends to persist over time (Walford, 2007). This translocal relation is recurrently experienced throughout the numerous pathways that people repeatedly produce in space. In this book, we wish to highlight the increasing interconnectedness of internal and international flows to rural areas, and how they connect rural areas with various scale levels ranging from the regional/urban to the national and the global scales (Smith, 2001).

Accordingly, the concept of translocal ruralism goes back to the 'networks of rurality' suggested by Halfacree (2004, p. 285; see also Mahon, 2007), which emphasise the connectivity of rural areas through in-migrants' and dwellers' everyday practices through networks. The notion of translocal ruralism increasingly stresses interactions on both national and international scales, the mutual direction of networks and flows, and the awareness of their duration in time. Therefore, it engages with the mobility discourse, and the call to include multiple flows in the analysis (Cresswell, 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006).

These ideas on mobility to rural areas are of course not new. There has been a strong emphasis from scholars on the role of counterurbanisation and of migration from urban to rural areas, which affects the population composition in rural areas (Champion, 1994; Halliday & Coombes, 1995; Halfacree, 1994; Amcoff, Forsberg, & Stenbacka, 1995). However, the process of counterurbanisation has lost significance within research and, moreover, it has failed to take a multitude of processes, such as the rural migration of international migrants, into account (Halfacree, 2008). A wider understanding of mobilities, which critically addresses both temporal and spatial complexities as outlined in this book, has been rather lacking in rural studies (Milbourne, 2007). This also involves a renewed understanding of the consequences of migration to rural areas. When people move from one place to another, they bring with them all sorts of experiences, identities and representations. Durable and tangible translocal linkages are established between sending and receiving areas, which could contribute to mutual development processes and dynamic initiatives for the localities involved in the process (Faist, 2008; de Haas, 2005).

What new geographies are emerging from this complexity? We do not really have a definitive answer, but we hope to offer a partial response to this question. Our perspective focuses on rural spaces, in all their diversity, as a way of understanding how these spaces produce and are being produced by mobility processes. Is it possible to talk about a 'ruralism' that is sociologically and geographically constructed by specific forms of mobility? What are the consequences of multiple mobilities for rural areas? These are some of the main questions raised in this book.

From a translocal perspective, rural space is seen as constructed by the interrelations with other national and international spaces (Massey, 2005). Accordingly, the notion of ruralism is not used here as an essentialist and enclosed concept, as if people could live surrounded by rural spaces only. On the contrary, from our point of view, ruralism stresses space as a system of mobilities and connections whose

nodes are not necessarily urban areas, which are usually defined as composed by their own dynamics of globalisation (Castells, 2000). Rural spaces, like villages, towns, and even the countryside, can have the ability of attracting both demographic and economic fluxes on their own account, and they can incorporate some levels of centrality. To conceive of rural areas intrinsically as spaces of repulsion is not only a reductive thought but also erroneous. Rural spaces are suffering deep and contradictory transformations. Whereas some areas are moving towards continual marginalisation through processes of depopulation and ageing, others have been reborn through the assimilation of new structural dynamics (Kayser, 1990). Thus, we view ruralism as an open system where through their networks, people produce spatial interactions, both between rural contexts, but also between urban and rural ones.

The process of globalisation has implied that the role of scales and their power geometries have shifted (Swyngedouw, 2000). Power has rescaled from the national level, both upwards and downwards, without neglecting the role that the national level still plays. Mobility flows (people, goods, capital and information) play an active role in transgressing scales by connecting places on various levels, while disempowering others. Whereas mobility in general is seen as a means of transgressing power, international migrants are mentioned as 'the most problematic area', owing to the failed inclusion of migrants in processes of governance in the new hierarchy of scales (Swyngedouw, 2000, p. 73). Migration scholars, on the other hand, have sought to understand transnational migration, and the connectivity of international migrants to places of out- and in-migration, as a way of transgressing power by a shift of scales (Glick Schiller & Caglar, 2009). The 'transnational social fields' that are created through the migrant networks are a chance for migrants to interact in a new arena where their identities with and activities in both countries are recognised (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Hedberg & Kepsu, 2008). In this way, the transnational perspective aims to avoid 'methodological nationalism' whereby the nation-state is used as the main unit of analysis.

For the purposes of this book, the rescaling of power relations implies increasing the opportunities of rural areas through the recognition of their connections to other areas; this involves both upscaling to the global world and downscaling to other local places (Swyngedouw, 2000). In order to stress the processes on the national and the global levels, and their reciprocal interrelatedness, we have chosen the concept of translocal relations. This concept challenges the tradition of 'methodological nationalism' perhaps better than the notion of transnational relations, through its more general application to intermixed internal and international mobility processes. For instance, the transnational processes of migration and circulation are not completely independent of the national legislations and policies that search to regulate population fluxes. The 'national' and the 'transnational' are not diametrical opposites but rather are mutually interrelated and dependent on each other. Moreover, the translocal concept gives particular weight to the local effects that the above mentioned transnational social networks and mobilities imply (Appadurai, 1996). As such, the notion of translocalism contains both a more general reference to various national and international scale levels, and also a more focussed approach to the local effects of mobilities and flows.

1.3 Contextual Diversities

The global processes that were described above cannot be considered to be homogenised tendencies that uniformly affect rural areas. On the contrary, it is crucial to include the context of particular places and the sociological and geographical diversity where the interrelations meet (Woods, 2007). As we mentioned, the production of space is in itself a complex product that varies in relation to different contexts, i.e. different concrete places. These are places that are known by their particular names, are situated in a specific region and are inhabited by a real ensemble of people. The places have their unique histories and traditions that are renewed through generations. In fact, we think that only a place-based analysis can give us the most accurate dimension of the translocal dynamics that are being developed in rural spaces. For that matter, we think it is a fundamental necessity to combine findings and perspectives of several social scientists from different European countries whose work overlaps in these areas.

The book at hand provides a wide range of chapters dealing with the 'grounding' of translocal ruralism through several empirical examples in a European context. The book should be seen as an attempt to capture some of the various ways in which the broad and complex process of translocal ruralism could be interpreted. It is structured into two parts, which intertwine the dynamics of rural spaces. The first part, 'Linking nodes: people and networks connecting places', is concerned with mobilities such as migration and commuting, and the establishment of national and global networks in rural space.

In Chapter 2, Carmo and Santos analyse the population dynamics of two case study areas in rural Portugal. They show how various modes of mobilities, such as commuting and daily shopping, produce rural spaces that are located in the tension between urbanisation and marginalisation. The capacity for mobility provides an important resource for the possibilities of staying in rural areas.

In a similar vein, Rau (Chapter 3) is engaged with the increasingly mobile and translocal nature of rural life in Ireland. Drawing on two empirical examples of rural mobility, the increasing car dependency and the emergence of 'mobile farmers', Rau concludes that mobilities are intrinsical parts of rural spaces, which policy-making plays a significant role in shaping.

Turning to the related mobilities of internal and international migration, Stenbacka (Chapter 4) describes the values and experiences of two distinct migrant groups as they intersect with rural space in Sweden. Groups that are often treated as separate – voluntary internal migrants and international refugees – show both similarities and differences in their relationship to rural space and they both provide crucial translocal networks that interlink rural areas on the national and international scales.

Silva's ethnographic study (Chapter 5) deals with how young people in a Portuguese village close to the Spanish border interact on the local, national, international and cyberspatial levels. As such, translocal mobilities on a wide range of scale levels produce a dynamic space through the everyday lives of the young population.

Taking its departure from the post-social transition in eastern Europe, Guran-Nica and Sofer (Chapter 6) investigate the process of counterurbanisation in

Romania during the last decades. The chapter shows how a change in production from an agricultural to a diversified economic base, and changing preferences among urban dwellers towards rural areas, has transformed and increased urban life patterns in the rural-urban fringe.

The last chapter of part one, by Dubois, Copus and Hedström, is a comparative study on the internationalisation of firms in rural areas in five European countries (the Netherlands, Sweden, the Czech Republic, Slovenia and Lithuania). The chapter suggests the magnitude of networks for small- and medium-sized rural firms on both the national and the international scale levels. Accordingly, all rural areas are part of globalisation processes, although to varying degrees. Since the business networks of the firms transgress international borders directly, without mediating multinational firms, they are argued to be translocal.

The second part of the book, 'International mobilities: a tension between scales', analyses the dynamics of international migration and mobilities in rural areas by applying a translocal perspective. Hedberg, Forsberg and Najib (Chapter 8) analyse the translocal effects of international migration processes on the local labour market in rural Sweden. By investigating attitudes and practices among local authorities, native-born employees and migrant entrepreneurs, the chapter concludes that transnational migrant networks exist in rural areas, and this constitutes a possibility for tanslocal rural development. This, however, is seldom acted upon by the local Swedish society.

In Chapter 9, Camarero, Sampedro and Oliva investigate the extension of international migration to rural Spain and how the geographical and social (occupational) mobility processes are interrelated. The chapter shows the subsidiary role of agriculture and rural areas in the employment and residential strategies of immigrants. In addition to local employment opportunities, family migration patterns also seem to play an important role in these new residents settling in rural areas.

Similarly, the chapter by Papadopoulos (Chapter 10) shows the crucial role of international migrants in the agricultural sector. Through investigating the dominant migrant group in Greece, the Albanian migrants, the chapter shows how the mobility of migrants significantly impacts upon the social and economic restructuring of rural areas. As such, they have transformed rural spaces into translocal rural spaces both demographically and socio-economically.

From a different perspective, Meijering (Chapter 11) analyses the translocal effects of international mobilities through the Hare Krishna community Goloka Dhama in Germany. The chapter makes clear how both global networks of the religious community and the local links to the neighbouring villages interact to produce the local community.

Lastly, the chapter by de Lima (Chapter 12) engages with the international migration patterns in rural Scotland and how these processes contribute to the disruption of notions of rural spaces as 'isolated' and 'fixed'. Moreover, the chapter shows how migrant identities are created in spaces between places of origin and destination, and between majority and minority groups. As such, the chapter shows how international mobility creates a plurality of rural spaces and voices within a translocal, dynamic and stretched context.

Taken together, the chapters thus show the multitude of interrelations that produce rural spaces (Massey, 2005). Be they local, national or international – they are all part of the construction of rural areas as places that are in a constant process of 'becoming' and of negotiation between various interests and power relations. In this way, the mobilities and networks that produce rural spaces are, quite logically, crucial to the very survival of rural areas as populated spaces. Not only could we agree with Massey that without relations there would be no space, but also we would say that for rural spaces in particular, the relations that connect rural areas on the local and global levels are central for the possibilities of their residents to live and work there. On the national level, sufficient roads, opportunities for commuting, and human interactions with other places are major prerequisites for the sustainability of rural areas. On the international level, the global networks that are provided by firms and migrants contribute to the opportunities for rural areas to reach beyond the national that could provide a global up-scaling of rural space.

All of these findings thus point to the importance of continuing the analysis of the production of translocal rural spaces through internal and international relations. This book does not provide the full answer, but is a useful starting point for further analysis.

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Part I
Linking Nodes: People and Networks Connecting Places

Chapter 2
Between Marginalisation and Urbanisation: Mobilities and Social Change in Southern Portugal

Renato Miguel do Carmo and Sofia Santos

2.1 Introduction

This chapter draws upon mobility practices in two rural areas in the south of Portugal. One of the main purposes is to deconstruct the idea that mobility is an intrinsically urban phenomenon that basically occurs in areas with a high population density. As we will see, there may not be a linear relationship between higher urban densification and the increase in mobility. Indeed, the analytical definition that presupposes this linearity is not one that has only appeared recently: it has marked the way in which sociology itself has been interpreting the social phenomena associated with rural areas (Bell & Osti, 2010).

In empirical terms, the different intensities and directions of mobility are measured in two municipalities of the inland Algarve region that have undergone very different sociodemographic processes. São Brás de Alportel, despite its inland location, is relatively close to Faro, the region's largest city. In the last 20 years, this municipality has not only grown in terms of population but has also shown important urbanisation dynamics. The other municipality is Alcoutim, which is on its way to accentuated marginalisation, reflected in the ongoing exodus and aging of the population. We will use these two different territories to try to ascertain how mobilities occur and to what extent they interfere in forms of social relationships by integrating internal mobility patterns, such as migration and daily travelling, shopping or commuting for work.

We will start by introducing the theoretical perspectives on mobilities in rural areas that we find most pertinent and then will present the two municipalities that are our case studies. The results of the survey applied will be analysed in terms of

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_2,
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the geography and the social composition of the mobilities,[1] relating it afterwards to the levels of trust and mutual knowledge. These readings are informed by theoretical considerations regarding what these data tell us about the dynamics and diversity of rural spaces.

A questionnaire was used to identify the mobility dynamics in these two municipalities: 410 questionnaires were given in São Brás de Alportel and 268 in Alcoutim in July and September 2009, respectively. The questionnaires were analysed taking into account age, gender and geographical criteria. One main concern was to get to several different geographical contexts and not only the villages centres, giving specific representation to the most rural and hilly areas, specially on S. Brás de Alportel municipality.

2.2 Mobilities in Rural Areas: A Theoretical Approach

The intensification of spatial mobility is one of the most expressive effects of the globalisation processes and of the emergence of networks as fundamental platforms for the contemporary societies' organisation. Speed has increased not only in electronic and information circuits, but also in people's travels in various forms. There are a number of relatively stereotyped images of the modern individual who commutes every day between different places in the metropolitan area or who travels abroad regularly for work or leisure purposes and wanders around the most dynamic cities in the world. In addition to these typical characters, there is another, the migrant, who has to live and work in a foreign country due a number of constraints.

These are some of the figures of our time and their common characteristic is their (more or less forced, more or less free) ability to move regularly between different places. However, at the same time as they move around more or less intensely, they and many other players also populate, inhabit and work in concrete places, to which they constantly return. For example, commuters go back home in the evening and migrants or tourists return at the end of a period of work (or a holiday) abroad. There is thus an overlapping relationship between mobility and immobility practices, however permanent they may be, in a given physical area.

Places are made up of certain morphological and physical textures and their own dynamics and functionalities, which interfere in relationships and social processes (Park & Burgess, 1984 [1925]). Space does not correspond to a merely neutral dimension; it should be analysed as an intrinsic part of the process that structures and triggers the *production of mobilities* (Carmo, 2009b; Cresswell, 2006). Mobility is not immune to space itself. On the contrary, it is partly determined by its own physical and social configuration: "Mobility is always located and materialised, and occurs through mobilisations of locality and rearrangements of the materiality of places" (Scheller & Urry, 2006, p. 209). Because it is not neutral, space should be

[1] The survey was applied in the context of a CIES-IUL research project funded by FCT which was intitled "Voluntary associations and local development: public policies, social capital and citizenship". From this project was written a broader report in portuguese language (see Carmo, 2011).

analysed as an active (not just passive) component that results in intense mobility processes.

Going back again to stereotyped images, these and other characters are usually represented in urban, mainly metropolitan environments. Mobility is often associated with the dynamic and effervescent setting of metropolises, as if all the other territories, such as rural areas, were still mainly occupied by immobile populations in the restricted perimeter of local towns and villages.

In an article entitled "The sociological construction of rural areas" (2009a), Carmo identified the essential traits of this sociological perspective, which was developed throughout the 20th century and conceived in opposition to the viewpoints interpreting the urban phenomenon. A symptom of this is the fact that the categories used by one of the most renowned rural sociologists of the first half of the century, Redfield (1989 [1960]), are much the same as those that Wirth (1938) used to characterise the urban way of life, only in opposite ways. While Wirth considered that cities were essentially extensive, dense, heterogeneous places, Redfield felt that rural societies were characterised above all by their relative homogeneity and the fact that they were located in small, sparsely populated areas (Carmo, 2009a, p. 258).

Carmo's arguments (2009a) show how the sociological interpretation of rural and urban phenomena, at least until the mid-20th century, shared the same analysis paradigm, which has its roots in the works of one of the founders of sociology, Durkheim (1987 [1895]). The French author considered that a given internal milieu, which could be a community or a specific settlement, was characterised by interdependence between two types of density: *material* and *dynamic*. In short, we can say that the former is defined mainly by physical volume (e.g. the existence of infrastructures) and population size, while the latter identifies the degree of concentration and interconnection of social relationships and movements. From this point of view, a close relationship is established between the morphological component of a given area (material density) and its degree of spatial and social dynamism, especially mobility. On the basis of this definition, it is easy to see the consequences of the reasoning in question: areas with low population density tend to be areas with less dynamic density.

Although this assumption is valid for certain socio-spatial settings, it does not apply to many other contemporary realities in which we identify diverse social and territorial dynamics that may develop in sparsely populated areas with rural characteristics. Indeed, one of the most interesting impacts of today's globalisation is the increasing complexity of relationships between different territories. Just like economies and populations, places have also become more interdependent. This applies equally to large cities, towns or villages. In fact, the mobility of residents in some of these communities, many of which continue to suffer from demographic regression (e.g. aging and depopulation), has increased substantially in recent years.

In a study of a village in a rural region called Alentejo, in southern Portugal, Carmo (2010) identified the coexistence of these two dynamics. The village that is continually losing its population is the same one where its residents are commuting more and more to other locations, usually cities. In this case, the reduction in material density has not caused a corresponding decrease in dynamic density; in fact, the opposite has occurred.

This difference between densities makes us look at rural areas from another perspective, in which the mobility phenomenon is increasingly important and necessarily interferes with other social dimensions. It is interesting to address the impact of more intense mobility on the way in which social relationships are structured. It is common knowledge that rural communities have always been characterised by very close and intense forms of relationship that are expressed in regular forms of social control. In many cases, individual identity has fused with the village's own collective identity, especially in communities in remote, inaccessible areas. One of the most marked expressions of this relational intensity was the generalisation of *mutual knowledge*: not only everybody knows everybody else, but there are also regular, systematic forms of reciprocal help and trust (Mendras, 1976; Pinto, 1985; Rémy & Voyé, 1994).

Considering these traditional aspects, a lot was written in the 20th century about the relationship between material and dynamic composition and the dominant type of solidarity in these communities. As Durkheim (1989 [1893]) and other classic authors stated, these communities are characterised by the fact that they develop their own forms of *mechanical solidarity,* which in turn are different from those that predominate in more densely populated, more urbanised areas, which Durkheim calls *organic solidarity*. This type of solidarity is basically the result of the impact of the economic modernisation and the corresponding increase in the division of labour. Its essential traits can be found, for example, in the separation of individual from collective identity, in the lower importance of traditional relationships of mutual help and knowledge and in the consequent generalisation of anonymity.

In this line of reasoning, a more or less linear relationship was soon established in sociological analysis between material and relational densification in different population settlements and the generalisation of a given type of solidarity. In other words, according to this concept, an increase in dynamic density gradually results in the erosion of traditional forms of solidarity in terms of mutual knowledge and interpersonal trust.

Taking account of the recent trends mentioned above, which also affect rural areas, such as the intensification of certain forms of spatial mobility, it is reasonable to question whether this analytic assumption still makes sense. Does the impact of mobility result in a reduction of mutual knowledge relationships?

This question is the theme of the second part of the chapter. In addition to wanting to deconstruct the idea that mobility is a phenomenon specific to urban areas, efforts are made to understand whether it has had a decisive impact on more traditional forms of solidarity.

2.3 Diversity in the Inland Algarve: Alcoutim and São Brás de Alportel

The Algarve illustrates on a regional scale the national settlement trends: concentration on the coast, bipolarisation and depopulation of the interior. Facing the urbanisation along the coast, the continuing depopulation of the inland areas accentuates the contrast in the region's sociodemographic composition. The cities of Faro

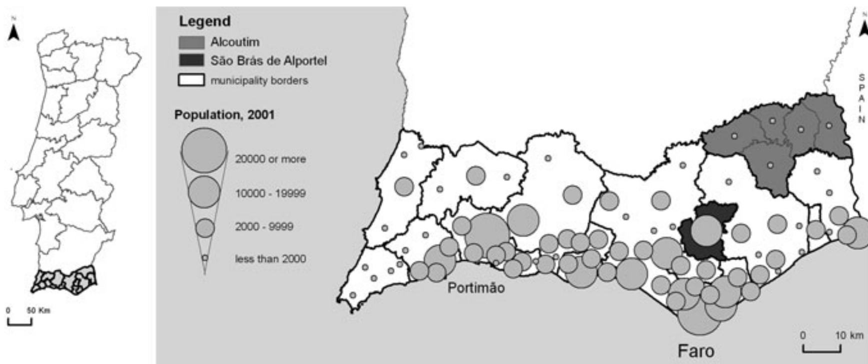

Fig. 2.1 Resident population in the Algarve by parish in 2001 (INE) and Alcoutim and São Brás de Alportel

(on the central Algarve coast) and Portimão (west coast) bipolarise the urban system. Faro is expanding to neighbouring municipalities such as Loulé, Olhão and also São Brás de Alportel. Although the Portimão urban area has less intense articulation between centralities, it tends to expand to the municipalities of Lagoa and Lagos. In turn, Albufeira, a major holiday resort, is located between these two centres, thereby completing the most populated part of the region (Fig. 2.1).

The municipalities of São Brás de Alportel and Alcoutim, both in the inland Algarve, occupy different positions in relation to this context (Fig. 2.1). São Brás has been included in the region's central urbanisation and it is connected directly to the region's capital and largest city, Faro. Alcoutim, on the other hand, has become increasingly marginalised and connected to cities of lesser importance, such as Vila Real de Santo António (a municipality at the eastern end of the Algarve). This articulation is particularly complicated because of the municipality's peripheral nature, which is accentuated by difficult geographical access conditions.

The 1990s were a period of considerable growth for the Algarve and a number of municipalities had population variation rates of over 15%, while the national figure was 5%. Four municipalities exceeded 20% growth (Table 2.1). São Brás de Alportel was one of the few that continued to grow considerably compared to surrounding municipalities such as Loulé and Faro, or even municipalities that had experienced similar dynamics in 1991–2001 but slowed down from 2001 to 2008, such as Vila Real de Santo António. Alcoutim, like Monchique, has continued to lose large numbers of its population.

Alcoutim and São Brás de Alportel have therefore experienced very different sociodemographic dynamics, between marginalisation and suburbanisation (see Table 2.2). On the one hand, Alcoutim is a more rural and marginalised municipality where the trend towards marginalisation has increased with a continuing and accentuated loss of population in the last 20 years. Its population is considerably older, with lower school attainment compared to the regional and national levels. Indeed, between 2001 and 2007, it was the under-25 age groups that had the most negative variation rates (Table 2.3). On the other hand, its habitability conditions show some

Table 2.1 Variation ratios of population (%) in the Algarve by municipality, 1981–2008

Geographical context	1981–1991	1991–2001	2001–2008
Portugal	0.3	5.0	2.6
Algarve region	5.5	15.8	8.8
Albufeira	21.7	50.6	23.5
Alcoutim	–13.1	–17.5	–17.7
Aljezur	–1.0	5.6	0.7
Castro Marim	–6.8	–3.1	–1.8
Faro	12.5	14.4	1.1
Lagoa	7.3	23.1	20.5
Lagos	9.3	18.0	13.7
Loulé	5.8	27.0	10.6
Monchique	–23.9	–4.6	–13.6
Olhão	6.5	10.9	8.6
Portimão	12.7	15.4	11.3
S. Brás de Alportel	0.3	33.3	25.3
Silves	4.9	2.8	6.9
Tavira	1.0	0.6	1.6
Vila do Bispo	1.1	–7.2	1.3
V. Real de Sto António (VRSA)	–11.9	24.7	3.2

Source: INE – RGPH (1981, 1991, 2001) and INE – Anuário Estatístico da Região do Algarve (AERA) (2009)

Table 2.2 Sociodemographic data of Alcoutim and São Brás de Alportel

Variables	Year	Portugal	Algarve	Alcoutim	S. Brás Alportel
Resident population (no.)	2008	10,627,250	430,084	3104	12,569
Pop. density (no./km^2)	2008	115.4	86.1	5.4	82.0
Aging rate (%)	2008	115.5	123.5	532.8	161.3
Illiteracy rate (%)	2001	9.0	10.4	29.4	9.3
Resident population with university degree (%)	2001	8.6	7.3	2.3	7.5
Family homes without at least one basic infrastructure (%)	2001	9.1	9.1	34.4	12.0
Resident pop. working or studying in another municipality (%)	2001	28.5	19.2	13.6	35.8
Pop. employed in primary sector (%)	2001	5.0	6.1	18.9	2.9
Foreign resident population (%)	2001	2.2	6.1	1.7	7.1

Source: INE – RGPH (2001) and INE – AERA (2009)

disturbing figures, with a high percentage of dwellings without at least one basic infrastructure (Table 2.2).

In spite of its inland location, São Brás de Alportel is relatively integrated into the urban system around the district capital and has a highly accentuated growth dynamic. It was actually the Algarve municipality that grew most from 2001 to 2008 (Table 2.2). Its population is younger, more educated and even shows some

Table 2.3 Variation ratio of population (%) 2001–2008 by age and municipality

Geographical context	0–14	15–24	25–64	65 and over
Portugal	–1.2	–18.8	14.2	11.6
Algarve region	16.2	–9.6	24.5	12.5
Albufeira	12.4	13.6	47.4	27.2
Alcoutim	–31.8	–42.5	2.5	–15.1
Aljezur	0.3	–4.9	22.3	–0.7
Castro Marim	–3.9	–22.3	15.7	–1.2
Faro	14.3	–23.0	12.4	12.0
Lagoa	16.1	3.6	40.6	24.0
Lagos	13.4	2.5	32.7	15.6
Loulé	24.0	–3.9	26.7	12.2
Monchique	–31.0	–26.8	3.4	–1.5
Olhão	30.8	–13.2	15.5	20.8
Portimão	42.8	–11.9	22.1	19.9
S. Brás de Alportel	15.8	13.5	53.3	32.4
Silves	6.4	–12.0	27.0	2.7
Tavira	0.3	–20.2	21.2	1.4
Vila do Bispo	–9.3	–10.2	21.1	2.2
V. Real de Sto António	–3.6	–16.5	19.8	15.6

Source: INE – AERA (2009)

signs of suburbanisation, with a relevant percentage of the population working or studying outside the municipality (Table 2.2). Although São Brás de Alportel had a high percentage of people working or going to school outside the municipality (35.9%) in 2001 (Table 2.2), there is confirmation of its attractiveness to the resident population of working age (the 25-to-64 age group was the one that grew most – see Table 1.3) and even to foreign population (Table 2.2), which highlights the municipality's demographic dynamism.

In Alcoutim, in addition to its large elderly population, the other important characteristic is the proportion of people of working age employed in the municipality itself. In spite of improvements in travel conditions to neighbouring municipalities (Castro Marim and Vila Real de Santo António), Alcoutim is still highly isolated and peripheral, and accessibility and transport conditions are important factors to be considered. In a municipality with poor economic dynamism, a little over 10% of the employed population leaves the municipality to work or study (Table 2.2).

In terms of the employed population by sector, the primary sector in Alcoutim is much more important (18.9% of the employed population in 2001) than in São Brás de Alportel (2.9%) or even in the region as a whole (6.1%). This difference can also be found in the inhabitants' occupational profile. São Brás de Alportel has a higher percentage of managers, professionals, technicians and associate professionals (23% in São Brás de Alportel against 12% in Alcoutim) and industrial workers, craftsmen and similar workers (23%). In Alcoutim, the importance of people working in agriculture is confirmed (18%).[2]

[2] INE – RGPH (2001).

2.4 The Geography of Mobilities

By looking at one of the parents' place of birth, we assessed not only the municipality's openness to the exterior but also its ability to attract and hold on to its population. The respondent's migratory experience may also suggest different degrees of contact with the outside. Together, these dynamics draw paths that to a certain extent provide information about the local and regional spheres of influence. In immediate terms, peripheral places may suffer from highly deficient accessibility, either due to their physical conditions or because of the population's capacity for mobility. Nonetheless, it is necessary to take account of the population's migratory path, especially considering the probable contingent of the population returning "home" on retirement.

When interpreting mobilities, it is important to look beyond the classic work-home commute. The urban transport system is responsible for carrying people mainly to and from work and is therefore commonly studied.[3] In fact, mobilities are much more complex and present much more diversified anchor points in the organisation of people's lives, going way beyond the work-home factor. There are schools, day centres, hospitals, supermarkets, etc.

Beyond spatial connections over longer timeframes and back-and-forth movements for shopping purposes, we also look into urban family networks that result in trips of variable frequency but that are still important. We tried to explore what reasons other than work lead people to travel regularly outside the municipality: visiting family and friends, shopping and leisure (such as trips to the supermarket, shopping centres, restaurants and cafés) or other types of service that require important trips, such as health services.

Table 2.4 shows the mother's place of birth and the respondent's migratory path. They demonstrate that the municipality of São Brás de Alportel is a more open and integrated area with a greater power of attraction, as the mothers of 44% of the respondents were born outside the municipality. Many of them came from central Algarve municipalities and also from Almodôvar, a municipality in the Alentejo region. In Alcoutim, the parent's place of birth cannot be similarly analysed, as most of them were born in the municipality (almost ¾ of the respondents, although the second most frequent origin was Mértola, in Alentejo).

More than half of the respondents from both municipalities had already lived somewhere else at least once. There were a considerable percentage of emigrants who had returned home, particularly in São Brás de Alportel. The questionnaire confirmed the greater integration of the population from São Brás in municipalities in the central Algarve, especially Faro. As for Alcoutim, Faro takes a secondary place.

[3] Marques da Costa and Marques da Costa (2003) and Marques da Costa (2007) clearly illustrates the relationship between employment basins, mobilities and the urban system in Portugal. Even so, gender studies in this regard have highlighted the persistence of a reductive and potentially discriminatory perspective of this approach to mobilities that focuses mainly on commuting, in the drafting of public policies, especially on transports (Greed, 2006). This question is now starting to be recognised institutionally at national and international level (CIG, 2009).

Table 2.4 Migratory experience and mother's place of birth (% of total journeys)

Municipality	Alcoutim		S. Brás Alportel	
	Mother's place of birth	Living elsewhere	Mother's place of birth	Living elsewhere
Faro	3.0	21.3	18.2	26.7
Lisbon Metropolitan Area (LMA)	4.5	27.7	5.3	13.3
Vila Real de Santo António (VRSA)	0.0	5.0	0.6	1.8
Loulé	4.5	5.0	12.4	14.5
Tavira	10.4	3.5	12.9	10.3
Mértola	26.9	5.0	2.4	1.8
Olhão	0.0	1.4	5.9	7.9
Castro Marim	10.4	5.0	0.0	0.0
Almodôvar (Alentejo)	3.0	0.7	7.6	2.4
Alentejo region (others)	20.9	9.2	10.1	6.1
Others	16.4	16.2	24.6	15.2
Total – outside the municipality, in Portugal	100.0 (67)	100.0 (140)	100.0 (192)	100.0 (165)
Abroad	2.2	17.1	4.7	25.1
Outside municipality – total	26.0	63.4	44.0	53.4

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

There, the Lisbon metropolitan area was the most representative national destination (27.7%) amongst the population that migrated. There was also a high proportion of migration to other countries (17%).

Generally speaking, in these mobilities, São Brás de Alportel reproduces greater integration in the region and particularly in the urban system centralised in Faro, with important connections to Loulé, Olhão and Tavira. All together, these five municipalities form the central Algarve urban network around Faro's central position. The polarisation of Faro reaches Alcoutim, though it competes with the influence of the Lisbon metropolitan area at the national level and with Vila Real de Santo António at the regional level.

To continue our interpretation of the geography of mobility routes, let us look at "spatial networks" which are set up through family ties, and also at the actual trips that the respondents make to visit relatives and friends (see Fig. 2.2 and Table 2.5). We must stress that though this type of trip is generally less frequent than others, such as shopping for basic necessities, it still spurs important travel. Half of the respondents in São Brás de Alportel said that they left the municipality to visit friends and relatives and almost half of these did so at least once a month (16% of those at least once a week). Around 65% of the respondents in Alcoutim visited relatives and friends outside the municipality and 37.2% of those did so at least once a month (while the others said they only did so several times a year).

Generally, the respondents' answers follow the map showing relatives' geographical location. The Alcoutim residents in general are more mobile. They go out of the

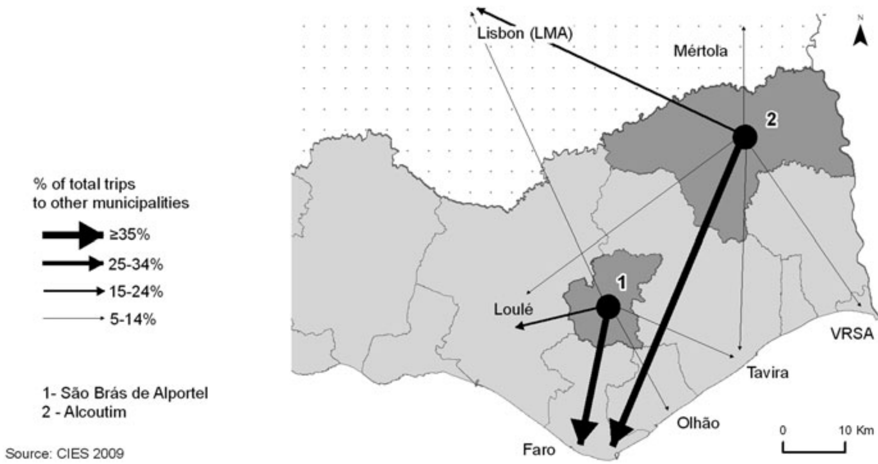

Fig. 2.2 Trips to visit family and friends

Table 2.5 Trips: visiting to family or friends (% of total trips)

Destination	Alcoutim	S. Brás Alportel
Faro	38.6	38.9
Lisboa (LMA)	18.8	8.4
VRSA	9.1	0.0
Loulé	4.5	20.7
Tavira	5.1	8.9
Mértola	4.0	0.5
Olhão	2.3	8.4
Other destinations	17.6	14.2
Total of people moving (no.)	176	203
% of total respondents	65.7	49.5

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

municipality more and their trips require more effort, due to the distances and more difficult access to their destinations. Once again, the most important regional destination is Faro for both municipalities (followed by Loulé for São Brás and the Lisbon metropolitan area for Alcoutim).

When we look at the maps showing travel for shopping purposes (Figs. 2.3 and 2.4) at stores, supermarkets or shopping centres, the diversity of flows is not so accentuated and stronger relationships appear (Table 2.6). The dynamics of mobility from Alcoutim is confirmed: 82.1% of the respondents said that they left the municipality to go to the grocery stores or to the supermarket and most of them went to Vila Real de Santo António, while 14% went to Faro. These trips are more frequent to Faro when they want to go to shopping centres, though the influence of Faro over São Brás de Alportel is unequivocal for trips to shopping centres and supermarkets.

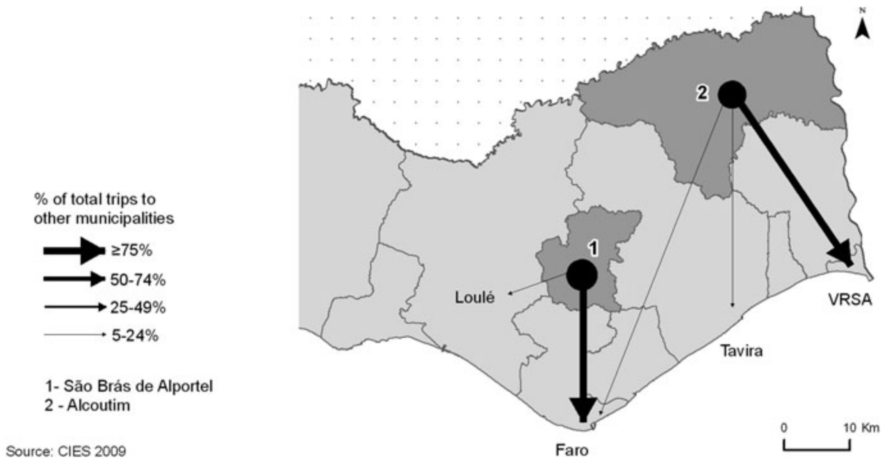

Fig. 2.3 Trips to go to grocery stores or/and to the supermarket

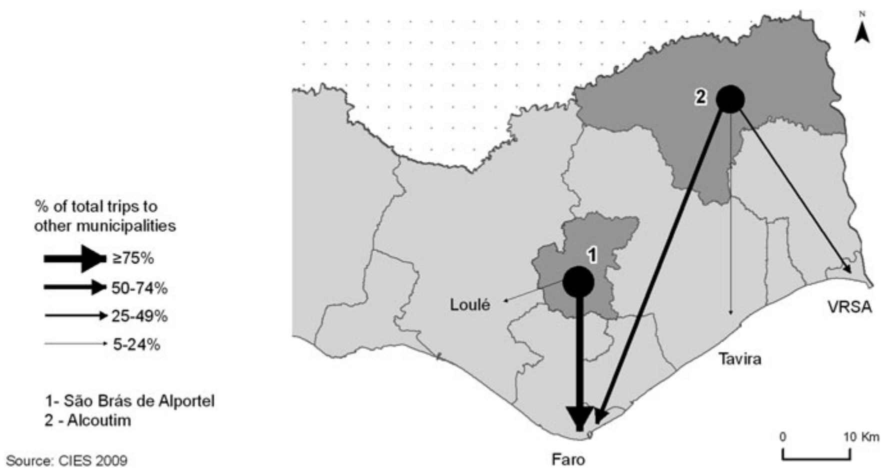

Fig. 2.4 Trips to shops and shopping centres

If we now cross-reference the destination of travel and its frequency for all the respondents, almost 30% of the residents in Alcoutim travel to Vila Real de Santo António at least once a week to go shopping. The figure is almost double for those who go at least once a month. In São Brás de Alportel, 10% of the respondents go to Faro once a week and 25% at least once a month.

Generally, a substantial part of this mobility relates to generalised consumer habits and practices but also with the development and strong acceptance of certain modern urban morphologies (shopping centres). On the other hand, this intense travel would not be possible without the use of private transport, which has also

Table 2.6 Trips for groceries and to shops and shopping centres (% of total trips)

	Alcoutim		S. Brás Alportel	
Destination	Groceries/ supermarket	Shops and shopping centres	Groceries/ supermarket	Shops and shopping centres
Faro	13.6	50.0	77.1	90.0
VRSA	78.2	36.1	0.0	0.0
Loulé	0.5	0.5	17.4	7.3
Tavira	5.0	8.8	0.5	0.8
Other destinations	2.7	4.6	5.0	1.9
Total of people moving (no.)	220	194	201	260
% of total respondents	82.1	72.4	49	63.4

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

Table 2.7 Means of transport to work and for other purposes (%)

Means of transport	Alcoutim		S. Brás Alportel	
	Work	Other purposes	Work	Other purposes
Own car	49.4	73.1	55.8	67.3
Public transport	5.4	17.2	2.8	10.0
On foot	40.4	4.9	28.4	11.0
Others	4.8	4.8	13.0	11.7
Total (no.)	100.0 (166)	100.0 (268)	100.0 (215)	100.0 (410)

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

become generalised (the main form of transport is their own car, especially in non-working periods). If we look at the means of transport used in travel to work and during non-working time, we confirm a dual principle of immobility and mobility in Alcoutim (Table 2.7): more people live close to their work (about 40% walk to work) and travel more when not working, with the majority using their own cars (73.1%) and also with greater use of public transport (17.2%).

To end our geographical reading of these flows, we will now look at other reasons for travel (Table 2.8). On one hand, going out to eat or for a drink is less frequent (around 37% of the respondents in São Brás and 33% in Alcoutim go to restaurants or cafés in other municipalities), though people travel from Alcoutim to Vila Real de Santo António and Faro and from São Brás de Alportel to Faro, Loulé and Tavira for this purpose. On the other hand, services that are rarer in terms of availability, such as doctor's appointments, require longer trips because of their scarcity and out of necessity (47% in São Brás and 57% in Alcoutim go to health services outside their municipality). These trips are not so frequent: 79.1% of the respondents in Alcoutim and 85% of those in São Brás travel outside the municipality to health services only

Table 2.8 Travel for leisure and health reasons (% of total trips)

	Alcoutim		S. Brás de Alportel	
Destination	Restaurants, pubs	Going to the doctor	Restaurants, pubs	Going to the doctor
Faro	42.7	80.0	67.8	84.8
VRSA	39.3	10.0	0.0	0.0
Loulé	2.2	1.0	20.4	7.3
Tavira	3.4	1.0	5.9	1.0
Others	12.4	8.0	5.9	6.9
Total of people moving (no.)	89	153	152	191
% of total respondents	33.2	57.1	37.1	46.6

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

a few times a year. However, there is a particular effort when it comes to the older populations, who have to travel farther in the case of Alcoutim.

Faro is a central destination for both municipalities. The local authorities often provide public transport services as part of their social policies. For example, there are buses to take young people to upper secondary school or to take elderly people to Faro Hospital, or mobile health units are set up within the municipalities.

2.5 The Social Constitution of Mobility

Now that we have characterised the geography of travel for different reasons (family networks, migration, shopping, leisure, etc.), it is essential to understand how mobility determines and is determined by a number of sociological variables. We will now analyse the effect of these pendular movements on the everyday life of the residents in both municipalities. As presented, mobility is a reality for the population of São Brás de Alportel, a municipality that has undergone considerable sociodemographic development, and of Alcoutim, which, on the other hand, has suffered ongoing depopulation. Indeed, the data on mobility in Alcoutim are actually quite surprising as it is an ultra-peripheral municipality in terms of its geographical location and its aging demographic composition.

The construction of a general mobility index[4] shows the travel frequency and there is no great difference between municipalities, though in São Brás there is greater polarisation between more and less intense mobility practices. Nonetheless, if we include the age variable, we find a substantial difference between the behaviour of younger and older people (Table 2.9). Here, 46.3% of young people travel more,

[4] This index is the result of combining six variables that measure the regularity of travel: for supermarket shopping, going to shops and shopping centres, going to the cinema, theatre and concerts, visiting friends or relatives, going to restaurants and cafés and going to bars and clubs.

Table 2.9 Intensity of mobility by age and municipality (no. and % of total)

Municipality	Frequency	Age			Total
		Up to 35	35–64	65 and over	
São Brás de Alportel	Intense and very intense	46	26	4	76
		49.5	15.7	2.8	19.0
	Not very intense	39	81	45	165
		41.9	48.8	31.9	41.3
	Sporadic	8	59	92	159
		8.6	35.5	65.2	39.8
	Total	93	166	141	400
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Alcoutim	Intense and very intense	16	24	0	40
		39.0	17.5	0.0	15.7
	Not very intense	25	95	31	151
		61.0	69.3	40.8	59.4
	Sporadic	0	18	45	63
		0.0	13.1	59.2	24.8
	Total	41	137	76	254
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

while the figure is less than 2% for older people (at this level of mobility). This profile does not differ much between the two municipalities (Table 2.9). In fact, the close relationship between mobility and age is not particular to these populations and can be found in other socio-spatial contexts in which young people have a greater capacity for travel (Carmo, 2010).

The picture is very similar when we consider the level of school attainment. Here, more educated people have higher levels of mobility: 41.7% of the respondents with upper secondary or tertiary education had high mobility as opposed to 3.1% of those who had not gone beyond primary school. There are no great differences between the two municipalities. There is obviously a degree of correspondence between these data and those for age: low school attainment is over-represented amongst the elderly.

If we consider mobility by social class, we find that the category of professionals and managers has the most intense mobility level (40%), followed by administrative employees (33.3%). On the other hand, retail and service employees, industrial workers, entrepreneurs, directors and self-employed workers have lower levels of intense mobility (24.4, 20.3, 19.1 and 10.5%, respectively). The figures for mobility based on social class are partly related to the data on school attainment, as the two classes with intense mobility practices are precisely those with the highest qualifications.

We can therefore say that mobility practices intensify in more educated groups and in younger populations. In fact, these are the variables that contribute most to a sociological differentiation in terms of mobility. Curiously, we found no great

Table 2.10 Intensity of travel for shopping by age and municipality (no. and % of total)

Municipality	Frequency	Age			
		Up to 35	35–64	65 and over	Total
São Brás de Alportel	Very intense	22	26	2	50
		23.2	15.4	1.4	12.3
	Intense	36	49	20	105
		37.9	29.0	14.1	25.9
	Not very intense	33	57	34	124
		34.7	33.7	23.9	30.5
	Sporadic	4	37	86	127
		4.2	21.9	60.6	31.3
	Total	95	169	142	406
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Alcoutim	Very intense	19	49	16	84
		46.3	34.0	20.0	31.7
	Intense	17	55	10	82
		41.5	38.2	12.5	30.9
	Not very intense	5	28	24	57
		12.2	19.4	30.0	21.5
	Sporadic	0	12	30	42
		0.0	8.3	37.5	15.8
	Total	41	144	80	265
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

differences on the basis of gender, as men and women have very close levels of mobility in both municipalities.

However, if we limit our analysis to travel for shopping,[5] we come across some relevant differences between the two municipalities. Although there is still the same type of polarisation between age groups, we find a greater intensity in travel in Alcoutim than in São Brás (Table 2.10). In other words, in all age groups, the intensity of travel outside their municipalities for shopping purposes is always greater in Alcoutim, as 46.3% of younger people have very intense mobility, as opposed to only 23.2% in São Brás. The same applies to the older age groups, at 20–1.4%, respectively. There is a similar trend for the education variable, although the difference between municipalities is smaller.

These data can be interpreted in light of two interdependent processes. On one hand, they confirm the hypothesis that mobility (and its greater intensity) is far from being a phenomenon that is exclusive to more urban areas or has more dynamism of urbanisation. In this case, the degree of mobility in the population living in the more marginal, peripheral area is quite expressive and, when it comes to travel for shopping purposes, it is higher than in São Brás, whose area is more integrated in

[5] The more intense mobility for these shopping purposes justified dividing this index into 'very intense' and 'intense'.

the district capital's urban system. On the other hand, this intense mobility on the part of Alcoutim residents is also the result of its geographical and socioeconomic marginality. Living in this municipality, people are more or less obliged to travel to meet certain needs that they would not otherwise be able to satisfy if they resorted only to the range of goods and services available locally.

Using Durkheim's conceptualisation, we could say that, after a certain point, the continued reduction in material density, expressed by the demographic indicators of depopulation and marginalisation for example, may promote increased mobility. Although this finding may seem paradoxical at first, it consolidates the theoretic studies in which we question precisely this linear logic between densification (urban and population) and increased mobility, based on the assumption of an inverse relationship where, in a less densely populated setting, there is supposedly less mobility. In fact, according to the data, we found that an exponential increase in mobility may also occur in sparsely populated settings.

Nonetheless, it is important to stress that this increase is found basically in travel for shopping purposes. Regarding mobility resulting from the availability of work outside the municipality, it is much more intense and generalised in São Brás, benefiting from its proximity to Faro. This phenomenon is practically nonexistent in Alcoutim, as almost all the population of working age works in the municipality. This situation is one of the more decisive effects of its ongoing socioeconomic and geographical marginalisation, as it is impractical for its residents to find employment alternatives in the small number of jobs that are available in the municipality. As a result, many people have left the municipality in recent decades and those who have stayed on are those who still manage to keep or find jobs locally.

2.6 Solidarity and Mutual Knowledge

As mentioned above, the second goal of this chapter was to understand whether, in these areas located in different settings, mobility has an important impact on forms of interpersonal relationships. Does the generalisation of mobility in everyday life change traditional forms of social relationships?

The dominant type of solidarity in more traditional rural areas was characterised by close social and identity proximity, reflected by mutual knowledge and a level of interpersonal trust. These ties have tended to decline with more generalised urbanisation and population densification processes. In other words, the increase in material and dynamic densities has caused a profound change in traditional forms of solidarity.

On analysing the data, it was found that processes of intense social dynamism may develop in sparsely populated areas, as is the case of mobility. Therefore, the principle defining a certain linear correspondence between types of density has to be questioned. However, does this mean that the area's physical and morphological component has lost importance as a variable to be taken into account in the analysis of social relationships?

The comparison that we have been making between two different areas may help us to reflect on the pertinence of this question. Let us begin with the issue of trust. In the survey, we asked whether the respondents trusted their neighbours and to what extent. On average, around 43% of the interviewees said that they trusted all their neighbours. However, if we look at each municipality individually, we find a considerable difference. In Alcoutim, 55.3% said that they trusted all their neighbours while in São Brás only 34.6% said the same.

In sociological terms, there is a similar trend for the degree of trust to increase with age in both municipalities (Table 2.11). Fewer younger people trust all their neighbours, though the figures are very different in each municipality: 21.7% in São Brás and 45.2% in Alcoutim. Although the degree of trust in neighbours increases with age in both territories, the percentages tend to be higher in all age groups in Alcoutim. The same trends occur when we include the education variable. From this we can infer that people with more intense mobility (young people and those with higher school attainment) show the lowest degrees of trust between neighbours. In fact, the data reflects precisely this if we cross-reference intensity of mobility with trust in neighbours. In the intense mobility category, only 25.7% said that they trusted all their neighbours, as opposed to 42.2% and 53.9% in situations of less mobility. Even so, this discrepancy tends to fade a little in Alcoutim.

Table 2.11 Trust in neighbours by age and municipality (no. and % of total)

		Age			
Municipality	Trust in neighboors	Up to 35	35–64	65 and over	Total
São Brás de Alportel	In all	20	51	67	138
		21.7	30.5	47.9	34.6
	In most	19	49	28	96
		20.7	29.3	20.0	24.1
	In some	42	56	38	136
		45.7	33.5	27.1	34.1
	In none	11	11	7	29
		12.0	6.6	5.0	7.3
	Total	92	167	140	399
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Alcoutim	In all	19	78	50	147
		45.2	54.2	62.5	55.3
	In most	7	34	18	59
		16.7	23.6	22.5	22.2
	In some	12	29	11	52
		28.6	20.1	13.8	19.5
	In none	4	3	1	8
		9.5	2.1	1.3	3.0
	Total	42	144	80	266
		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

Some strata of the population with a certain sociological profile (such as young and more qualified people) tend not only to have more intense mobility practices but also to trust fewer neighbours. However, at the same time, a proportional difference appears between municipalities: the scope of interpersonal trust is much greater in Alcoutim, even when considering each of the sociological categories mentioned.

However, taking into account other relational dimensions, the difference between the two municipalities increases exponentially in such a way that it reduces the influence of the variables analysed. Where mutual knowledge is concerned, a considerable difference prevails between the respondents in São Brás, where only 55.3% said that they knew almost all their neighbours, and the 86.9% of the residents in Alcoutim (Table 2.12).

We find the same trend, although it is not so polarised, in the frequency with which respondents talk to their neighbours. More than two-thirds of the residents in Alcoutim answered that they talked to them practically every day, as opposed to 37.8% in São Brás (see Table 2.13).

Taking account of these results, we find that the composition of the territories and the type of changes they undergo are decisive factors in the forms of interpersonal relationships. We could assert that material density is a conditioning factor for levels of mutual knowledge and interpersonal trust in local communities. The effects of the urbanisation and substantial demographic growth in São Brás are necessarily reflected in forms of social relationship, where the more traditional components are becoming less important. On the contrary, the ongoing loss of population and the permanent marginalisation of Alcoutim are factors that influence the continuance of more traditional social traits specific to rural areas.

Table 2.12 Familiarity with neighbours and by municipality (no. and % of total)

	Municipality		
Do you know your neighbours?	S. Brás de Alportel	Alcoutim	Total
No	9	1	10
	2.2	0.4	1.5
Very few	27	3	30
	6.6	1.1	4.4
Some	91	13	104
	22.2	4.9	15.4
Most	56	18	74
	13.7	6.7	10.9
All or almost all	226	233	459
	55.3	86.9	67.8
Total	409	268	677
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

Table 2.13 Frequency of conversations with neighbours and by municipality

	Municipality		
Do you usually talk to your neighbours?	São Brás de Alportel	Alcoutim	Total
Practically every day	153	180	333
	37.8	67.2	49.5
Several days a week	154	67	221
	38.0	25.0	32.8
Basically at weekends	12	7	19
	3.0	2.6	2.8
Rarely	86	14	100
	21.2	5.2	14.9
Total	405	268	673
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Survey applied (CIES, 2009)

2.7 Conclusion

As mentioned in the theory section of this chapter, there is a close relationship between the production of mobilities (Cresswell, 2006) and the production of space (Lefebvre, 1974). It is not, therefore, a relationship of a hierarchical nature in which the place represents merely a kind of scenario in which a varied set of travel and movements takes place. Rather, it is above all a relationship of tension:

> The increase and intensification of mobility cause an organic disruption that leads us to configure the social space not as an undifferentiated surface impervious to the dizzying passage of flows, but as a kind of rising and falling mountain range that interferes and suffers constant interference as a result of interaction with countless trips and movements. In a sense, we can say that mobilities generate new spatialities and that they, in turn, shape and redirect circuits (Carmo, 2009b, p. 49).

On analysing the data on these two different territories, we found that this relationship generates and was generated by profound and sometimes unexpected tensions. In fact, if we take account of certain assumptions that have oriented a part of the sociological perspective, the data on Alcoutim are, in fact, a little surprising. When all is said and done, mobility is far from being an exclusively urban and metropolitan reality, as it constitutes a form of rural life in itself. Paradoxically, one of the symptoms of depopulation and demographic regression may be an exponential increase in spatial mobility. In other words, in places that are constantly losing people and that are simultaneously experiencing a certain functional dismantling of their local economy (not only in agriculture, but also in the loss of certain private and public services), the capacity for mobility represents an essential resource for those who have stayed and wish to continue to live in this type of area.

Here it is important to note that around 95% of the respondents in both municipalities expressed an interest in continuing to live there. Therefore, this trend towards

fixed populations is observed not only in the area that is growing and becoming urbanised but also in the one that has serious marginalisation problems. And it is not unreasonable to conclude that mobility conditions are an essential factor in guaranteeing that they stay in either of them. Concerning Alcoutim, where the vast majority of the population of working age works in the municipality, it is travel for shopping (goods and services) that is particularly important. In São Brás, there is also commuting to work, facilitated by the relative proximity of the largest city in the region (Faro).

The contrasting mobility profiles result from and interfere with the transformation of the area itself and therefore reporting to forms of interpersonal relationship in different ways. In the case of Alcoutim, which is a sparsely populated area with small settlements, greater mobility coexists with traditional forms of mutual knowledge and reciprocal trust. People travel more though this does not profoundly alter the framework of physical and social proximity. In São Brás de Alportel, there are considerable changes that reflect the impact of urbanisation on neighbours' relationships and a reduction in the extent of mutual knowledge.

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Chapter 3
The Ties That Bind? Spatial (Im)mobilities and the Transformation of Rural-Urban Connections

Henrike Rau

3.1 Introduction

Spatial mobility has gained considerable prominence as a topic in social theory and research in recent years, resulting in calls for a paradigm shift or 'mobility turn' (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Proponents of this 'new mobilities paradigm' (NMP) argue that social scientific inquiries into the conditions of late modernity need to move away from more static units of analysis such as societies and nation-states, and instead ought to concentrate on flows of people, goods and information (Bauman, 2000; Sheller & Urry, 2006; Urry, 2000, 2007; Cresswell, 2006; Mol, 2010). Undoubtedly, these proposals for the 'mobilisation of sociology' present an innovative alternative to more conventional views of society as a culturally homogeneous nation that neatly coincides with a specific territory (Rau, 2010). However, the suitability of the NMP for the study of rural forms of (im)mobility is less certain given its implicitly urban-centric orientation and its strong focus on largely voluntary, individualised mobility that is reliant on adequate physical and technological infrastructure most likely to be found in or near cities. Significant forms of (in)voluntary (im)mobility that are characteristic of rural life in the Republic of Ireland[1] and other parts of the world thus remain under-explored in these mobilities debates. It is argued that by framing cities as 'engines of spatial mobility', stereotypical notions of the rural as static and immobile are likely to be reproduced, albeit often inadvertently. This suggests that spatial mobility concepts that dominate contemporary social theory and research need to be broadened to capture the complexities of different flows of people, goods and knowledge that link different rural spaces and that are also central to the formation of rural-urban relationships.

Could observable rural-urban differences be understood differently if they were re-conceptualised as forms of (im)mobility whose benefits and burdens

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_3,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

are unequally distributed across space? If so, could the 'mobilisation' of social-scientific theory and research help to make visible and challenge stereotypes of rural life as sedentary and peripheral by showing its 'translocality' (Freitag & Von Oppen, 2010), that is, its increasing integration into multi-scalar networks of people and places? Finally, do virtual and corporeal mobilities actually erode both real and imagined differences between the ways of life of rural and urban dwellers, as popular accounts suggest? It is argued here that there is an urgent need to re-think and challenge existing rural/urban dichotomies that continue to influence much social theory and research as well as policy, albeit often implicitly, and to consider substituting these dichotomies with novel socio-spatial concepts and labels that capture various degrees of (im)mobility.

This chapter focuses on recently emerging forms of spatial mobility in rural Ireland to illustrate their advantages and drawbacks for people and places and to make visible their constituent influence on the formation of translocal networks. The main aim is to challenge widespread preconceptions of rural concerns as necessarily local and distinct from urban issues that continue to inform spatial planning and transport policy in Ireland. It will be shown that recent transport policy decisions have facilitated novel forms of rural mobility such as long-distance commuting, albeit not always intentionally, while at the same time further 'immobilising' certain vulnerable groups. Section 3.2 will focus on stereotypes of the rural as immobile and rooted in place (as distinct from the cosmopolitan character of cities), which have dominated social theory and research, at least until recently. Here it will be argued that perceptions of rural immobility continue to influence public debates and policy decisions in Ireland. Section 3.3 then examines two forms of rural mobility – car-based daily travel and property-related migration – to show how these practices serve to transcend rural-urban and national boundaries. Section 3.4 sketches the wider political, economic and social context that helped to construct specific rural mobilities that are simultaneously translocal and place-specific. The concluding section of this chapter argues for an enhanced integration of these divergent forms of rural (im)mobility into mobility research, transport planning and social policy.

3.1.1 Methodology

The remainder of this chapter draws on existing qualitative and quantitative data from various sources, including Irish transport policy documents such as *Transport 21* (2005) and *Smarter Travel* (2009), articles from Irish and international print and online media, including *The Irish Times* and *Farmers Guardian,* and publicly accessible statistical information about mobility patterns in Ireland provided by the Central Statistics Office Ireland (CSO), the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) and Ireland's Automobile Association (AA). This evidence has been synthesised to construct two case studies of distinct mobility patterns – car-dependent everyday mobility and the emergence of 'mobile farmers' – that are central to the daily experiences of rural communities and that directly contribute to their integration into translocal

networks. While much of the data presented below relates to mobility-related developments in the 2000s associated with the 'Celtic Tiger' economic boom and its aftermath, their historical roots cannot be ignored. It is beyond the scope of this chapter, however, to cover in detail the history of rural (im)mobility and transport policy.

3.2 Stereotyping the Rural: Images of Immobility

Looking at classical and contemporary social theory through the lens of (im)mobility reveals stark contrasts between conceptualisations of the rural and notions of urban life, which are also reflected in the terminology used. Dualisms such as mobile/static and flexible/bound have traditionally been applied, either implicitly or explicitly, to distinguish between the urban and the rural. For example, the works of classical social thinkers such as Weber, Tönnies and Simmel depicted rural life as traditional, slow-paced, stable, and tied to a particular place (Edmondson, 1998; Woods, 2005); in other words, as diametrically opposed to the city as the locus of modernity. 'It was in the modern city that the founders of sociology and urban studies first envisioned the contraction of social space, the density of transactions, the increased "metabolism", and the compression of "social distance" that comprised modernity' (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 209). For example, in his various contributions to the sociological study of city life, Georg Simmel linked the new urban way of life to an increase in anxiety and sensory overload as well as greater freedom, which he contrasted with the slow-paced, habitual and sedentary way of life in the countryside (1903/1950, cited in Cresswell, 2006, p. 17). Similarly, classical Marxism and social-democratic perspectives conceptualised the urban working class as key agent of social change (Benton, 2007). Rural dimensions of modern industrial society, on the other hand, received little or no attention until the emergence of a 'new rural agenda' in the second half of the 20th century (ibid; also see Woods, 2005). All in all, many of these classical works have been criticised for their uncritical acceptance of static dichotomies such as rural/urban and mobile/immobile and their predominantly structuralist, 'a-mobile' view of society.

Recent proposals for a 'mobility turn' in social theory and research adopt an eclectic approach to theory that seeks to amalgamate mobility-related contributions by both classical and contemporary social thinkers.[2] For example, Urry's (2007) proposals for the establishment of a 'new mobilities paradigm' (NMP) draw on a plethora of social-scientific works on (im)mobility, including Simmel's writings on modernity, mobility and the city. On the one hand, this eclecticism acknowledges the historical roots of many contemporary sociological theories, thereby promoting continuity in (mobility-related) thinking in the social sciences. However, it also

[2] See Rau (2010) for a critical discussion of some of the key features of the 'new mobilities paradigm' and its relevance to environmental sociology in particular.

implies that the privileging of the urban that is inherent in many existing works on modernity and mobility is perpetuated.

> Social life thus seems full of multiple and extended connections often across long distances, but these are organised through certain nodes. Mobilities thus entail distinct social spaces that orchestrate new forms of social life around such nodes, for example, *stations, hotels, motorways, resorts, airports, leisure complexes, cosmopolitan cities* [. . .] Or connections might be enacted through less privileged spaces, *on the street corners, subway stations, buses, public plazas, and back alleys* (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 213, emphasis added).

While it is undoubtedly the case that cities and their transport and mobility infrastructure play a key role in the formation of translocal networks and mobility patterns, the importance of rural and peripheral places as *both* sources and targets of material and information flows and human migration must be taken equally seriously. Ireland – a small country on the periphery of Europe with an economically and politically dominant capital city and a substantial rural population – provides ample opportunity to investigate these translocal connections brought about by various forms of (im)mobility.

Stereotypical notions of rural life in Ireland as largely immobile continue to influence public perceptions both in Ireland and abroad. The west of Ireland, a predominantly rural region with strong agricultural traditions, has often been portrayed as the bedrock source of Irish culture, especially during the formative years of the Irish state in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (cf. Gibbons, 1984). Multi-generational ties to and knowledge of a particular area as well as an (over)emphasis on the merits of localness and immobility characterised these rural-centric notions of Irishness, which are often reflected in historical accounts of rural life by both outsiders and local commentators. For example, 19th century travelogues such as Pückler-Muskau's (1826–1829) letters depict rural Ireland as inherently backward, static and immobile. This contrasts with the stark realities of both forced migration and immobility that shaped social life in many parts of rural Ireland around that time and that resulted from colonial rule and a patrilineal system of property inheritance, amongst other things (Cawley & Ní Scannláin, 2003). In fact, experiences of emigration and diaspora have been seen as one of the central characteristics of life in Ireland in the past. The banking crisis in 2008 and the subsequent deterioration of Ireland's economic situation has initiated a new wave of emigration of both Irish and non-Irish people as well as intra-national migration into (sub)urbanised areas, most notably the Greater Dublin region. Population and migration estimates issued by the Central Statistics Office of Ireland (CSO) in April 2010 show net outward migration in excess of 34,000 people, the highest level since 1989. Overall, the centrality of emigration in Irish society and culture is reflected in the vast body of academic and popular literature on this topic. While many of these works on Irish emigration challenge commonly held notions of rural immobility, they nevertheless concentrate almost exclusively on a particular form of mobility, the largely involuntary outmigration for economic reasons.

Stereotypes of rural immobility also come into play in the context of tourism. McManus (2005) observes that place marketing in Irish tourism continues to draw on a long-standing 'bucolic bias' that incorporates conceptualisations of rural life

as pre-modern and 'timeless' and that presents remoteness and rural spatial immobility as a major selling point to potential visitors from abroad. This seems all the more remarkable given that tourism, one of the most important economic sectors in Ireland, depends on various corporeal, virtual and imagined mobilities that require adequate transport and ICT. Ironically, many rural communities who wish to attract visitors face considerable accessibility problems themselves, which may or may not be mitigated through their involvement in tourism. The availability of mobility-enabling infrastructure and services thus continues to be a decisive factors in the creation and maintenance of a 'living countryside' (McDonagh, Varley, & Shortall, 2009).

Overall, the complexities of flows of natural resources, people and knowledge that influence economic and social relations in rural Ireland today remain poorly understood. While the onset of the recession in 2008 has once again put the spotlight on issues of economic migration, everyday spatial mobility patterns in rural areas and between rural and urban regions receive limited attention. It is argued that a mobility-centred analysis of everyday practices in 21st century Ireland can challenge common perceptions of rural life as static and immobile, which contrast with views of urban life as mobile and cosmopolitan. The remainder of this chapter will focus on examples of heightened rural mobility that connect (sub)urban and rural spaces. The following section examines some recent rural mobility trends to illustrate the increasingly translocal nature of rural life and associated rapid changes in rural-urban relationships in contemporary Irish society.

3.3 Rural (Im)mobilities and the Globalisation of the Rural

Contradictory experiences of both increased and reduced physical mobility are central to everyday life in Ireland today. In a rural context, these (im)mobilities both shape and reflect broader social and economic transformations, including changing demographic and family structures and economic re-structuring associated with the decline of agriculture and the rise of the service sector. They are also the result of global webs of production and consumption in areas such as food and energy that are contingent upon complex distribution networks that facilitate various virtual and corporeal mobilities. As a result, rural people's ability to be spatially mobile in order to access services and information and to actively participate in the production and consumption of tangible and intangible goods is central to their experiences of the translocality and increasing global interconnectedness of rural places.

In Ireland, recent policy reports and social-scientific publications show that the burden of immobility is shouldered disproportionately by vulnerable socio-demographic segments of the rural population, such as older people and young children, low-income households, single parents and people with disabilities (Fitzpatrick Associates, 2006; McDonagh, 2006; Millar et al., 2007; O'Shea, 2009; Rau & Hennessy, 2009). This knowledge led to some policy responses, including the roll-out of the *Rural Transport Programme* (RTP) in 2006 to address

unmet rural transport needs by providing predominantly demand-responsive bus services (Government of Ireland, 2006; see Section 3.4). However, the impacts of increased mobility on rural communities, including specific mobility practices such as car-dependent long-distance commuting to and from off-farm employment, have yet to receive equal attention from academics and policy makers. The 'mobility burdens' shouldered by rural commuters, such as high motoring costs and loss of time that may or may not cancel out the financial benefits of off-farm employment, thus remain under-explored in the Irish policy context. In addition, improved transport infrastructure in some rural areas in the 2000s has created novel mobility-related socio-economic and demographic imbalances which urgently require social-scientific investigation. Illustrations of the extensive scale of commuter belts around Irish cities and their wide-ranging social and economic effects exemplify this (Government of Ireland, 2002; McDonald & Nix, 2005). The remainder of this section will focus on two aspects of rural mobility – car dependence and the spatial mobilisation of parts of the farming community – to illustrate some of their benefits and burdens and to demonstrate the increasing translocalisation of rural Ireland and its effects on rural-urban relationships.

3.3.1 Car Dependence in Rural Ireland

While unmet transport needs and poor accessibility continue to affect large parts of rural Ireland, long-distance commuting by car has become a daily reality for many people (Commins & Nolan, 2010), most notably those who live in rural hinterlands of larger towns and cities and who travel to their urban-based places of work.[3] The term 'car dependence' describes people's over-reliance on the car to meet their basic transport needs, including trips to work and to go shopping. Ireland has been described as one of the most car-dependent countries in Europe, with rural locations without proper public transport services being most severely affected. For the purpose of this paper, official car use and car ownership statistics have been examined and synthesised to capture levels of car dependence. Sustainable Energy Ireland's 2009 *Energy in Transport* report includes average mileage figures for private cars of 16,708 km per annum and an average drop of 1% per annum in miles driven for all private cars between 2000 and 2008. However, total mileage increased by 38% during that period due to significant increases in car ownership, with many households in Ireland now owning two cars. Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's report *Energy in Ireland 1990–2009* reveals an increase in car ownership by 142% between 1990 and 2008, with a decrease for the first time in 2009 to 540 cars per 1000 adults, down from 548 in 2008 (SEAI, 2010, p. 60). While car ownership in Ireland remains marginally below the EU 27 average in 2007 of 551 per 1000 adults,

[3] A series of articles in 2003 and 2010 by *Irish Times* journalists Kathy Sheridan and Frank McDonald on the lives of commuters in the Leinster area – the eastern part of the Republic of Ireland that includes the capital city Dublin – aptly captured these experiences.

mileage per car per annum is higher than average (SEAI, 2010, also see Flynn, 2007 for additional evidence).

Ireland's car dependence results from a range of political, economic, infrastructural and socio-cultural factors, which are more or less open to policy intervention and which affect different areas of the country in different ways. During the 'Celtic Tiger' era (1995–2007), planning and land use policies as well as intense lobbying by local communities and their public representatives to attract 'development' to their place increased the spatial separation of employment centres and residential areas while further concentrating economic activity in urban areas, most notably Dublin.[4] Transport policy decisions that favoured car ownership and use along with failure by local government to effectively regulate the spatial distribution of residential and commercial areas led to the car-dependent 'mobilisation' of significant parts of the population, urban sprawl and ribbon development, one-off housing in areas without proper infrastructure and facilities and the formation of large commuter belts around urban centres. Furthermore, the (over-)concentration of economic opportunities and transport infrastructure investment in cities such as Dublin, Cork and Galway and along inter-urban corridors accelerated out-migration from many rural areas, most notably those areas the Western seaboard that are seen as particularly remote. The 'property bubble' of the late 1990s and 2000s meant that long-distance commuting by car was often perceived as 'the only option' for many rural people who wanted to own a house. The resulting social and environmental consequences of these rural-urban flows of people and cars remain very visible today.

A spatial analysis of daily commuting patterns offers some interesting insights into the relationship between cities and their immediate rural hinterlands. McDonald and Nix (2005) draw on census data from 2002 to illustrate the formation of 'commuter belts' around cities such as Dublin, Cork and Galway that extend significantly into their rural environs. In fact, Ireland's capital city Dublin features a commuter belt that includes County Dublin, the adjacent counties Kildare, Meath and Wicklow as well as other parts of the Midlands region. 'As new roads are built, more far-flung places are drawn into Dublin's orbit. Gorey, Mullingar, Portlaoise, Rochfortbridge and so many other towns within an 80–90 km radius have sprouted suburbs targeting long-distance car commuters' (McDonald, 2005, p. 11). The 2006 Census of Population revealed that 22% of the working population in Dublin City and County,

[4] Ireland's *National Spatial Strategy* (2002–2020) was partly developed in response to this centralisation of economic activity. It was intended to improve the regional spread of employment opportunities and services, reduce (long-distance) commuting by car and enhance people's quality of life. Nevertheless, there is a strong emphasis on urban areas and issues throughout the document, a fact that had been raised during the NSS consultation phase (see Appendix 1 of NSS document). The NSS identified five regional gateway cities with a strong economic and socio-cultural profile – Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick/Shannon and Waterford – and proposes their development as regional centres. Mobility-related aspects of the NSS focus on a proposed reduction in commuting. Importantly, tensions between different transport-related elements of the NSS, such as a commitment to developing public transport (rail, bus) *and* road and airport infrastructure remain unresolved.

the part of the country with the highest population density, travel distances of 15 km or more to get to work. This contrasts with figures from County Leitrim, a predominantly rural county with the lowest population density in Ireland, which show that 49% of the working population travel distances of 15 km or more to get to work.[5]

Commins and Nolan's (2010) analysis of 2006 census data confirms the uneven geographical spread of car ownership, commuting distances and modal choice. From these findings, it can be concluded that burdens resulting from too little or too much mobility continue to be unequally distributed across urban and rural locations (cf. McDonagh, 2006). For example, a growing number of rural households now face mounting financial and time pressures associated with increased physical mobility, which reflects the rising costs of motoring and greater distances travelled. This is likely to be exacerbated by the recent recession. Again, the distinction between car ownership and car use is important in this context because owning a car and actually running it produce very different financial strains that are unevenly distributed across urban and rural locations. For example, in the absence of viable alternatives, car ownership in many rural areas tends to go hand in hand with car use, resulting in high levels of car dependence. These contrasts with urban areas where alternatives to the motorcar such as public transport are more readily available (also see Haase, 2009).

The Irish transport sector's almost complete dependence on imported fuel – more than 99% – makes car-based personal transport, such as daily commuting, highly contingent upon volatile global fuel markets that react to political instability and natural disasters. For example, oil price hikes in early 2011 triggered by conflicts in northern Africa and the Middle East saw prices in Ireland soar to above 1.50 €/l for unleaded petrol. While the true costs of motoring and their uneven distribution across different sections of Irish society and different geographical regions often remain invisible, there is considerable evidence that rural households are more likely to experience financial difficulties due to high car dependence and few transport alternatives (McDonagh, 2006). Interestingly, people tend to underestimate their annual mobility-related expenditure as well as the time spent moving themselves and others, which casts doubt over models of modal choice that assume that people act as rational utility maximisers. '[M]any people are ignorant of the true costs of motoring and do not think of valuing time spent waiting in traffic queues' (Cullinane, 1992, p. 298). Recurring costs such as tolls, repairs and parking charges can be considerable, yet they often do not feature in people's household budgets. For example, a roundtrip from Galway City in the west of Ireland to Dublin Airport in the east of the country on the recently completed motorway incurs 15.60 € in tolls.[6]

[5] Source: Central Statistics Office (2006a) and (2006b) http://beyond2020.cso.ie/Census/TableViewer/tableView.aspx (accessed 11 November 2010). The percentage figure for Dublin is based on $N = 436{,}554$ persons at work aged 15 years and over who stated their distance to work. The percentage figure for Leitrim is based on $N = 9520$ persons at work aged 15 years and over who stated their distance to work.

[6] Regular price without discounts or concessions in November 2010.

Table 3.1 Cost of motoring in 2010 in Ireland by taxation band (all values in €/km driven)

	Band A[a] (0–120 g/km CO_2)	Band B[a] (121–140 g/km CO_2)	Band C[a] (141–155 g/km CO_2)	Band G (≤226 g/km CO_2)
Standing charges (e.g. parking, insurance, taxation, depreciation and interest)	0.40	0.43	0.49	0.88
Operating costs (e.g. petrol, repairs)	0.16	0.19	0.21	0.39
Overall cost per kilometre (based on 16,000 km per annum)	0.56	0.63	0.70	1.27

[a]Following the introduction of a CO_2 emissions-linked taxation system for newly registered cars in July 2008, cars in Band A, B and C now account for more than three quarters of all new private vehicles purchased in the Republic of Ireland. In the first 6 months of 2009, cars in Bands A, B and C made up 78% of all new cars, up from an average of 35% between 2000 and 2005 (Sustainable Energy Agency Ireland, 2010), http://www.seai.ie/Power_of_One/Getting_Around/HCIYC/Transport_Energy_Usage/ (accessed 3 November 2010).
Source: Automobile Association of Ireland (2010).

As will be shown in Section 3.4, transport policy that focuses almost exclusively on (inter-)urban infrastructure may further exacerbate this rural disadvantage.

Ireland's Automobile Association (AA) regularly provides information on the cost of motoring (Table 3.1). While some of these figures appear to err on the high side, they nevertheless demonstrate the full spectrum of motoring costs. More importantly, it is clear from the above figures that motoring costs in Ireland are skewed towards the initial purchase of the car and subsequent standing charges, that is, towards car ownership. Relatively low operating costs also mean that there is little incentive to reduce car use once the vehicle has been bought and insured. A recent report by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) criticises the fact that motorists in Ireland pay significant 'flat taxes' such as vehicle registration tax (VRT) and annual road tax that do not reflect their actual use of transport infrastructure and that do nothing to reduce car use (Morgenroth and FitzGerald, 2006). The report also raises the question of whether these taxes are high enough to cover the cost of building and maintaining transport infrastructure and any externalities related to motoring, including environmental damage.

In the context of stark rural-urban differences in car dependence, these observations are highly significant and highlight the merits of a mobility-focused approach (also see Haase, 2009). Attempts to reduce car use through various motoring and fuel taxes without providing adequate alternatives are likely to perpetuate existing rural-urban differentials in accessibility to jobs and key services. Some authors see the high cost of motoring as a key factors contributing to poverty risks in rural households (McDonagh, 2006). Recent research carried out by the Vincentian Partnership

for Social Justice showed that rural households need to spend up to 109 € a week more than their urban counterparts to achieve a minimum essential standard of living and that a large proportion of these additional costs relate to car ownership and use. '[. . .] rural families needed a car – or two where they had children – because of the lack of public transport' (Cullen, 2010, p. 6). Based on the AA's cost calculator in Table 3.1, a household with two Band A cars that travel 16,708 km per annum each would thus pay 18,713 € in motoring costs.[7] This figure is marginally below the average disposable household income of 19,889 € per person in 2007 – 8.3% below the national average – in County Leitrim, the county with the lowest population density in Ireland. This contrasts with a disposable household income of 23,226 € per person in 2006 – 12.3% above the national average – in County Dublin, the county with the highest population density.[8] This reveals the unequal distribution of the (hidden) costs of motoring as a proportion of people's disposable income.

There is ample evidence that the causes of high car dependence in Ireland have been largely political and reflect reluctance by successive governments to effectively regulate the spatial distribution of development and to introduce transport policy that encourages a balanced modal mix. A lack of transport alternatives such as adequate cycling facilities and public transport make the car the only available option for many people, especially in rural areas. This has also fostered a 'car culture', which further increases levels of car use and which produces strong cultural barriers to modal shift. For example, many parents and children in Ireland now expect to do the school run by car rather than on foot, a trend which has been difficult to reverse. Attempts to restrict car use through pricing mechanisms are also deeply unpopular, in particular in car-dependent rural constituencies. These observations challenge popular arguments that car dependence is an inevitable outcome of growing prosperity (also see Section 3.4 and Wickham (2006) for more detailed discussions). It also raises interesting questions about possible reasons for the visible laissez-faire approach to spatial planning in Ireland. It is argued that images of voluntary immobility and rootedness in place continue to be seen by many within and outside the political system as desirable features of Irish society, even though people's everyday experiences of heightened mobility and their life choices with regard to property suggest otherwise. Section 3.4 will attend to some of these issues in more detail.

[7] These calculations are based on the Ford Focus – Ireland's number-one selling car between 2000 and 2010 – which is available in a Band A version and which costs in excess of 21,000 € (http://www.motorcheck.ie/blog/best-selling-car-of-the-decade/ and http://www.motorcheck.ie/blog/scrappage-scheme-band-a-cars/, accessed 3 November 2010). According to SEI (2009), the combined average mileage in 2008 was 16,708 km (10,382 miles). Census 2006 data for County Leitrim show a population density of 18 people per km^2, the lowest density in the Republic of Ireland (CSO, 2006a, 2006b).

[8] Source: Central Statistics Office 2007, http://www.cso.ie/studentscorner/statsfactsleitrim.htm, accessed 3 November 2010.

3.3.2 No Place Like Home? Property Ownership and the Mobility of Farmers

Past portrayals of traditional life in rural Ireland often emphasised people's connection to place while mobilities to and from rural areas, such as seasonal mobility cycles experienced by landless agricultural workers or forced migration due to political turmoil, disappropriation, or food shortages brought about by environmental disasters, were framed as disruptions to 'normality'. Mass emigration associated with the Irish Potato Famine (1845–1848) and related historical events, such as the formation of the Irish National Land League in the late 19th century, pushed land ownership questions into the centre of the political debate. Importantly, they gave prominence to themes such as 'positive immobility', rootedness and multi-generational ties to place which shaped dominant notions of Irish national identity both before and after Irish independence. These were frequently contrasted with images of urban life as anonymous, mobile and centred around economic interaction (cf. Gibbons, 1984).

Changes in the composition of the farming sector and rising prices for agricultural land both in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland from the late 1990s until the start of the recession in 2008 resulted in both internal migration and out-migration of a sizeable proportion of Irish farmers to places with lower land prices. Re-zoning practices and the absence of a 'windfall tax' meant that rural land owners who sold all or parts of their land were able to secure capital to participate in the global agricultural property market. Some Irish farmers and their families were thus able to purchase much larger farms in other parts of the world, most notably Wales and Scotland but also the US, Australia and other overseas locations with a strong agricultural sector. These examples of voluntary transnational mobility among some members of the farming community challenge simplistic dichotomies between rural immobility and urban mobility. More importantly, they both contribute to and reflect the growing interconnectedness of rural regions around the world. The following excerpt from an article by James Butler from Glasgow-based estate agent Strutt and Parker on farmland sales in the UK highlights the increasingly 'footloose' nature of property-related capital and its impact on markets in countries that are geographically close to Ireland:

> Irish families who have farmed at the same location for generations are now more willing to move, not only because of the high sale prices achievable but because traditional small farms are now unable to support more than one family, fewer [. . .] are going directly to the eldest son and traditional farms have not developed in line with modern technology [. . .] A desire to expand coupled with strong buying power is causing Irish farmers to dominate the market for farms, especially in neighbouring countries [. . .] Perhaps the most appealing factor is being able to convert a '100 and something' acre farm with one string to its bow to into a '400 and something' acre farm with two or three strings to its bow [. . .] A similar climate and culture makes the transition for the family a smooth one, with the ease of travelling back to Ireland an added incentive (Butler, 2007).

Undoubtedly, these examples of Irish farm families who more or less voluntarily uproot themselves to benefit from agricultural land price differentials and to

increase their chances of economic success challenge widespread conceptions of rural life as inherently local, immobile and based on multi-generational connections with the land. It is argued here that the economic and socio-cultural impact of these 'translocal' farmers on the fabric of rural society both in Ireland and abroad is likely to be significant and that their mobility practices raise interesting questions about the link between individuals' job-related mobility, property ownership and personal identity (cf. Ní Laoire, 2004 for a detailed discussion of young Irish farmers' professional identity). Are these farmers' life choices a reflection of their commitment to agriculture? Or do they represent their way of adapting to the 'hegemony of the expansionist rhetoric [. . .] and ideologies of expansionism and efficiency' (Ní Laoire, 2004, p. 292)?

The emergence of these 'translocal farmers' is clearly the result of a wider transformation of the Irish agricultural sector. According to Share, Tovey, and Corcoran (2007), the modernisation of Irish agriculture was marked by increasing specialisation, commodification and scientisation. In addition, Ireland's entry into the EU in 1973 brought about dramatic changes in agricultural practices, pricing structures and systems of food production and consumption. As a result, farmers in Ireland became increasingly involved in global production-consumption chains that require complex distribution networks and that promote competition, spatial mobilisation and increasingly globalised division of agricultural labour. As a result, a decline in the number of farmers in Ireland contrast with an increase in farm size and a concentration of agricultural activity in more productive areas of the country. 'The ability to expand [. . .] can mean the difference between survival and loss in farming' (Ní Laoire, 2004, p. 286). At the same time, Ireland has witnessed some countertrends to the globalisation of agriculture, including the growing popularity of locally produced food sold in farmers markets. These contrasting socio-economic trends are in turn linked to land use, transport and environmental policy decisions at different scales which influence transport costs and infrastructure development. For example, trends within the European Union towards road pricing for HGVs as well as price differentials between EU members states with regard to fuel duty have led to significant changes in freight transportation practices that affect the cost of shipment of agricultural products and influence rural development as a result (also see Hine & Ellis, 2001).

Rapid changes in the composition of the Irish economy during the 'Celtic Tiger' and its aftermath further accelerated the restructuring of traditional rural economies. A significant drop in the number of full-time farmers and the rise in urban-based off-farm employment fundamentally re-shaped urban-rural relations in Ireland. More importantly, changes in the Irish property market meant that an increasing number of farmers supplemented their income through the sale of land for development (Hennessy, 2006). Interestingly, Irish transport policy had a direct impact on prices for agricultural land and thus on the socio-demographic profile of rural areas, at least until the end of the property boom and the start of the recession in 2008. 'With road-building schemes set to take 40,000 acres of Irish farmland out of production over the next five years, the Irish investor [looking for UK farmland] is likely to hold his own well into the next decade' (Farmers Guardian, 29 December 2006).

It is estimated that compensation for land accounted for almost one-quarter of the costs of road projects in Ireland, which is more than twice the level seen in other European countries (Hennigan, 2008). Ireland's current financial woes have dramatically reversed many of these trends in the agricultural property market, which is likely to have a lasting impact on many rural areas.

The experiences of individual 'mobile farmers' and the causes and consequences of rural people's mobility-related decisions more generally remain under-researched today. According to Haase (2009), novel ways of researching rural people's choice of location need to be found.

> There are no recent Irish studies dealing with life choices in relation to where people choose to set up home which might allow us to understand contemporary settlement patterns. Historical studies [. . .] largely deal with times of economic hardship and their social consequences over previous decades and may not easily be extended to the contemporary period (246–7).

The above examples of high car dependence and targeted out-migration to foreign locations with lower land prices serve to highlight the importance of diverse mobilities for rural Ireland and reveal the increasingly translocal nature of contemporary rural life more generally. At the same time, these examples call into question the effectiveness of rural policies that either implicitly or explicitly perpetuate stereotypes of life outside cities as largely immobile, static and disadvantaged. It is argued that the process of rural proofing, that is, the testing of policies for their suitability and effectiveness for rural people and places requires an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of rural life, including the distinctiveness of its changing (im)mobility patterns. The following section will focus on recent transport policy developments in Ireland that more or less explicitly target rural immobilities and that illustrate the challenges of tailoring policy to an increasingly mobile rural population that criss-crosses various spatial boundaries on a daily basis.

3.4 Mitigating Rural Immobility? Impacts of Transport and Land-Use Planning on Spatial Mobility Patterns

As stated previously, Ireland's transport woes are often framed as unavoidable side effects of increased urbanisation and prosperity (Wickham, 2006). Growing car dependence was often viewed as an acceptable sacrifice to be made in return for economic development and high levels of private homeownership. Similarly, transport problems such as congestion became linked to the growth of cities and their spill-over effects on suburban and rural hinterlands. In fact, transport emerged as a significant area of policy-making and academic research only after the rapid (sub)urbanisation of Irish society in the latter parts of the 20th century. These common misconceptions about the inevitability of congestion and car dependence and their urban root causes are increasingly being challenged (e.g. Morgenroth, 2002; Wickham, 2006). Studies linking contemporary transport problems to past land use and transport decisions show that current patterns of car dependence are the result

of the state's 'predict-and-provide' approach to car-based transport which prevailed until very recently (McDonald & Nix, 2005; Rau & McDonagh, 2007). More importantly, there was a strong emphasis on urban and inter-urban areas whereas rural mobilities received much less attention. Major transport and spatial planning documents published by the Government of Ireland and the Department of Transport between 2000 and 2008 – the *National Development Plan* (NDP) for 2000–2006 and 2007–2013, the *National Spatial Strategy 2002–2020* (NSS) and *Transport 21* (2006–2015) – either implicitly or explicitly favoured road-based solutions to improve inter-urban and regional traffic flows and prioritised public transport development in cities, most notably Dublin. Recent dramatic cuts in public spending mean that these policies are unlikely to be implemented in full.

Transport 21, the last major transport investment programme preceding the onset of the recession in 2008, was launched in 2005. This 34 € billion spending plan was supposed to be implemented over a period of 10 years but was suspended and eventually discontinued in 2010–11 due to rapidly deteriorating public finances. *Transport 21* promised an annual spend of 3.4 € billion per annum to address previous under-investment in transport infrastructure and to cater for the predicted increase in transport demand. The document focused on five main policy goals: increased accessibility, sustainability, expanded capacity, increased use (of the transport network in general and public transport in particular) and improved quality of services. Interestingly, *Transport 21* spending was sub-divided into two tranches – a national programme (20 € bn) and a programme for the Greater Dublin Area (14 € bn) – and was to be informed by national planning guidelines, most notably Ireland's *National Spatial Strategy* (NSS). What is evident from the *Transport 21* document is its strong focus on addressing Dublin's traffic problems. According to McDonald (2005), 'all roads lead to Dublin – and that's the problem' (11). This contrasts with the comparatively small sum of 90 € m (or 9 m per annum) set aside for rural transport, including the Rural Transport Programme (RTP) which was launched in 2006 to specifically address unmet transport needs. The RTP provides funding for demand-based public transport services delivered by the community and voluntary sector and small private operators (see Rau & Hennessy, 2009 for a more detailed discussion). This said, exchequer funding for rural public transport schemes and the maintenance of regional and local roads has been much more moderate overall, which suggests that urban-centric approaches to transport policy and planning and a prioritisation of roads persist to this date.

It has been argued that rural landowners in particular have benefited from the national roads programme since the late 1990s, in particular in relation to the government's decision to proceed with a greenfield motorway programme instead of upgrading existing national roads and bypassing traffic bottlenecks. Land acquisition costs have been shown to account for almost a quarter of the costs of road construction (Hennigan, 2008). In some cases, land purchases have made up three quarters of the overall project costs, such as in the case of the 1.2 km Dundrum bypass in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, which cost 44.4 € million to build. The cost implications of these decisions have been severe and have attracted considerable attention, in particular following the onset of the banking crisis in 2008 and the IMF/ECB intervention in November 2010. According to McDonald (2005),

> Money was no object, even as it became clear that what [the Irish government] had in mind was a greenfield motorway programme, under which entirely new roads would be built alongside existing national routes, bisecting farms and anything else that got in the way. The cost of this folly, even in purely financial terms, is astronomical. A roads programme with a projected price-tag of 5.6b in 1999 rose to 9b within a couple of years and then to 16b as the cost of building a kilometre of road and acquiring the land for it doubled (12).

It is likely that money paid for land for roads and other transport infrastructure in Ireland has been used to purchase property elsewhere, resulting in the translocal 'mobilisation' of some farm families described in Section 3.3. This connection between transport policy and property ownership serves to highlight the (oftentimes unintended) consequences of transport policy for rural areas, which may or may not result in the spatial mobilisation of some parts of the population.

What do these policies reveal about the relationship between urban and rural Ireland? Until recently, most transport-related debates and policy decisions in Ireland reflected contradictory views. On the one hand, a strong trend existed that placed rural interests and pursuits over and above those of city and town dwellers. These rather skewed perceptions of 'the rural' (as well as 'the urban') meant that some aspects of rural life, most notably agriculture and the interests of farmers have been prioritised by politicians and decision-makers. In contrast, other rural issues such as the exclusionary effects of unmet transport needs and car dependence and the lack of adequate regional transport networks have yet to receive adequate attention from policy makers. Tensions between pro-rural views and largely urban-centric policy initiatives sometimes surfaced during public debates, such as those in relation to the controversial issue of one-off rural housing which revolved around rural dwellers' right to choose their residential location. Related issues to do with (un)sustainable mobility patterns and associated social issues remained in the background.

Observable rural-urban imbalances in the distribution of transport spending also reveal a strong economistic view of infrastructure provision that pitches 'state-subsidised public transport' against 'free market automobility' and that rejects (rural) public transport as expensive and inappropriate for Ireland's dispersed population. Similarly, Dublin's status as the 'economic powerhouse' for the entire country has often been used to justify the prioritisation of transport infrastructure development in and around the capital. This view clearly disregards the intangible social and environmental benefits of cars and alternative modes that resist quantification and cannot capture the complexities of both explicit and implicit subsidisation in the transport sector.

Many transport and planning initiatives in Ireland continue to rely on dichotomous rural-urban distinctions, which ignores the interconnectedness and translocal nature of many mobility related phenomena. It also marginalises problems that are specific to many, if not all, rural areas such as limited accessibility to jobs and services, demographic decline and deteriorating (transport) infrastructure. At the same time, there appears to be limited interest in developing local solutions to local problems that tap into the existing strengths and resources of transport-disadvantaged rural and urban communities and that guarantee a high level of

autonomy to community development groups.[9] The *Rural Transport Programme* (RTP) mentioned previously represents a notable exception as it draws on local knowledge, skills and resources, at least to some extent. Some commentators and community and voluntary groups have recently called for additional measures to address the disproportionate exclusion of car-less households and individuals in rural areas, however these have yet to be translated into actual policy changes. All in all, contradictions between rural and urban (im)mobility patterns and their complex interrelations remain poorly understood and top-down, urban-centric solutions continue to dominate Irish transport policy.

While Ireland's current economic difficulties severely constrain opportunities for improving the country's transport system, it may be possible to change policy direction to mitigate the least positive outcomes of past decisions that promoted unsustainable mobility patterns and under-resourced rural transport. Recent changes in government policy and practice to facilitate a modal shift away from the car and towards more sustainable alternatives certainly signal a departure from the 'predict and provide' paradigm. *Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future* (2009) sets out to present low-cost or no-cost measures for the promotion of more sustainable, low-carbon transport choices such as walking and cycling. Importantly, *Smarter Travel* responded to growing concerns about rural-urban imbalances in transport infrastructure provision and mobility opportunities and resulting problems accessing employment and services. Proposals to concentrate population and employment growth in compact, more sustainable urban and rural areas are a central theme of *Smarter Travel*. The document also advocates the co-location of employment and residential centres.

3.5 Conclusion

According to Cahill (2010), transport represents a source of 'corrosive disadvantage', which means that in a car-centred society like Ireland, unmet transport needs tend to produce further disadvantages. This presents a significant challenge for *both* land-use and transport planning and social policy that requires much more attention than has hitherto been the case. Undoubtedly, many people in remote rural areas in Ireland (and elsewhere) continue to suffer from isolation and poor transport links, with carless households remaining particularly vulnerable. However, a substantial proportion of rural dwellers now also bear the brunt of unsustainably high levels of car-dependent mobility, which are a legacy of past land-use and transport planning that encouraged population dispersion and a growing spatial separation of employment and residential areas. Many of these planning decisions have their origins in urban-centric views of rural life that either misunderstand the realities of

[9] See Rau and Hennessy (2009) for a more detailed discussion of some of the problems that can limit the effectiveness and long-term sustainability of a partnership approach to transport policy-making and implementation.

rural (im)mobility, or altogether ignore spatial mobility. An enhanced understanding of the unequal distribution of spatial mobility opportunities and burdens is necessary to make visible previously concealed urban-rural relationships and their connections with political, economic and socio-cultural factors and to facilitate the rural proofing of policies (cf. Haase, 2009).

This chapter has shown that placing mobilities at the centre of social-scientific studies of rural life reveals the growing complexity of rural-urban relations in an increasingly interconnected world. It focused on two instances of recent rural (im)mobility in Ireland – car dependence and the outmigration of 'mobile farmers' – to highlight the translocal nature of contemporary rural life and to challenge stereotypical views of the rural as immobile, stagnant and declining. Experiences of high car dependence in rural Ireland call into question narrow economistic explanations of transport problems as inevitable outcomes of growing prosperity and development. At the same time, they reveal the influence and (unintended) outcomes of urban-centric approaches to transport policy and land-use planning. The phenomenon of Irish farmers selling their homes and landholdings to move to culturally similar countries with cheaper agricultural land exemplifies translocality and its various connections with social mobility: these 'mobile farmers' and their families experience rural life as simultaneously mobile and settled. Overall, this chapter has highlighted the need for a more nuanced approach to the study of rural life that recognises the centrality of spatial mobility and that acknowledges the increasingly translocal nature of social life in both rural and urban contexts.

Acknowledgments An initial version of this chapter was presented at the XXIII ESRS Congress 2009 in Vaasa, Finland. I would especially like to thank Dr. Marie Mahon and Prof. Rosario Sampedro for their constructive comments. This chapter draws on desk study work conducted for ConsEnSus (www.consensus.ie), a large-scale research project on sustainable consumption funded by the EPA Ireland (2008-SD-LS-1-S1).

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Chapter 4
"The Rural" Intervening in the Lives of Internal and International Migrants: Migrants, Biographies and Translocal Practices

Susanne Stenbacka

4.1 Introduction

One aspect of population exchange in rural areas is the movement that was identified in the 1990s, and which is often referred to as a process of counterurbanisation. In the 1990s, parts of the Swedish countryside experienced an inflow of people with an urban background. This counterurbanisation movement was explained partly by outside effects, such as increasing opportunities to live in more peripheral areas and commute to work (Amcoff, 2000), and partly by inside effects, such as values and desires for a way of life that could be realised in a specific rural location (Stenbacka, 2001). While many, primarily British, studies theoretically argued for this process as following on from the view of the countryside as a rural idyll (Mingay, 1989; Little & Austin, 1996), the movements in Scandinavia were explained by a desire to live in the countryside among forests and lakes, social networks such as family ties or the opportunity to move to a vacation house. The growing enchantment for rural living, though, seemed to build upon quite different processes and a variety of methods, which contributed to multiple understandings of the rural and the exploration of the concept of rurality.

A more recent process of rural in-migration in Sweden concerns international movements. For some rural areas in Sweden, the beginning of the 21st century meant an emerging trend of in-migration of households with diverse backgrounds. International migrants were most likely to be found in the border regions earlier on, if we consider rural areas and regions to be a distance from the central parts of the country. Border regions in the periphery have a tradition of population exchange with the neighbouring countries, Finland and Norway. During the most recent years, we have been witnessing a trend involving both dispersion and diversity. International migration now affects most rural regions in the country but to different

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_4,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

degrees and not only the Nordic countries are represented. Some municipalities now host more than 50 nationalities.

These two kinds of migration movements, counterurbanisation involving internal migration from the city to the countryside, and international migration flows involving forced as well as voluntarily migration, raise questions about the meaning of the rural as a living environment and how individuals experience rural living with respect to biographical background and reasons for migration. From the view of Swedish "peripheral" municipalities, the migration issue is a crucial one since many regions and smaller localities suffer from population decline and related problems with the supply of public and private service. While population increase due to natural growth (births) and internal migration does not contribute to positive figures to a sufficient level, recent strategies have evolved around international migration. These strategies have a predecessor in so-called place-marketing campaigns devoted to an internal audience (Niedomysl, 2004) and events focused upon return-migrants. The strategies directed towards international migrants can take various forms. One is closely connected to the place-marketing campaign, involving municipalities' struggles to present themselves as appealing living environments at fairs abroad, for example in the Netherlands or Germany. Another strategy is directed towards the reception of refugees, which to an important extent may involve preparing and planning for public authorities and public services within the municipality.

This chapter aims to discuss the rural as a space for living and to explore a variety of ways of experiencing rural life in Sweden with the point of departure being the internal migration wave of the 1990s and in the international migration movement taking place during the beginning of the new century. The migrants' earlier place experiences and contemporary spatial networks are crucial. A fundamental question is: how do translocal experiences and practices contribute to building the meaning of the rural? The idea here is that these two studies merged into one will lead to a new and progressive understanding of the rural.

4.1.1 Rural Places and Scale

One point of departure in studying the rural is a relational understanding of place (Massey, 2005). Every locality has a position at a never-ending scale of places. The scale is a fluid one, and places are experienced in relation to other places. Life in a rural setting involves connections to urban areas, and a prerequisite for rural life is a rural-urban network in both professional and private manners. But rural areas are also in a network with other rural areas. These networks can be materialised by flows of capital, goods or people but they can also be immaterial, as ideas and feelings are involved in connecting certain places. Feelings of solidarity or sympathy may evolve around, for example, common living or migration experiences. The awareness of the meaning of such relations have given rise to ideas of place and networks of places, and maybe the most cited statement is the one from Doreen Massey:

> Instead then, of thinking of places as areas with boundaries around, they can be imagined as articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings, but where a larger proportion of those relations, experiences and understandings are constructed on a

> far larger scale than what we happen to define for that moment as the place itself, whether that be a street, or a region or even a continent. And this in turn allows a sense of place which is extroverted, which includes a consciousness of its links with the wider world, which integrates in a positive way the global and the local. (1994, p. 154)

Every locality is then part of a network of places. The countryside is understood as global space, with the reservation for the varieties in impact globalisation between different rural localities (Woods, 2007). Talking in terms of transnationalism or translocalism, the content of such a concept is often summarised as social, economic and political aspects of the networks, involving circulation of ideas, information, products and money. Moving towards the empirical material for this study, it is appropriate to link such place-networks to the human activities connected to them. Communication is important, as well as other linkages which could be practised through work, relatives, consumption or leisure activities.

4.1.2 Two Studies in One

In the study on the internal migrants, narratives around work, leisure and social ties expressed the way the rural is part of a network of places, involving other rural areas as well as urban ones, thus pointing at the translocal character of the rural. Similarly, for the international migrants, the networks are stretched out to be translocal. How should we understand the networks involving several localities, rural and urban places and spaces? What kinds of needs do the linkages fill? This chapter will follow a structure that builds on the migrants' experiences within three fields: *communication and the production of networks* of places through translocal relations, and how they influence the *local society* and local relations on the one hand and *physical environment and nature*[1] on the other hand. Alongside that, I will show that it is possible to add a counterbalance to the differences often focused upon concerning international migrants, in particular refugees, and internal migrants. Something that will be explored is the chance to focus on values, attitudes and practices that occur among international as well as national rural dwellers, in order to scrutinise the meanings that are connected to the rural as a living environment. Focusing on the similarities within diversity – that is, common experiences, interests or characteristics among the internal and international migrants – does not mean that resources devoted to, for example, the reception of refugees, introduction and integration should be decreasing. But it does pay attention to the fact that there is a risk of ruinously focusing on differences and at the same time underestimating common interests and common experiences and practices.

[1] The concept of nature is in this text used the way it is used in the Swedish language: "the green outdoors" includes forests, lakes, parks and gardens. Spending time "in nature" is spending time outdoors. To gain strength by spending time "in nature" means that watching the landscape or spending time outdoors is to have a relationship with nature and to use it for recreation or healing or other reasons.

The starting point of this work is two migration studies, both based on in-depth interviews within two research projects. In both studies, rural areas close to medium-sized towns as well as more remote areas were included. One was carried out at the end of the 1990s (Stenbacka, 2001) while the other one was carried out in 2009 and 2010. The first one explored the reasons behind migration to rural areas in the Mälaren region and the consequences at the household level and the society level. Twenty-nine individuals in twelve households were interviewed. The households that were chosen were composed of families with children, retired couples, single male or female households, such as single mothers, as well as couples without children. The households had migrated from an urban to a rural area and their everyday life could be analysed in terms of various everyday practices directed towards the local community, towards the countryside and towards the house. The second study took place in a region in the north of Sweden and focused on international refugee migration to rural areas; families with children as well as single male or female households and one single mother.[2] The primary material for this study is interviews with 23 individuals in 16 households.[3] In this study, everyday life is structured around communication and networking, the local social environment and the physical environment.

4.2 Translocalism and Rural Migration

4.2.1 Seizing the Rural Migrants

As an introduction, I will combine the themes of translocalism and rural migration. This is needed because of the urban bias often involved in studies on international migration (also see Hogan, 2004). The knowledge of international migration, its effects on a structural as well on an individual level, to a large extent builds upon studies in urban areas. Smith (2001), however, has paid attention to practices that are localised at "one pole of translocality", for example, in Mexican villages, Chinese factory towns or "even in the countryside". Smith's arguments are familiar in the sense that they build upon a perspective implying that everything has its roots in the cities and metropolitan areas, whether it be socio-economic opportunities, cultural or consumption practices or communication and travel. Using this way of seeing the urban-rural relation, it is easy to regard the rural as only mirroring the urban, with no explanatory power of its own, as merely a geographical dimension. The aim of this work is to go beyond such normative urbanised explanations and to elaborate

[2] The interviewees come from the following countries: Afghanistan, Burma, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Sudan, Thailand and Uzbekistan.

[3] Some of the interviews with these 16 households also involved a child or two in the family. In addition, 12 adolescents and 11 civil servants were interviewed, but the data generated from them are explored in other texts (such as Stenbacka, 2001).

on “the rural power” and on how the rural as an environment affects the transnational or translocal practices and networks. Nevertheless, Smith makes an important statement concerning “the taking place” of transnational practices. The historically mediated context (in which he includes geography) will force us to pay attention to the emplacement of mobile subjects. To conclude, the geographically mediated context, concerning, for example, urban vs. rural, forest vs. desert or village vs. suburb, will make an indispensable contribution to the context of transnationalism. In this case, it means that we will investigate internal and international migrants’ experiences of life in a rural environment and how this life is regarded through a lens of a translocal biography and how it involves translocal practices.

There is now a consensus concerning speaking of countrysides in the plural; there is not one countryside but several different places containing different translocal ruralities. It is more fruitful to discuss the continuous transformation of different countrysides rather than trying to catch one certain feature or the essence of the rural. The contemporary trends of internal and international migration flows into rural areas have interested researchers in several parts of the western world. In the 1990s and the beginning of the 21st century, the main focus was to grasp the phenomenon of internal migration to rural areas. This was conducted with different perspectives and methods, such as statistical analyses of migration movements and classifications of municipalities (Champion, 1989), a discussion on the rural-urban continuum (Bell, 1992), the rural idyll and the gender aspects of such an “idyll” (Little & Austin, 1996; Forsberg & Gunnerud Berg, 2005) and also the rural understood as social processes and social representations (Halfacree, 1993). The perspective taking diversity into account has led to several studies on subdivisions of the rural population, like the middle class, amenity migrants but also more marginalised groups (Cloke & Little, 1997). Later, the often repeated distinction between the urban and the rural has been supplemented with discussions on the rural-urban interrelations (Munkejord, 2006).

The interaction of international migration and the rural has been researched from several interesting perspectives – but not in terms of values and living preferences as was the case within the counter urbanisation paradigm. Without claiming to be able to grasp the full range of the research, I will point to some contemporary research areas. One is concerned with labour migration, which has given rise to a large number of studies concerned with the impact of foreign-born workers in rural areas. One study from Virginia takes account of both the immigrant and industry perspective (Gozdziak & Bump, 2004), and a study from Iceland uncovers questions regarding attachment and the meaning of home (Skaptadóttir & Wojtynska, 2008). Working conditions and recruitment of a foreign-born labour force is discussed in a study from Norway (Rye, 2007). Not as common is the focus on planning and international migration but Miraftab and Mcconnell’s (2008) study is an exception. There are studies on lifestyle migration, mostly among European citizens migrating to Scandinavia, as well as on Dutch and German migrants and second-home owners (Eimermann, 2009; Müller, 1999). Love migration is another theme and is a concern also within the Scandinavian context, involving images of Russian women moving to Norway and Thai women migrating to Sweden (Flemmen, 2007; Hedman,

Nygren, & Fahlgren, 2009). Another area for research, not considering reasons for migrating, is on the rural as a "white" haven and as a place for a certain kind of racism connected to ideas about the rural as representing the core of the nation and ideas about who belongs or not (Neal & Agyeman, 2006).

These quite diverse orientations within the broader field on rural migration to the western countries does not limit itself to a short conclusion. The point is that the limited scope of this study should be seen in the broader light that reminds us about the relativity of spaces as well as the outcomes of the always present categorisation of migrants.

4.2.2 Biographies and Translocal Practices

A biographic approach gives an important contribution to understanding the way individuals and households experience the place of living and how they look upon their future. Such a perspective can also contribute to explaining expectations and doubts regarding certain environments or ways of living. In the study on the *internal* migration, this was explored in terms of earlier experiences of the rural in terms of growth, relatives, and second homes in rural areas but also experiences of the urban, like heavy traffic, lack of suitable houses or an experienced "tough social climate". In the study on *international* migrants, earlier experiences were also present during the interview. As many of the respondents fled from a war zone, lived in camps and experienced uncertainty and fears about health and life, to live in a peripheral rural setting first and foremost is seen as "peace and quiet" in a positive sense. To be able to take a walk in the streets, to let the children walk to school and to have a flat of one's own is primarily spoken of in positive terms. The sparsely populated municipality is described as strange in the beginning, as no people are out in the streets, but after a while it is possible to get used to this.

The two studies have been based on the stories of the migrants and their roles as actors. As individuals migrate, we experience several places involving relatives and friends, work and leisure, memories and feelings. This means that we also belong to several places, a condition that has been conceptualised as place polygamy (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002) or "flerstedstilknytninger" (i.e. connections to multiple places, Munkejord, 2009, p. 20). These concepts embrace the way individuals have multiple place attachments and connect different places with each other. Peoples' belonging to places is also fluid and changes over time and the intensity may vary. Individuals are now part of constituting networks of places and people, connected in social activities, imaginations, memories and expectations on the present and the future.

The respondents will be termed internal and international migrants. The international migrants have a refugee status, which is important as part of their biographical background, but at the same time the label "refugee" is misleading as it puts most of the focus on the past and not as much on the future, while the term "international migrant" or "transnational" pays attention to the individuals as actors with intentions and possibilities. It is not to say that the refugee experience is irrelevant but

rather to say that intentions and goals are just as important for individuals with this background as for voluntary migrants.

The way individuals and households use the place where they live and how they experience possibilities and constraints are connected to biographies, including the past, the present and the future (Boyle, Halfacree, & Robinson, 1998). The themes that will be investigated all involve such feelings; they can be considered opportunities but also constraints. The multifaceted experiences can be stressed as an obstacle for the possibility of saying anything about people's complex relations to places – or they can be seen as the very core of the knowledge needed in terms of the rural as a living and more specifically a "receiving" environment. The three investigated themes – "communication and networks", "local society" and "nature" – all take the rural place as the point of departure, which means that the study subject is individuals' everyday geographies.

4.3 Translocal Rural Spaces from the Perspectives of Internal and International Migrants

A question to be explored is "in what ways do values and experiences differ or coincide regarding the perspectives from the individuals involved in these two studies?" In relation to this, it should also be considered how migrant biographies affect the experiences of the rural as a living milieu. This is interesting as planning activities today focus on presumed differences and group belonging, while we know less about the possible similarities within diversity; the occurrence of common experiences but different biographical backgrounds is here based on being either an internal rural migrant or an international refugee.

4.3.1 Communication and Networks

As stated earlier, rural places are connected to several places in the world. Through the activities and networks of individuals, spatial interactions between different rural places, but also between urban and rural contexts, are an ongoing process indicating a condition of constant restructuring of places (Stenbacka, 2001). Various communication techniques allow people to maintain closer contacts with their previous (home) societies, also involving them in different kinds of social and economic – translocal – networks.

The analysis of the internal migrants showed that in several cases, the Swedish migrants migrate to a social network, an existing network or a non-existing but presumed one. They may look for a house close to relatives or friends or close to a place they already know from when they were younger or from holidays (Stenbacka, 2001). It may also be the case that households move to a rural place that represents a place in their past, the place where they grew up or spent the summers (Forsberg & Carlbrand, 1993). But the wish for a rural living environment or even a "rural way of

live" does not mean rejection of the urban. The belonging or attachment to several places may also be part of the attractiveness of rural areas, as the multi-place experiences may contribute to strengthening positive place-experiences in peripheral areas (Munkejord, 2009). The possibility to live in one place, have a vacation home somewhere else, and keep in contact with relatives and friends as well as travel to new places makes the place for living an attractive place in-between the excursions. The households in the study in Mälardalen stress the importance of keeping contacts with the city. Commuting on a daily basis, as well as weekend trips for cultural events or visiting grown children in metropolitan areas are examples of such recurrent activities within a Swedish context. Friends and activities are important, and a common dream is to own a house with a big garden in the countryside and a flat in town. There is a common wish to hold on to at least two geographical contexts, and each context is experienced in relation to the other.

> Sometimes I long for an urban life, like . . . Stockholm . . . to get the cultural stuff. I mean, not to have to travel for hours and find somewhere to stay. A lot of money just to visit the theatre or an art exhibition. (Birgitta, Swedish background)
>
> It is an oscillating feeling. I would really like to move back into town. /. . ./ But I would also like to have a country estate with horses; I would like to have it all! /. . ./ a flat in the centre of town and a big house in the countryside. But economically it does not work. (Elisabet, Swedish background)

The connections to other kinds of environments, like a city, may be discussed from the viewpoint of opportunities to join certain activities, but these connections may also involve other people and transgress international borders. In-migrants with an *international* background show that relations to other places are materialised in relations to other individuals; it may be something that is practised regularly through physical visits, remittances transferred to other parts of the world, phone calls or chatting on the internet. Such relations may also to different degrees be active in mind and body, "resting" or kept as memories, ready to activate when possible or needed. Social and economic networks extend beyond the singular link between Sweden and the home countries (see also Thompson, 2009, p. 372). Many of the respondents talk about relatives and family members in other countries, leading to translocal networks and a mix of local practices, what may also be referred to as hybridisation (Canclini, 1995).

An effect of the international migrants' transnational lives is that many of the contacts with relatives and friends are now via the phone and the Internet. Mobile phones, for example, play an important role in "building and maintaining a sense of community and connection to others" (Thompson, 2009, p. 360). Many migrants stress the importance of these technological advancements. It means that social networks can be spread even though they are practised at home. When asked about the frequency of contact with "home", and the relatives there, Aras answers:

> Sometimes once, sometimes eight. It depends. There are so many relatives that you should keep in contact with. She [my wife] has ten brothers, me too. Many phone calls. The family is much closer in Iraq. (Aras, international migrant)

In this statement, Aras implicitly states that relations are closer in Iraq than in Sweden, and that he is combining these two ways of living; everyday practice is filled with relational understandings. Another aspect of the intensity in translocal communication by the phone or Internet is that social life to a large extent takes place in the home, where, for example, the computer is, and not in other people's homes or in the street, which may have been the case in the home country. If the household has most of the family in one place in the home country, and if there are relatives from different generations, it is possible to have regular contact, and children may spend a lot of time on the Web. On the other hand, if in the home there is only an elderly mother or father with no computer skills, it is harder to keep in contact because phone calls may be too expensive. Anyhow, for many of the interviewees, contacts with the native country are in fact more frequent than contacts within the local society.

Social network also involves obligations. Ibrahim and Hanna have contact with their relatives almost every week. Mostly they discuss everyday matters, what life is like in Eritrea and in Sweden. The question of remittances is also brought up.

> They ask if we have got a job. If we say "no", they do not ask for money, but if we should say "yes, we have a job", they expect us to send money to them. (Ibrahim, international migrant)

Communicative practices affect immigrants' social networks and how they look upon themselves and perceive themselves in the local society. Recurring questions from relatives in the home country about economic assistance may, for example, affect feelings of success or failure. If you have the chance to send money it can make you feel better but if you have no such opportunity, it may create feelings of despair and hopelessness. Networks within Sweden are also based on a combination of social and economic factors. One man from Uzbekistan recounts how he and another man regularly travel to Gothenburg to shop for groceries at a store with a range that widely exceeds that of the local shops. They buy commodities not only for their own families but also for many others. He mentions that they have had plans to open some kind of business where they live, using these contacts in Gothenburg. This may serve as an example of another recurrent theme; contacts with "compatriots", a social network that is located across Sweden and which involves many phone calls and visits.

The networks within the country also involve a political dimension. One man says that he speaks about local politics with his friends in a southern municipality in Sweden: "We discuss the living conditions and compare our situations." National networks may in this sense be seen as something that makes rural living easier: you share your experiences and compare other environments and so everyday life is put into a wider context, involving feelings of ambiguity and thoughts of moving but also feelings of attachment and a wish to defend a certain way of life.

A striking difference when we compare the internal and the international migrants, and take a time context into account, is that firstly there has been an important change in communication technology involving the Internet and the possibilities to phone, chat or email. These contacts and the use of such technologies are much

more pronounced in the study of the international migrants, performed about 12 years later. But time and advanced technology is not the only answer; even more obvious is the importance of biography and how the migration experience lead to certain translocal communication practices that sometimes stay within the national borders and sometimes transgress the borders of nation-states. There is a need both to build up a sense of "community" despite the dispersion of households and also to exchange and share experiences. Thompson comments on the intersection of community and networks by saying that while communities are ideationally constituted through cultural practices, "social networks" are constituted through interaction and exchange and that there is a complex interplay between communities and networks (Thompson, 2009, 359ff).

We know from earlier studies that households in rural areas are involved in spatially spread social networks, developing communication strategies to other parts of the country or in the world. People themselves integrate the rural and the urban, and build identities with the point of departure in several contexts, a kind of double morphology (Berlan-Darque & Collomb, 1991). We will now turn to the theme of local society and community, to see how the translocal relations are active in the process of interpreting and living the local.

4.3.2 Local Society and Community

In this study, local society and community are investigated through the social relations that are built in the local context and the way they are explained from the geographical, rural, context. Thus, it involves social networks just as the previous theme did, but has the physical locality as point of departure. It involves such geographical aspects as a smaller number of people live close in the municipality centre but also they are also live peripherally in relation to metropolitan parts of the country and with a distance to larger cities, so life and local social relations are affected by the rural or small-scale context. It is about everyday practice as well as about the verbal, outspoken and transferred construction of the rural social life in every day talk.

The analysis of internal migrants showed that a close-knit society and a feeling of "community" was one reason they preferred a rural or a small-town living environment. In a Swedish context, this involves aspects of being seen and that your well-being is of concern for other people in the surroundings. It is practised in the way neighbours keep an eye on each other, each other's children or properties. It is about knowing each other's habits and noticing deflection (Stenbacka, 2001). One woman discusses concerns for and of neighbours:

> If there is no light on, is he ill or has he gone away or what? It is easier to help each other in a way. I think so, and you are more dependent on each other. (Gunilla, Swedish background)

Similar reflections are made concerning the advantages of letting the children grow up in a rural setting. Schools are smaller, if something is wrong with a child you

will know about it and it is also possible for the children to move around, using the forest for playing.

> In the city you are more anonymous. /. . ./ one of the kids was missing, and soon someone was on the phone asking if it is ok that our kid was there. That would not happen in town. (John, Swedish background)

There are also negative aspects of closeness and visibility. Social disadvantages in smaller societies or peripheral locations have to do with gossip and control, and the way you have one life in your own view and one life in the eyes of other people (Stenbacka, 2001; Haugen & Villa, 2006). One woman with a Swedish background, who lives by herself, experiences how people around her notice how she acts, if she has visitors etc., which can have a preventative effect as she avoids doing certain things or visiting certain places. This may, for example, prevent her from visiting the local pub.

> It is easier to be anonymous in town. Easier than here. And that is why I feel that . . . going out at the local pub, it doesn't lure me . . . but God! Go out and see some people. I mean there are plenty of people and it is not that they are all going to look at me but . . . (Birgitta, Swedish background)
>
> Everyone knows everything about everyone, and that is something you need to get used to. They know more about you than you do yourself. /. . ./ It doesn't matter what you do, there is always something to talk about and it doesn't matter who you are or how long you have lived here. (Anette, Swedish background)

There are also aspects of the small-scale social life that are connected to networks and possibilities. It may be easier to find an arena for local activism, to create and to be part of an informal or formal network that can be activated, for example, in work with local festivals (Ekman, 1999) or at times of threat, such as changes within the provision of welfare services, like the closing down of a school or a shop (Berglund, 1998). In addition to such bottom-up movements, the relation to "the local power" is also often described in terms of closeness and informal channels in sparsely populated areas or smaller municipalities. A disadvantage of such local networks is that the same individuals tend to have the high positions, which prevents renewal; once you are in a network, you reinforce each other's status while it can be hard to enter such a network. From a gender perspective, there is also status involved in different kinds of networks, where, for example, male networks are in more powerful positions compared to female (Stenbacka & Tillberg Mattsson, 2009).

When the international migrants are analysed, similar kinds of contextual characteristics associated with rural areas are brought up. Because of the biographical backgrounds and migration histories, international migrants have little knowledge of Swedish society, the welfare system organisation and labour market characteristics (for example, administrative issues around entrepreneurship). If they are also refugees, they are directed to a destined municipality in the country, often with no previous knowledge about the location, climate and character. Within this discussion, the advantage of the small-scale society is formulated in terms of the possibilities that lie in "being close to important people or key persons", like civil servants from the municipality office, integration projects or the local employment

agency. These key persons are not distant official servants, but to a higher degree are seen as individuals who are easy to approach (also see IM-gruppen, 2007).

Another aspect concerns the experience of "being seen" as an individual rather than as an anonymous migrant. It involves a discussion of the differences compared to metropolitan areas where you are seen as a collective of in-migrants, while in a village you are an individual with individual characteristics (also see Bergström, 2001). There are also negative aspects of closeness and visibility. A report by the board of integration (Integrationsverket) discussed how feelings of being seen as deviant and "identified" may exist (Integrationsverket, 2000). The advantages of "small-town-care" can thus turn into disadvantages. This is true when it comes to formal networks and services as well. For individuals or households, it is positive to get the feeling that the civil servants are out walking in the streets and you are close to the place where decisions are made. For civil servants, it has another side. Diana from Sudan tells about her engagement in a women's association and how she had to face some problematic situations as she was inviting the newly arrived women to meetings and seminars. Some men called her ugly names and she was looked upon as a real danger for other in-migrant women.

> I had to speak with the men to make them understand that a women's network is not dangerous. The purpose is not to be against the men. (Diana, Sudan)

Such reactions, and the gender aspects of these reactions, are discussed in other interviews too, and this raises questions of the meaning of the small-scale. On the one hand, it may reinforce a desire for control as it is important to behave "correctly" in the eyes of others. On the other hand, it may have been the small-scale network that made it possible for this woman to speak to the men and discuss the purpose of the meetings. Such antagonisms may lead to adjusting behaviour, backing off and trying to follow another way of action, trying to stand tall or considering moving. Ali-Reza from Iraq works as an interpreter. He has moved from the smaller municipality to a neighbouring larger town. He prefers not to work as an interpreter in the smaller municipality. Those who he will be interpreting for he knows too well and it can become a sensitive situation. He feels that they also have expectations that he cannot fulfil and he says that there is a risk of individuals using gossip in situations where he is supposed to work as a civil servant.

> Everyone knows everything about each other and there is so much bullshit. (Ali-Reza, Iraq)

Being such a key person in a small-scale society has also meant that he is viewed as a friend instead of as a professional, which leads to expectations of him "being there" 24 h a day and to questions from migrants about what is considered to be unfair treatment, including accusing him of giving some people certain favours. Referring to these examples, it can be stated that a close-knit society may involve negative social control. Social control does not only involve gender; age is also an issue as is the power relations between parents and children. A small-scale social environment results in increased opportunities to know where the children are and this is seen as positive from the view of parents. The international in-migrants may also view the rural locality as a good environment to grow up in.

> We thought that Europe only would be cities, and no villages. That there is no small town or small village, everything is a city. But when we arrived we got this place, and we saw that it was good for the children. A good place to grow up in /. . ./ they should not be acting like they do in town /. . ./ (Ibrahim, Eritrea)
>
> We are happy because children are free here. They can go biking, they can laugh, and they can play as they want. It is safe here, and free. They are happy with this freedom. (Nur-Aftab, Afghanistan)

A rural environment is seen as a preferred environment for children to grow up in, something that has been stated in other studies on migration into the countryside (Valentine, 1997; Stenbacka, 2001). One aspect that should be paid attention to in this context is the way the rural municipality is considered in relation to other spaces. For the international migrants, these spaces may be rural or urban areas in the home country, sometimes characterised by war and violence. For the native Swedes, such spaces may be Swedish metropolitan areas or towns. However, this analysis highlights the necessity of treating space as something created in relation to other spaces. This is something that makes comparisons complex; I will nevertheless devote the next section to such an undertaking.

There are some characteristics that seem to be connected to rural areas, irrespective of the background of the interviewed. These characteristics can be summarised as the rural as a place offering close social relations, including a safe place to grow up for children and as a place where the small-scale society involves social control with the concomitant advantages and disadvantages. In rural areas and in smaller municipalities, social control is often described as positive: children are safer, it creates a feeling of visibility and means that you are seen as an individual. The dark side of this is when "care" turns into normative thinking and control over people's practices. Social control is also, to significant degree, a gendered practice. In its negative sense, social control may prevent you from doing certain things and may make you adjust to what is expected. It may also involve certain expectations on in-migrant women, including a collective view on what is accepted.

While the internal migrants often have a previous locally based network as they move into a village or smaller municipality, international migrants lack that kind of social tie. The international migrants thus devote a lot of time to the Internet and mobile phones. Place attachment may be built upon social networks as described above, but as we shall see, nature and the physical aspects of the rural also are involved in processes of anchoring or feelings of belonging.

4.3.3 Spending Time Outdoors and the Meaning of Nature

For the *internal* migrants, nature is named as one important element and as a way to materialise the intentions behind the change of living environment. One often quoted reason behind migrating is to have a greater chance to partake in outdoor activities, such as sports, fishing, berry-picking, barbecuing or simply being able to see the seasonal changes through changes in vegetation, light and animal life. Three different practices or attitudes towards nature were identified among the respondents

in the 1990s: activities such as the use of what nature provides (berries, mushrooms, fish or garden products), an appreciated backdrop to one's own living environment and also the feelings and embodying, feelings for gratitude for just being able to "be part of nature" (Stenbacka, 2001). One woman describes how nature is a place for retreat and recovering:

> When I feel that something is wrong, I go out into the woods. To be by oneself, to be alone and go through things. That is so good. Compared to staying in town. You do not have that possibility. You gain strength by staying outdoors. In the summer, we stay out all the time. We live outdoors. First thing we do, breakfast or coffee in the garden, and we have built a porch where we sit all night. (Gunilla, Swedish background)

Staying outside is also connected to social, collective activities with friends or relatives: hiking, fishing and barbecuing as well as learning how to take care of what nature provides (Stenbacka, 2001).

> I want to learn. I want to be with the older ones, see how they do it, to learn. You go out picking rosehips, and you dry them. And to know the temperature. /. . ./ they smoke their own fish out here. That is how I want it to be. (Anette, Swedish background)

Another recurrent attitude is that the green areas in the cities are not enough. It has to do both with the need for being alone or at least with a limited company and with the wish for the unordered vegetation and the excitement that lies in the unexpected meeting with animals, weather changes or other interactions with what is considered to belong to the broader concept of nature. Birgitta says that ". . .in the city /. . ./ you may go to a park, and that is not enough for me. /. . ./ I want to walk over the meadows, listen to the mockingbird. . ."

While Bell (1992), drawing on a study on the English countryside, said that there are some moral and community-oriented aspects connected to the respondents' arguments around the practise of using the countryside (hunting, for example), there was more individual well-being and less of disparaging the urban way of living in the Swedish study. The woman who appreciates the mocking bird goes on: "/. . ./ It is quality of life, it is greater than the cultural activities in the city [theatre, art exhibitions], but of course, a bit of culture now and then." This woman illustrates the always present notion of the need for both what is considered to be urban and what is considered to be rural.

Regarding the international migrants, their relations to nature and the physical environment are often referred to as something unknown initially. In some cases, it even caused feelings of uneasiness, because of the first impression of waste and wilds. After some time and when the different seasons of the year become familiar (climate, light etc.), the landscape may be an appreciated surroundings. Some also tell about outings to special places which may be used for barbecues, fishing or hiking. When one family from Iraq, with a refugee background, explains the way they use their surroundings, they use words similar to Gunilla's statement above, about staying outdoors. They also refer to the need or the wish to stay outdoors in the summer time; it seems that being in the rural physical environment, spending time fishing, gardening or socialise with friends is something that becomes both necessary and naturalised. The daughter in the family says:

> We fish every day, we go out at around six and come home at around one or two o'clock. Around twenty fresh fishes! In high season we carry three or four bags!
> You will not find us at home in the summer! We are always out barbecuing and fishing. We are always outdoors. (Zahra, Iraq)
> Only for sleep are we back /. . ./ sometimes we go with the car, sometimes we bring the tent, then you can have a rest if you are tired. And we are barbecuing, and you can dip your feet into the water. And when something is pulling [a fish] everyone wants to see what it is. (Aras, Iraq)

Two women have made the journey from Afghanistan to northern Sweden as quota refugees. They speak about similar but also different experiences: "It is good that there is this nice forests and the nature everywhere, but we go to school and after that we go home." The landscape is a nice backdrop but as a newcomer, it is not so clear how a different climate and a different landscape can be used. People also have different feelings concerning openness in terms of mountain or coastal areas or more overgrown areas such as deep forests (Williams & Harvey, 2001). In smaller municipalities or villages, there is also a lack of parks or planned public spaces. The Swedish right of common access involves the right to hike or barbecue in most of the nature surroundings, which is one reason for the absence of planned parks in nature close villages. However, there may be a need for some organised space for outdoor activities.

> When we were in Moscow, there were so many parks. We could bring the children and they could play, and it was a bit different. Here we have nowhere to go. We do not know what to do with the children when we are at home. We have no particular place to go. . . (Sima, Afghanistan)

The comparison of internal and international migrants point to a common experience of the rural as intervening in their lives, and their narratives embrace attitudes towards the physical surroundings (in this case, nature and green environments) and meanings of nature that are both common but also suggest different needs. First, it is shown how nature and outdoor activities may be talked about as a basic need, and how it is impossible to stay inside in the summer. Swedish and international migrants, refugees as well as voluntary migrants, even use the same kinds of expressions, such as "we are outdoors all the time". Also, the importance of what nature provides, like fish or berries, is a recurrent theme among the respondents in both studies. It is also important to pay attention to the lack of public "arranged" space in smaller Swedish municipalities. While the internal respondents did not express such wishes, it seems that households with various international backgrounds pay attention to needs for more planned green spaces, simply because of the wish to use nature as a second living room and because of the ambiguous attitudes towards how to use the physical environment, especially in the beginning.

Another important notion is that the physical environment will always have an effect on humans and lead to certain practises. These practises may be characterised by rejection or attachment. Considering the results from these two studies, it seems that "nature" is something that insists on getting a reaction or being paid attention to, it is getting close and it is something that is hard not to notice and act towards. For some people, it can be a reason to migrate to a rural area, for others it has become a welcomed part of life.

4.4 Conclusion

An important finding from this study considers the spatially rooted ingredients of the rural; there exists a “common language” for expressing the content of life in a rural setting. Peace and quiet, freedom and a stronger sense of community are common words for both internal and international migrants. But the reasons for using the words are quite different. While peace and quiet from the internal-Swedish point of view refers to the contrast with the noise and tempo in bigger cities; the immigrants refer to violence, threats and traffic far beyond Swedish levels. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the similarities and the common goal to live in an environment that is good for the children and that makes life easier. The wish to be part of something that is not too big, but to have the possibility to be seen as an individual may also be some kind of common goal in life. Biographies do have an explanatory power but there are no clear or linear relationships in these explanations. This work also points out the need for a relativity approach when studying place. The experiences, appraisal and appreciation or rejection of one area is though built upon images of what the other offer as well. Spaces for living and acting need to be understood in relation to each other.

It is through the intentions of people that we can come close to the values associated with a certain way of living and it has been shown that rural areas may satisfy the wants and needs among households with different backgrounds but with similar expectations and goals. This is of importance not only for studies within local development but also for work on integration and social cohesion. Such projects or measures are often occupied by differences and to overcome distance while “the gap” may not be that huge or existing at all, and certainly not within all types of values or attitudes. It is possible to add a counterbalance to the differences often focused upon, among the majority population and international migrants, and refugees in particular. It is possible to focus on values, attitudes and practises that occur among international as well as national rural dwellers.

The migration act does not only involve the physical re-location of an individual, a household or a family. New relations are also established between different localities. As the new relations develop the actors involved live in a continuous condition of negotiating and synthesising; places are lived and in the acts of living, several places and place experiences are merged. Referring to the narratives of the international migrants, it is clear that communication is crucial; holding on to the relationships with relatives and friends is a necessary part of life. It is a way to make sense of this merging of experiences and helps in understanding the place they left as well as the place of living.

This chapter has shown that the values connected to rural living can be of a “general” character despite variations in migration biography. Regardless of being an internal or an international migrant, rural identities or in-migrant identities are not fixed, or do not develop as a given outcome from similar backgrounds or experiences. Rather, attitudes towards the rural as a living environment develop from the intentions individuals and households have, and these intentions may exist independent of biography. Even though biography is part of the explanation, it does not

mean that it demands similar biographies to create similar rural identities or attitudes. Rather, it seems that we must regard "the rural" as an intervening subject, the rural as material and social space is a powerful actor in the building of identities and the development of practices.

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Chapter 5
Youth "Settled" by Mobility: Ethnography of a Portuguese Village

Vanda Aparecida da Silva

5.1 Introduction

This research takes place in a modern-day scenario amidst the changes that Portugal has been going through, especially since 25 April 1974,[1] and the country's entry into the European Union in 1986. The project involves a young adult population of a village located in Lower Alentejo. Located on the border zone between Portugal (Alentejo) and Spain (Andalusia), the village has a population of some 1,500 inhabitants.[2] Of the more visible changes, today it is important to highlight the significant change that took place in terms of how Portuguese women have come to be viewed in society after 25 April 1974. The result has been a greater affirmation of women in the workforce and in family and demographic behaviours. Significant changes have taken place and the protagonists of those changes are the women and the political movement that sparked this process (Carrilho, 1996, p. 15). Of no less importance are the developments involving sexual behaviour and reproductive life, such as abortion.[3] More recently, we have the ratification of the law that recognises equality of same-sex marriages.[4]

Although within this scenario of modernisation we see some improvements, there are also some internal struggles in terms of institutions that make adaptation difficult. This is true in terms of the strong presence of certain religious beliefs, especially Catholicism, along with legislative structures that offer contradictions and do not wish to encourage the changes and dynamics that are felt in the family,

[1] The period in which Portugal changed from the dictatorial regime of Oliveira Salazar to a democratic regime.

[2] Source: Caracterização Genérica do Concelho de Serpa, C.M.S., 2001. The decision was made not to mention the name of the village in this text.

[3] Through Law no. 16/2007, 17 April, ratified in June 2007.

[4] Law no. 9/XI, 31 May (2010).

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_5,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

such as women's greater participation in the workforce. Other examples include the low birth rate that contrasts with a natalist ideology; the new divorce law; and the framework for parental responsibilities versus the obstacles to the execution of basic measure. Demographics suggest a growing gap between the active and inactive population, and there are many changes taking place in Portugal, which has become a country of immigration when it used to be a country of emigration (Almeida, 2006).

In the Alentejo rural space, such social transformations can influence (directly or indirectly) the way in which residents of the Lower Alentejo village relate to the world, in such a way that looking at these relationships and dynamics involves thinking locally-globally (Santos, 2002, p. 313), as well as understanding people's attempts to adapt to what comes from "outside" the village. Along with the removal of the latifundium society structures that ended up bringing about changes in the traditional lifestyles of the communities, consumption and production ceased to be the exclusive domain of agriculture and began to include new forms of work and income, combining agricultural activity with other activities performed in the secondary and tertiary sectors[5] (Carmo, 2007).

5.2 Aims and Methodology

It was thus against this backdrop that this ethnographic (Geertz, 1989) and qualitative research project[6] took place, on the basis of participating observation. However, it is important to point out that even though the lower Alentejo village exhibits expressive movement, seeing as how mobility has become a contemporary demand (Santos, 2002), its reality also supports the state of rural Portugal, with its increasingly aging population. However, in this regard, I wish to reflect on the different mobility of local residents, with a special focus on young people. Young people, through sociability, express themselves and experiment with the various ways available to communicate, living a sort of "effective exchange" (op. cit., p. 319) between the worlds of the village and the city, the national space and the foreign space. As such, we can see that through their movements, daily life is opened up, causing residents to be encouraged or compelled to be creative, including the dimension of recreating the idea of space and belonging to a place.

The chapter contains points about the different scales of mobilities, i.e. the international, the national, the regional and cyberspace. According to this division of

[5] The residents of this village in Lower Alentejo live off olive crops, industrial crops (e.g. olive oil), permanent pastures, and livestock such as sheep, fowl and swine. They also work in small businesses selling clothing, food and medication; coffee shops and restaurants; administrative services at the parish council, banks, and other public institutions, such as health centres and primary schools.

[6] From the post-doctorate project entitled "Experiences and representations of sexuality amongst Portuguese youth in rural surroundings," financed by the Foundation for Science and Technology (F.C.T.). The qualitative methodology combines multiple sources and testimonies (covering three years of fieldwork), seeking to identify the extent to which different representations and practices of mobility influence the life and permanence of young people in their own villages.

various mobilities on various scale levels, the general aim of the chapter is to study the way the diverse social participants (particularly the young population) organise their daily life, in their multiple movements throughout the most varied spatial contexts. Here, I use the qualitative methodology combining multiple sources and testimonies (from 3 years of fieldwork). I will identify the extent to which different representations and practices of mobility influence the life and permanence of young people in their own villages. Visits and contact with inhabitants of the village therefore do not follow a rigid pattern and they do not take place solely at their place of residence. That is to say, this is an example of how the mobility of the subjects themselves affects the dynamics of the field work. As such, during interaction with people, we discuss all areas of daily life. As some trust begins to build between myself as the researcher and the subjects, a deeper interview may be conducted, while I also use the technique of interviewing slightly older young people in order to “reconstruct a retrospective of the biographies” (Heilborn et al., 2002, p. 15).[7]

I carried out around 35 interviews and successive visits to the families of those interviewed; and I also checked on the internet pages of friends in the social network. The virtual terrain has become another aspect of the “ethnographic field,” as it is through instant messages via MSN, text (mobile phones), Hi-5 (a social network)[8] appearances with messages and photographs (for example, photologs)[9] that adults and young people began to maintain contact with the researcher, keeping me updated regarding the events in the village and reviving memories. In this regard, they have chosen or they believe to have chosen who will have access to the virtual network of Internet friends. In contrast, people can find out about the private lives of other people by belonging to a network of friends that can share secrets, heartbreaks, pains and hurt feelings published on the Internet in the form of “intimate diaries” (Sibilia, 2008, p. 12).

Based on the data collected through “participative observation”, I call attention to how these young people have come to play a role that I believe can offer another way of looking at young people in rural Portugal, as social subjects who are active in the process of social transformation. While it is through the young people that I begin exploring the terrain, as it is through them that I am introduced into the village, it is they who at the same time more directly receive information and the behaviour examples seen as more urbanised and modern. In addition is the fact that they live in a physical border zone, which can directly or indirectly favour them in terms of the dynamics of exploring and travelling to other spaces with fluxes and refluxes of experiences. Thus, looking at the rural space for a “translocal” perspective is

[7] Especially when it is necessary to overcome some obstacles like shyness in young people of the targeted age bracket (14–25 years) and difficulty in speaking about intimacy, amongst other such topics.

[8] This is one of the many forms of communicating via computer and Internet. Through it, people establish new forms of conversation (Herring et al., 2005). The social network includes participants (people, institutions or groups) and their connections in cyberspace.

[9] Photologs are photography blogs, or websites that allow you to put photos on the Internet quickly and easily.

to consider that people are moving in multiple directions geographically (Hannerz, 1997), and is to see mobility as a "social movement" and as political (Cresswell, 2009). The central point in this idea is that this is happening and that therefore the network of relationships and communications in rural space is strengthened.

5.3 The Regional Scale of Mobility: Young People and Association

The young people from the Alentejo village are participants in local society, discovering spaces and political entities that they can address to execute their events-activities and so they can be recognised as a youth group of a rural location, principally by those who visit them. Once they are organised, they learn of public administration entities such as Portuguese Youth Institute (I.P.J.), whose mission is to implement the youth policy adopted by the government in terms of fostering and supporting youth associations and groups. In terms of the information flow, and the promotion of I.P.J., young people seek out alternatives and create strategies so that the life of the village can be positive and dynamic. One of the strategies adopted is the promotion of social gatherings (in the country with food and drink) and parties with lots of music and drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic). Parties promoted by young people are incorporated into the village festivities and can signify a search for "leisurely exaltation" (Saraiva, 2005), but also another stage of the identity process of a particular group, in this case young people who participate in the association.

The Cultural and Youth Association (UAI) was created on 7 July 2001. According to the promotional text for the association, "[. . .] it was created by a group of friends from this locality who shared innovative ideas, a cooperative spirit of teamwork who on a volunteer and non-profit basis organise activities essentially directed at young people residing in this region that has somewhat aged" (written by the president of the association, 25 years old, married, employed).[10] A possible interpretation is in regard to the need of young people to take the lead in promoting events-activities for themselves because "when you live in a place where nothing happens, you have to make things happen." But what does "UAI" mean?[11] Young people who are affiliated or not affiliated with the association are not sure where it came from, but it is common to say that this is a typical expression heard in the village. Identification and the feeling of belonging is expressed through the young people's choice of an expression that translates the uniqueness of the local culture while also setting the young people apart.

The association's program of activities follows a schedule that is created annually and includes: mountain biking, all-terrain vehicle rides (motorcycles, jeeps,

[10] According to press material about the association "UAI".

[11] This is an expression that is mainly used in southern Portugal to express a feeling or reaction (happiness, surprise, awe).

cars, etc.), football tournaments, live music ("house" music, "rave" type events), traditional festivities, going to the Talefe (a local geological landmark) at the top of the mountain and painting, and the so-called "Non-Stop" (with various activities in a single day). When I talked to the association's president, the total of 110 members consisted of 63 boys and 47 girls with an average age ranging between 14 and 16 (not all are students). Not all of them pay dues and when they do, they pay a monthly amount of €1.00 (one euro) to the president or the treasurer. The collaboration of the young people from amongst members of the administration of UAI, members of the group itself and non-members, almost always makes up for the lack of suitable space to maintain the events-activities, such as in terms of accessing food or beverages that will be used.

Under these circumstances, family homes become a space that also belongs to the Association. However, it is due to the "lack of space"[12] that belongs to young people that they seek out spaces for their festive and commemorative events, as well as space to be more intimate (privacy). There is no lack of space for holding parties, and this space is the ideal and strategic space for the affective-sexual experiences of young people, not to mention the adults through their own experiences or through nostalgia.

In fact, parties mobilise young people and adults and particularly those who wish to find future husbands and wives or at least a committed relationship. The older people reminisce about the dance parties. According to a 71-year-old lady (married, working as a cook in the village): "When I dated my husband, dances involved singing "cantes",[13] [. . .] boys would sing songs to us and us to them."[14] If the "commemorations help to remember the past in the present" (Sobral, 2006, pp. 30–31), in these moments the young people seem to feel that they are promoting a "movement" that includes everyone, some integrating themselves while others just watch.

5.4 National and International Spaces: A Tension Between Flows and Images

The young people of this village in lower Alentejo move amongst spaces that can be considered rural with some subtle differences within the village: the country, chapel, country house and rural areas outside the village, with the concentration of houses,

[12] Recently, the association was able to obtain approval for the plans for a headquarters in the village. We know that it will receive aid from the parish council and the Portuguese Youth Institute and it will be located in the building where the first customs house of lower Alentejo was located in the Portugal-Andalusia border zone.

[13] These are songs whose lyrics refer to the rural and popular universe, marked by their spontaneity, and in the past occurred in the streets, during work in the field and at taverns (a place for male social interaction) Cf. website: http://cantoalentejano.com/textos/, visited on 29-06-2010.

[14] Interview carried out 09-02-2008.

local administration buildings, church, health centre. Meanwhile, older people reminisce and encourage young people to join inherited social networks. Nevertheless, it is through memory or remembering that things are reassigned meaning, within and from the place in which one lives, and repetitive socialisation is reborn with parties, association events, or even the organisation of a group trip to Santiago de Compostela, for instance, as discussed more below, bringing new aspects to the social life of residents.

Underlying the "aging" of the region is the need for young people to seek out better living conditions, and we could mention a few guidelines that rural young people might follow in terms of seeking alternatives to leaving the locality. Wanderley (2000, p. 99), based on the Mendras study, for instance, calls attention to the example of rural young people from Brittany, a region with a strong history of rural exodus, who triggered what he called "rebirth of rural life," as they refused to leave their village and sought out ways of living in the locality, even if this involved finding work in neighbouring areas. This example is given to illustrate that in lower Alentejo, the young people who live in this village behave similarly, as they are forced to seek work elsewhere, namely in neighbouring localities (the cities of Serpa and Beja in Spain) or in more distant places such as France, England, Switzerland, etc. Some end up working in other rural spaces (harvesting grapes, peaches, olives, etc. inside and outside of Portugal, especially in Spain), while others work in the hotel and transportation industries. Of interest is also the spatial mobility of women (young and adult), especially through the autonomy they have acquired by having a driver's licence and by driving their own cars. It is not difficult to find women (many of them married) travelling and linking to other spaces inside and outside the village. They also use the widely accessible nationwide bus services, with a particular company providing service to all the villages and main cities in Portugal.

However, even when they are "forced" to emigrate (due to unemployment, for example), they continue to be active in the village in some way, as in their respective homes and mobilisation of their network of friends. This can lead to a revitalisation in relations with family and friends, because in addition to causing an increase in financial resources this can also create the possibility of geographic movement of family members and friends when they visit and learn about another country. All of this increasingly points to more homogeneity in terms of access to material and social property by rural and urban inhabitants (Wanderley, 2000). In fact, in the case of the Alentejo village, this can be an important factor and it is reinforced by the location of the village near the border. Notwithstanding, evidence shows that it is in terms of demands and identifications in daily life that we can see the differences.

I was able to accompany the different movements in the travel of young and adult men and women. One example illustrates the movement of family members to Lisbon. The young woman (26 years old, single, completed the ninth grade in school, employed) is able to find a job at a company in Lisbon; she rents a small apartment and in addition to spending alternate weekends at her parents' home, her parents also begin to take short "holidays" from the village by spending some time at her daughter's home. It was during a trip that we made together, researcher and young interviewee, from the village to Lisbon that I learned that she had found a

job in Lisbon and decided to move there; this was after many attempts at finding a job that would allow her to "change her life," seeing as her work up until then had consisted of small jobs that included working in small family businesses and harvesting peaches and apples in France. There is perhaps another move on the horizon, as her dream is to go and "live in the Algarve".[15]

Observing the interactions between young people in relation to festivities, social cooperation, searching for work, involves deriving some conclusions regarding the experiences of these social subjects with time and space, mobility amongst different locations, as well as the consumption of new technologies and the manner in which they provide new ways of relating to each other and the world. It was not by chance that once I had built closer ties to the young people that ran the local youth association, I was asked to join Hi-5 (a social network, as previously mentioned above),[16] in which the UAI friends participated). As such, considering the coexistence of traditional local culture with the modern I ask: Could it be that these technologies are being used to expand horizons of affection, friendships, and networks of solidarity, in such a way that living in the village no longer means being so far removed from the world?

In another example, a young man (19 years old, student, currently living in Coimbra), after experiencing a situation of contrasting values (within the scope of his friendships),[17] because he wanted to live his sexuality more freely, decided to leave the village. However, it all ended up being a convergence of situations, as he wished to continue his studies and attend university. It was through his network of Internet friends that his perspective on the village changed. He says:

> [. . .] some years ago when I was 15 I said that I would never leave [name of the Village][. . .] then I began to get to know people from the outside via Internet and they have become great friends[. . .] [boy, 19 years old, student, living in Coimbra].[18]

The example of this excerpt of the conversation with the young village resident via Skype can be useful in terms of thinking about some aspects of these computer-based methods of fostering orality. One of these involves the contexts in which the types of conversations occurred. The type established between the researcher and the young interviewee serves as an example. In this relationship, which was built

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[15] A region located in the southern part of mainland Portugal. According to my field journal of 03-05-2010.

[16] This is one of the many forms of communicating via computer and Internet. Through it, people establish new forms of conversation (Herring et al., 2005). The social network includes participants (people, institutions or groups) and their connections in cyberspace.

[17] We can say that the experience of the young man (19 years old) revealing intimate information to people within his network of friendships brought to light aspects that confront the aspirations of the young people of the village, which involves living affective-love relationships more freely and with more spontaneity, i.e. sexuality and socialisation values marked by heterosexual normative models. I do not intend to elaborate on this description and analysis; however, it should be said that one of the factors that led to his decision to leave the village is related to a "coming out" experience spread through gossip.

[18] Excerpt from the conversation-interview held via Skype on 28-04-2010.

from within the village and then began to grow through exchanges of text messages (via mobile phone) and e-mail, we can see the multiple interactions of the social subjects with the verbal, textual/virtual and image-based language, as well as with the computer. This is an element that gains importance in terms of the relationship that they establish with time and space. Another aspect that can be highlighted is the persistence in computer accessibility, which allows conversations between people and groups to be resumed at times different from the one when the first lines of the conversation were written (Boyd, 2006).

5.5 Cyberspace: Internet, Friends and Multiple Images

In the language of cyberspace, the practices of conversation via computer and its communication tools emphasise the text, such as how the term "messengers" is used. Examples are e-mail, MSN, Skype (although you can opt for video and sound), and GoogleTalk, all of which allow the user to appear as present to others each time he or she connects to the Internet. As such, in contrast with the traditional image of sedentary village life, incorporation of the computer/Internet and mobile phones into the daily lives of the residents of the lower Alentejo village requires other approaches to the idea of distance, proximity and velocity (Cresswell, 2009). Mobile phones make it possible to adjust daily events in a more flexible manner, coordinating commitments and schedules, especially due to the capacity to connect in "real time".

For the young people of the village, this allows them to be in constant contact, even when they have nothing or almost nothing to say to each other, sending mobile phone messages with just a ring. For families, it is an effective way of reducing anxiety (about receiving news) whenever their children are away from home. That is to say, there is a change in the opinion that one has in going from the view of village "sedentarism" to an interpretation that takes into account the distinct family nucleuses and the use of time. From this experience, we can also see that there is only one superficial layer (perhaps a protective one) covering other layers: the circulation of "symbolic and imaginary goods" (Campos, 2009) and of people too.

An example is the case of the boy (19 years old) who, after having left the village, developed friendships via a social network (on the Internet), turning it into a strong ally when his friendship ties within the village were not going well. However, it is through this technological instrument that one can resolve conflicts and rediscover new friendships, including in the place of origin. In addition to decoding meanings of the word "friendship" due to the manner in which the ties are consolidated through conversations via Internet, in exchanges in reciprocity and trust elements one can make the distinction between those who are "friends" from the network and the other participants in the network (Boyd, 2006). Sometimes they even find potential suitors, as with the experiences lived by an interviewee (26 years old, employed, single).

As such, in the Alentejo village, especially amongst young people and adults, we can see a substantial use of image diffusion and capture instruments: television,

photo cameras (digital, mobile phone), video cameras, as well as diffusion of images via Internet (websites/blog of the village, photologs, Hi5 and Facebook social networks). It was not by chance that on the first night I was there, while walking through the streets of the village, I found a small group of young people. Some were watching a boy who was creating a drawing painted with aerosol. What I saw was not graffiti made directly on the wall, but rather a “writer”.[19] That night I learnt that the drawing was for a party at the local disco (currently closed down).

As such, and since today graffiti can be seen as a mobility artefact in contemporary urban life, because the wall is one of the destinations for those who do graffiti (Campos, 2009), it is also important to observe the contrast of such a practice in the village with what is considered to be an example of visual city culture, multiple and multifaceted. Anyone who walks the streets of the village will not see initials on the walls, nor symbols and individual signatures. They will instead find on the bedroom walls of a boy (17 years old, non-student, works with his father) some forms of interpretation of cultural graffiti. Are there other young people who do graffiti in the village? If there are, they are hidden because it is during this learning phase for a particular art or trade in the urban universe that we can see certain constraints amongst peers. Perhaps this inconvenience comes from being associated with something that is extreme – the language of young subversive protesters – an image that not everyone in the village would like to be associated with. As such, some people refer to the boy (17 years old) as the “Picasso of the village” jokingly or in disguised admiration.

Another example that may denote concern with image fluxes indirectly arose through questions that youth or adults had about Brazilian[20] soap operas, asking about the veracity of some of the episodes or behaviours. What does this tell us about the lives of young people in this village? A simplistic response would be that the young people of this lower Alentejo village are becoming more “urbanised” because they wish to be more like the young people of the soap. However, this accounts for very little in light of the fact that there are increasingly more similarities between the residents of the two rural and urban worlds, namely in terms of usages, consumption and the demands of the residents, while they still have their own specific demands as well. It is through the specificities of “ways of doing things” that young people and other Alentejo residents sometimes show how proud they are of themselves. According to one girl (approximately 25 years old, university degree in communication, member of the youth association), during one of the socialisation events promoted by the association: “Here we do more than what young people do in Lisbon.”[21] However, sometimes they cannot continue certain activities, such as running the business of the small, only disco of the village, or hone a skill, such as the boy who is a graffiti writer but cannot continue because of economic constraints.

[19] Even though the boy probably did not see himself as or intend to call himself a “writer”, which means a member of any graffiti-writing community.

[20] Broadcast by Portuguese television channels (Cunha, 2003).

[21] According with my field journal of 23-06-2007.

5.6 The Cross-Border Scale: Beyond the Frontier

As such, we can see that the residents of this village and of other border villages seek to take maximum advantage of the possibilities of living next to the Portuguese-Spanish border. They often undertake creative actions to compensate for shortcomings or excesses in both cultures (Hannerz, 1997). However, while for residents of this village the experience of movement is conducted via different "events" occurring within various times and spaces, inside and out, they are lived as transits through "domestic spaces." The story told by a girl (26 years old, village resident, completed ninth grade in school) regarding a situation that occurred with her and her sister (15 years old, student, resident of the village) is an example of this. She told me that one day when they were going to an Andalusian city, they were almost kept from continuing their trip by the highway patrol because her sister had forgotten her identity card. However, because one of the officers knew the driver of the vehicle (26 years old) they were allowed to continue their trip. That is to say, what could have been one of the many trips to that city became an unstable situation due to a break in the routine. It was another example of the confrontational tension zones that spatial mobility and border location creates, instilling a feeling and awareness of vulnerability.

> The more unstable and surprising the space is, the more surprised the individual will be and the more effective the discovery operation will be. The awareness *of the place* supersedes the awareness *at the place*. The notion of unknown space loses its negative connotation and gains a positive slant that comes from its role in producing the new history (Santos, 2002, p. 330).

Thinking about the geographic mobility in this border zone also involves reviewing historic and economic aspects. We can see the accelerated process of the approximation of the two economies and we can also perceive the permeability, chemistry and affinity in terms of solidarity relations (not to mention affective-love relations) on the Portuguese-Spanish border. One example is the tight bonds between families from the village whose children (girl or boy) married a Spaniard. These situations are divided amongst the two countries, whether it be in terms of sociability or in terms of domestic life (especially in terms of mutual help for reasons of economic difficulty or illness). It appears that such a union can be a sign of something broader that is present in the memory of proximity between the Portuguese and the Spanish living on the border, including relations of generosity.[22]

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[22] Regarding this issue, the work of Simões (2007) can remind us that Portuguese and Spaniards living along the border continue to harbour feelings about the drama and events lived during the Civil War of 1936–1939. On the Spanish side, the war caused many Spaniards to flee to the Portuguese side to save their lives, while on the Portuguese side, there was generosity (an example is Lieutenant Seixas who protected hundreds of Spanish refugees, ignoring Salazar's orders) and examples of transcendence in the face of danger and repercussions, while also illustrating how in one man we can see an example of "hero/villain" (in the Portuguese case). It should be pointed out that Barrancos is not the location of the research here undertaken, but its scope applies to all

As such, it is not by chance that we are reminded of the historical saying "Spain brings neither good marriages nor good winds" in relation to the Andalusian border. This suggests that people are willing to rethink moral precepts in the face of the fluidity and dynamics between the Portuguese-Andalusian border during trips taken by the social participants as well as use of the word "friend" which, at times and in certain contexts, is used in order to hide any suspicions regarding the involvement or degree of intimacy with another person. In many cases, in this Alentejo town, use of the word "friend" also denotes hiding a situation. It is also not by chance that people's memory on both the Portuguese and Spanish (Andalusia) sides continues to conjure up the past as relates to contraband (Freire et al., 2009). Therefore, if we pursue this line of thought to its fullest extent and to the full extent of the lives of these inhabitants, we find that the familiar and the traditional can be loaded with affectivity (Martins, 2000), which in turn provides for social situations marked by ambivalence expressed through relations of friendship. And what is so familiar becomes temporarily unknown or likely to become estranged.

5.6.1 Friendship, a Necessary Relationship

In some situations, it was observed that in terms of friendship relations between female and male peers, if there was a loss of trust, offence and hurt feelings triggered a break-up process. The announcement that something is identified as unworthy of being part of a particular group cuts solidarity ties, especially when there are forms of social coercion, such as gossip or rumours (Cutileiro, 1977; Elias & Scotson, 2000; Silva, 2007), strongly present in the village. The process of breaking up friendships or weakening relationships are part of people's daily lives and can signal a new way of seeing the world, the place and space. However, it is in this state of alert that discovery takes place. Perhaps this is why we can see residents, young people and adults, who believe that in order to continue to live in the village, it is important that they be able to travel to another place and have an alternative to "breathe" and still return to the same place.

> [...] In relation to young people who are away and always come back... I believe it is because things are simpler, you always end up at somebody's house, everyone together eating migas[23] or waiting outside for the coffee shops to open so they can all eat together, all their childhood friends are there [boy, 19 years old, living in Coimbra].[24]

While a Portuguese language dictionary may define friendship as a sentiment and a relationship, one should also consider that formally the word can take on multiple

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of the villages in lower Alentejo. However, in the village that is the location of the field observations, some stories of brawls in coffee shops or night clubs on the Spanish side involving young Portuguese and Andalusians circulate every once in a while.

[23] Cf. Dicionário da Lingua Portuguesa: "*açorda,* thick soup made with bits of bread browned with olive oil and pork." Porto Editora, p. 523.

[24] Excerpt from the conversation-interview held via Skype on 28-04-2010.

meanings, depending on the socio-cultural conception of friendship that is created by a particular society (Rezende, 2002). In the town, meanings of friendship change according to situations, appearing as a way of mediating relationships between life inside the home and outside the home, both as a strong element in social relations and in defining the self.

Joan Scott (1999) comments that the "subjects are made up of experience" and therefore for some young people to become subjects of their own stories, leaving the village should also be an option or choice, as stated by a young man: "[. . .] I'm not interested in working in the fields, and big cities offer more, have more movement, different people and you gain experiences that help you grow as a person." (19 years old, student, resident of Coimbra).[25] There is also the story of a mother and her son (the woman is approximately 47 years old, married, employed in the village and the son is 30 years old): "My son is from here. He has already refused the opportunity to go work outside of the village and earn more money; he turned it down. He likes it here in the country." Another case involves the story of an interviewee (25 years old, single, university degree in accounting) who studied at a university abroad and after getting her degree, she returned to the village. She works at the family business in the city of Beja as an accountant.[26]

In another sense, going to Spain (Andalusia) for some young people of the lower Alentejo village means living more intensely outside and where you can be "someone else" more freely and have other experiences within a space of relative "familiarity." This is why young people and adults often go to Andalusian Spain in order to have fun and live experiences that they often feel they cannot live in the village. For instance, the fact that young people choose to take their graduation class trips (during the last year of their academic education) to Spain.[27] There is also the example of a trip to Santiago de Compostela (crossing the Galician border) by bus, bringing together residents of the village and Andalusia, especially adults and the elderly. These passengers essentially represent people with some disposable income to invest in this type of leisure-tourism, as they are retired.

However, within the scope of the village, moving amongst other spaces and consuming and incorporating other lifestyles sparks an interest in living experiences that are different from those that are usually expected. Young people express the wish to live affective-love experiences in a more extreme manner, combined with alcohol consumption, new technologies, extreme sports and electronic music. This denotes belonging to or aspiring to belong to a particular class (within the village space) with greater purchasing power, education or status. In these situations, all ties of trust are indispensable.

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[25] Excerpt from a conversation-interview held via Skype on 28-04-2010.

[26] According with my field journal of 11-11-2006 until 2008.

[27] In addition to having other employment opportunities in Spain, such as the boy (approximately 19 years old, single) who at the time of the research project was a truck driver assistant at a livestock transporting company. Another boy (26 years old), the boyfriend of a female interviewee, quit his job as a waiter in a village restaurant and went to work in Spain at a meat packing company due to a better salary. However, both frequently returned to the village.

It is within this context that we can understand that festive events-activities are both spaces of security and (in)security for many young people, especially those of a younger age who are initiating their social life. Going out at night is often the most anticipated moment for young people in their daily lives because it is at night that they leave their homes to live their youth to the fullest. Some of them call themselves bats because they live at night. This in turn causes some tension because the "rookie" will be under the watchful eye of the older young people, whether they be family members or from the friendship network.

5.7 Conclusion

What can be concluded from this paper requires special attention paid to the process that Portugal is undergoing. Even the occurrence (or accelerated sparking) of social transformations have not been sufficient (and dynamic enough) to trigger changes in mentality, especially the mentality that still wants dichotomies between worlds, in this case the rural and the urban. This is particularly true when the "founding myth" is invoked in order to reinstate the idea of the sedentarism of rural society and the dynamism of the urban society.

As such, this research highlights the interconnection between different experiences through combinations of ideals of modern and traditional, along with the dynamics of a certain rural context that contrasts with the discourse of the "emptying" of the Portuguese villages, especially since this discourse is based on an analysis founded on demographics. The intention was to call attention to the creative process of the individuals in terms of their manifest will to mediate between the worlds, simultaneously claiming diversity and difference, i.e. equality, liberty and rights. As such, the residents of places like the one researched live experiences that increasingly distance themselves from the quiet and sedentary lifestyle of village life, and in the various situations of sociability and work the experiences then become more complex and sometimes tense. This turns rural spaces into spaces of emergency, conflict and break-up (Wanderley, 2000).

When there is an individual willingness to remain in the village space and experience spatial mobility and related goods and symbols, increasingly favoured by the numerous offers and facilities of contemporary society, this translates into a way for some of these subjects to transform relations with space and social life. Young people of this village in Lower Alentejo, in their diversity, contribute to the lifestyle of having a simultaneous capacity of linkage between the worlds of the city and the country while they also seek to affirm themselves. This is an identity affirmation that for some of the interviewed young people translates into the choice of "remaining" in the village, even if that entails giving up possible improvements (especially economic ones) that life somewhere else might be able to provide, or they may initiate a coming-and-going movement, working in another place and returning at the end of the day, week or month (or after months) to their home in the village. Thus, young people see mobility between different times-spaces as a way of remaining in one place.

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Chapter 6
Migration Dynamics in Romania and the Counter-Urbanisation Process: A Case Study of Bucharest's Rural-Urban Fringe

Liliana Guran-Nica and Michael Sofer

6.1 Introduction

During the past two decades, Romania has undergone a complete metamorphosis, a major transformation that has led to a complete modification of the political, social and economic systems. As a result, the rural areas of Romania have been undergoing tremendous economic, social and environmental changes. These changes have been fed by intense population mobility, into and out of the rural settlements. Due to the fact that agriculture is no longer the sole economic base of rural areas, rural communities are changing in social and economic terms, changes which are far more noticeable in the rural-urban fringe (RUF), where the dominance of productive usage is giving way to a mixture of production and consumption-led activities. This rural-urban fringe is losing its traditional image as a farming space by partly turning into middle-class suburbs, inhabited by urban migrants who move in search of quality lifestyles. The outcomes are new land-use patterns, designed for residential, commercial and leisure activities, which proliferate in this zone.

This chapter aims to describe and explain the internal migration patterns and their outcomes that have taken place in the rural areas of Romania and particularly in the rural-urban fringe by focusing on Bucharest RUF. The reason for this choice is that the capital city is the most dynamic core of social and economic changes and its RUF has undergone significant changes through steadily losing some of its traditional features.

The discussion is based on synthesising available data and information in the Romanian literature and also on an analysis of the latest available published data sources. An additional source of information is a survey conducted in a number of rural settlements that offers a perspective on the local actors' (the in-comers and the natives) motivations to migrate. The spatial analysis embedded in this study

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_6,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

offers a better knowledge of the regional differences in migration tendencies, and the differences in the triggers for population movement.

The chapter begins with a short background summary of the economic transformation of the Romanian economy and its impact on the population. This is followed by a description of the spatial dimension of the recent migratory movements in Romania. The third section deals with migration patterns in the rural-urban fringe of the major metropolitan areas, leading to a discussion of the migration patterns within the Bucharest RUF and focusing on two communities, Voluntari and Brăneşti, as case studies. Finally, the current and future implications for migration trends are discussed.

6.2 Background

In the past two decades, the dynamics of the society and the economy had a significant impact on the population movement in Romania. In order to understand the mechanisms that triggered this process, we need to reflect back upon the previous period, namely the second half of the twentieth century. The migration then was generated by major political, social and economic events that Romania had experienced, such as the Second World War, the famine that followed it, the deportations by the Communist regime, the enforcement of farmers to be organised within farming cooperatives, and the rapid industrialisation process based on the expansion of the urban system. All these events shaped a specific migration pattern, which perfectly matches the eastern European post-war model.

Since the 1989 transition from a centralised to a market economy, the entire socio-economic system has been transformed through the implementation of structural reforms, leading to new migration trends. Alongside the privatisation and restructuring of industrial corporations, there was a significant reform in the agricultural sector, including the restitution of farmland to former owners (Guran-Nica, 2004). The combined effect of these changes triggered important social transformations, in both the urban and the rural spaces. In the latter, as a result of the extreme fragmentation of farmland and diminishing employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector, many households were engaged in semi-subsistence production, leading to a sharp decline in their living standard, or they used coping strategies based on pluriactivity (Sofer & Bordanc, 1998).

The difficult economic conditions of the rural space compared to the urban one are not new for Romania. The entire post-war period has been economically difficult, despite attempts by the Communist regime to improve it, somehow, through erratic industrial investments. This impacted on all the elements of the demographic structure. The consequences were a vulnerable natural balance and an intensified exodus towards the cities, which led to a constant decline in the numbers of inhabitants and an increase of the ageing population, features which persisted and even grew in importance, in some instances, after 1989 (Table 6.1).

Economic growth during the 1990s led to the relocation of rural populations into urban areas (Fig. 6.1). However, the intensity of this phenomenon declined in the

Table 6.1 Demographic characteristics of the rural population

Years	1966	1977	1992	2002	2007
Population (thousand persons)	11,797	12,164	10,418	10,245	9670
Population growth (percentage change from population in 1977)		100.0	85.6	84.2	79.4
Rural population as % of national population	61.8	56.4	45.7	47.3	44.8
Elderly rural population aged 60 and over (%)	12.2	16.4	22.1	24.3	23.8

Source: National Institute of Statistics, *Census of Population*, 1966, 1977, 1992, 2002 and *Statistical Yearbooks* 1981–2008.

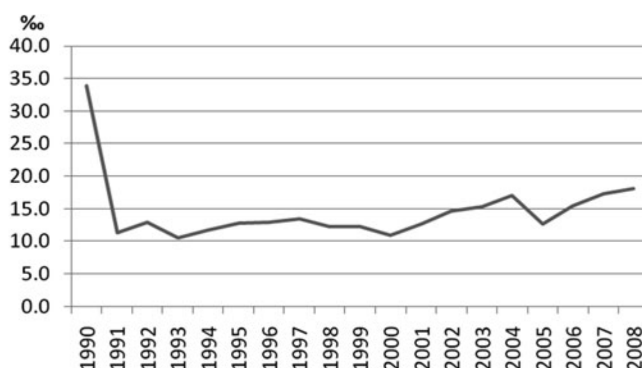

Fig. 6.1 Migration trends in the rural space: gross migration rate (total internal migration)
Source: Anuarul statistic al României (2009)

following years, when a shift in the prevailing direction was observed, reflected in a positive migration balance in favour of the rural areas after 1997 (Fig. 6.2). Hence, the rural space has become a destination for migrants, and "the urban-rural component becomes, maybe for the first time in the modern-day history of Romania, the main direction for migration" (Rotariu & Mezei, 1999b, p. 16).

There are various reasons for the changing trend, yet the literature focuses on how the economic restructuring impacted on the urban population (Bălteanu et al., 2005; Bolohan-Zamfirescu & Teodorescu, 1996; Rotariu & Mezei, 1997, 1999a, 1999b; Sandu, 1984).

> Lost jobs or uncertain jobs, the increasing cost of living in a city, the difficulties faced by young married couples in finding a house (the famous "blocks of flats" – cheap and low-comfort apartments – one thing of many that the communist regime was so proud about, stopped being built after 1989, and were replaced by individual housing, a privilege of those advantaged by the new economic order), as well as the lack of professional prospects for the young people, all these have led to a re-orientation towards the rural environment (Rotariu & Mezei, 1999b, p. 16).

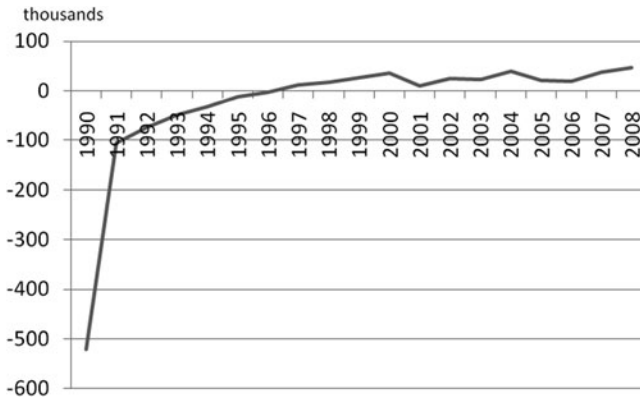

Fig. 6.2 Migration trends in the rural space: migration balance
Source: Anuarul statistic al României (2009)

Alongside the economic and social changes, there were also legal changes. All the more since the land law was passed (1991), which involved the reallocation and subdivision of state land (Bordanc, 1996), so many urban dwellers became owners of farming plots of land that, adding to houses owned or inherited from their parents, formed an economic base for the in-comers.

Since the early twenty-first century, the Romanian economy has experienced a fluctuating growth rate. Under the changing conditions, more and more urban inhabitants shifted to the rural areas with a desire to improve their quality of life, being attracted by both tangible benefits (beautiful landscapes) and intangible advantages (a secure and friendly environment) (Paquette & Domon, 2003; Mitchell, 2004). This shift has been supported by the increasing attractiveness of the rural way of life, and by the transformation in the form of capital accumulation in the rural space. A shift from the farming-oriented use of devalued land to a tertiary land uses re-values rural resources (Guran-Nica & Rusu, 2004).

6.3 The Spatial Dimension of the Migratory Movements in Romania

Spatially, population movement between regions in Romania has shown a number of different patterns over the years and its intensity varied under the impact of numerous economic, social, political and religious factors. After the 1918 unification, and especially after the Communist regime took power, the rural-to-urban flow became the most important one. This flow did not occur only on short distances, from rural spaces to neighbouring urban areas, but rather it covered longer distances as well. The most important motive was economic, reflected by the high correlation between development level and migration balance, where the highly developed counties served as the major destination areas (Guran-Nica, 2004; Rotariu & Mezei,

1997, 1999b). "The magnitude and orientation of migrations were determined by the industrialisation and urbanisation pace, by the differences in intensity of social and economic developments and the prevailing economic profile" (Cucu et al., 1984, p. 69). The main feature of these movements was expressed by the final relocation of rural population (mainly young people of working age – 20–29) to the urban areas, mostly from eastern and south-eastern areas towards urban centres in the west.

Studies on internal migration trends in Romania before 1990 show that major movement took place in the period between 1970 and 1990, with Bucharest (the capital city) and other urban centres in the most developed counties being the most attractive destinations (Rotariu & Mezei, 1999b). Many of them are located in central and western Romania (Fig. 6.3). The areas of origin, especially the rural ones, were Moldavia, Oltenia and Muntenia (in the east and south-east) (Ştefănescu, 1974), but also the central Transylvanian plain. Generally, the main direction of migration was from the east and south towards the west.

Whereas rural-urban and urban-urban movement occurred over longer distances, the urban-rural movement, which was less significant during that period, happened in most cases in terms of shorter distances, mostly within the same county (Rotariu & Mezei, 1999a, 1999b). The attraction of rural areas was of an economic nature, based mainly on various activities in the mining industry and the food sector, and even the textile industry, which offered profitable jobs. In this context, location advantages of rural settlements were related to good road accessibility, and proximity to developed industrial centres.

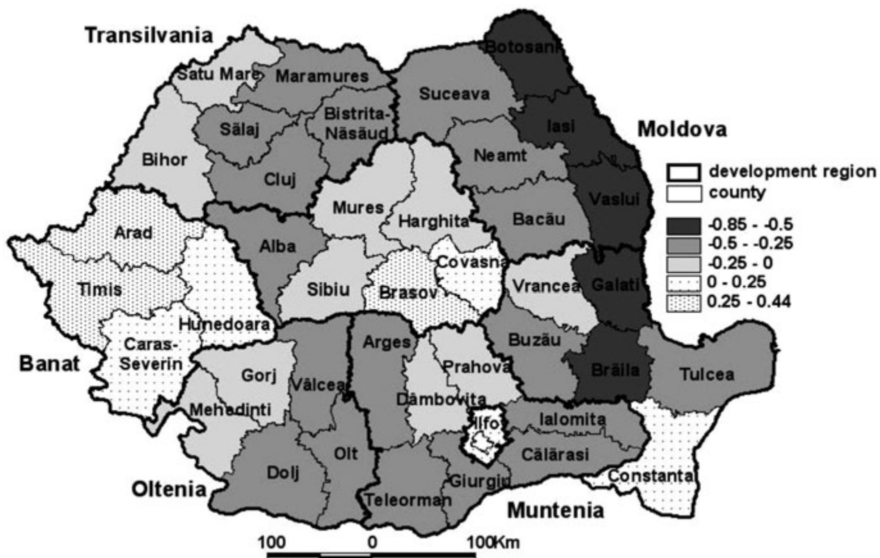

Fig. 6.3 Migration growth rate (%), 1990–2008

Whilst in the beginning of the post-Communist era the migration pattern persisted (Bălteanu et al., 2005; Rotariu & Mezei, 1999b), it gradually changed under the impact of the economic transformation. In order to understand the development of the internal migration over the past 20 years, a number of specific indicators were analysed, such as the gross and net migration rates as well as the migration growth rate. These three indicators show how the phenomenon evolved in time and how its general features have changed.

The analysis of the gross migration rate[1] reveals the relative magnitude of migration turnover in the rural space. Hence, eastern Romania (regions such as Moldova and Dobrogea) is characterised by a very mobile population where many rural settlements experienced a very high gross migration rate (over 700%). Similar values have been recorded for communes in counties in western and southern Romania. By comparison, rural settlements in the mountains and the southern plain, as well as in the centre and north-west of the country have experienced low magnitudes of migration. The motives that generate the differences are related to both push and pull factors, of which the most important are the social and economic ones. Whilst in the rural space there is limited availability of wage employment and many of the available jobs are underpaid, people can find better access to employment opportunities in the urban labour markets. In addition, the availability of social services in rural settlements, such as education and health, is insufficient. These difficulties arise mainly in the areas where the rate of natural increase is traditionally high (Moldavia). All these factors push the young population to migrate to urban agglomerations.

The spatial distribution of the net migration rate[2] highlights the traditional "origin" and "destination" areas. One easily notes that the east, Moldova, and also the south, Muntenia and Oltenia, remain – as in the second half of the twentieth century – areas of origin for internal migration. These areas have been characterised by rural settlements in poor economic conditions for long time. Moreover, their economic difficulties intensified during the transition period and failed to be solved, despite a period of recovery of the Romanian economy (2004–2008). Additionally, even the rural economy of the best developed counties (Cluj, Prahova, Argeş) has been negatively affected with a significant population loss by migration. These ideas are sustained by sociological studies concerning the migration trends in post-Communist Romania (Bălteanu et al., 2005; Bolohan-Zamfirescu & Teodorescu, 1996; Rotariu & Mezei, 1997, 1999a, 1999b; Sandu, 1984). They confirm the old patterns of migration, but underline some changes such as the decrease in the out-migration rate from some traditional areas of origin and the emergence of new ones.

[1] The gross migration rate was calculated as the sum of in-migrants and out-migrants of an area in a period of time, divided (usually) per 1000 inhabitants.

[2] Net migration rate was calculated as the difference of in-migration and out-migration of an area in a period of time, divided (usually) per 1000 inhabitants.

The main destinations for rural migrants are the "traditional" ones – Banat and Southern Transylvania, as well as the metropolitan areas of the large urban centres – Bucharest, Constanţa, Braşov, Cluj, Iaşi, etc. Among the attracting factors, the level of economic development is still ranked first, as these regions are relatively abundant in employment opportunities.

Altogether, the current situation is disturbing, taking into consideration the fact that the number of rural settlements with negative growth is higher compared to those with positive growth, as the official figures show (Voineagu, 2009). There are people leaving the underdeveloped rural areas in the eastern counties who are heading towards towns or better developed rural areas in the western regions or on the fringes of the metropolitan areas. Yet, we can also find migration trends consisting of population from places lately confronted by economic regression (small towns and some large villages), moving back to their localities of origin. There is also the urban-rural flow, with some city dwellers migrating in search of rural amenities or for less costly life conditions. This latest trend is developing especially in the rural-urban fringe of big cities as part of wider processes like peri-urbanisation development and suburbanisation.

6.4 Metropolitan Areas in Romania and Migration Patterns in Their Rural-Urban Fringe

The major spatial changes concerning the rural-urban migration process in Romania are most noticeable in the fringes of metropolitan areas. These areas are defined as being under the influence of larger urban centres with macro-regional functions (Erdeli et al., 1999). In Romania, the regional metropolitan areas other than Bucharest consist, in most cases, of less than 400,000 inhabitants, and including the satellite settlements, of not more than one million. Moreover, domestic legislation changed the meaning of metropolitan area, taking into consideration only the associative character of the metropolitan spaces. Thus, officially the metropolitan zone is "a built up area, based on a voluntary partnership, between the large urban centers and the neighboring urban and rural localities, within a distance of 30 km, and which developed cooperation on multiple levels"[3] (Săgeată, 2004).

There are currently eight metropolitan areas officially established in Romania, which vary a lot, in both the number of settlements (towns and communes) and the number of inhabitants (Table 6.2). However, the most important metropolitan area, though not officially constituted yet, has developed around Bucharest, the capital city. It covers not only Ilfov county but also parts of the neighbouring counties. Most of its administrative units are rural settlements, except for some towns located in the rural-urban fringe that developed a number of urban functions, such as a small industry, commercial and storing premises, and recreation activities. The

[3] Law 351/2001 on the approval of the arrangement plan for the national territory – Section IV – Locality Network.

Table 6.2 Characteristics of the metropolitan areas (2008)

Metropolitan area	Location	Setting-up date	No. of towns	No. of communes	Total population (2008)
Iaşi	North-east	2004	1	13	400,347
Oradea	North-west	2005	1	8	245,568
Târgu Mureş	Centre	2006	2	12	213,198
Constanţa	South-east	2007	6	8	446,595
Bacău	North-east	2007	1	5	250,000
Braşov	Centre	2007	6	8	402,041
Cluj	North-west	2008	1	17	379,705
Craiova	South-west	2009	1	5	333,834

Data source: National Institute of Statistics

evolution of the metropolitan areas in Romania has been largely influenced by location advantages of the settlements located in the vicinity of large cities and by their development potential. The available studies on this issue deduce that their recent economic expansion is due to relatively higher investments in the secondary and tertiary sectors, mainly industry, services and real estate (Erdeli & Simion, 2006).

The changes discussed so far are closely related to the internal migration trends in Romania. It seems that there are significant differences in the migration growth rates for the major metropolitan areas as some tend to attract population, whilst others are losing a share of their inhabitants. A comparison of the migration growth rates for the eight metropolitan areas displayed in Table 6.2 for the period 1990–2008 reveals clear differences. Thus, Constanţa and Oradea were poles of attraction for migrants, the values of the migration rates exceeding 10% (22.4 and 10.99%, respectively), whereas the respective values for Cluj and Craiova were negative (–6.63 and –2.47%). Two other metropolitan areas showed medium positive migration growth rates, 6.53% for Braşov and 5.13% for Iaşi.

The analysis of the migration growth rates for the rural settlements of the same metropolitan areas presented even higher values, particularly for two areas – Constanţa and Oradea (27.87 and 12.8%, respectively). A similar propensity, but with lower values, can be seen in the Braşov rural area (7.14%) and for the rural settlements of Iaşi (4.8%). By comparison, the rural settlements of the areas of Cluj (–7.63%) and Craiova (–5.45%) were losing population. Generally, and this is the focus of the rest of the chapter, the rural-urban fringe of the metropolitan areas attracts more migrants than the urban cores in recent times.

6.5 Migration Patterns in Bucharest Rural-Urban Fringe

The metropolitan area of Bucharest municipality (MAB) is far larger than all other metropolitan areas, more diversified in terms of social and economic activities, and different in its nature in regard to the rural-urban fringe. Geographically, it is located

in a highly accessible place, and the nature of the lowland allows its rural settlements to extend with almost no limitation. In addition, the surrounding features of the landscapes, such as the hydrographical network, and the availability of lakes and forests in the rural-urban fringe, provide, in their turn, favourable factors in attracting new migrants who are in search of a pleasant residential environment.

There have been a number of propositions for the organisation of Bucharest's metropolitan area. The first took into account 94 administrative units (communes and towns) covering five counties (Ianoş, 1998–1999). The second, proposed by the city council, suggested that the metropolitan area had to be a distinct administrative unit with the status of a county, and that it include Bucharest and 62 other localities, of which ten are towns, organised in two different parts: the metropolitan core of Bucharest (MCB) and the peri-metropolitan area of Bucharest (PBA). The latter is formed by the rural belt around the core. A third proposition referred to Bucharest "district" that should include the city together with nine suburbs, eight towns and 30 communes (Iordan, 2003). The forth considered the existing spatial order based on the linkages between the settlements, and suggested a much larger metropolitan area compared to all the other propositions (Săgeată, 2005). In this study, we followed the second proposition, which actually turned into a law proposal submitted to the Parliament.

Bucharest city, which ranks first in all the social and economic hierarchies in Romania, has always been a strong attraction pole for migrants. Being the largest economic centre of the country, it accounts for about 19% of the country's gross domestic product. It also serves as the main hub for all means of transport, with a high number of routes connecting the city to the entire country and to neighbouring countries as well. By the early 1990s, Bucharest had reached the size of 2 million inhabitants, with adjacent settlements, although administratively it belonged to neighbouring regions, becoming part of its economic hinterland. By then, a number of communes located in Bucharest's rural-urban fringe grew, exceeding by far the demographic size of a common rural settlement. Communes such as Voluntari, Pantelimon, Popeşti-Leordeni and Chitila grew to have over 10,000 inhabitants, a fact that allowed some of them to be declared towns in recent years, thus changing to some degree the administrative organisation of the rural-urban fringe.

A larger time perspective shows that the development of the larger metropolitan area (including the current rural-urban fringe) is directly linked to the development of Bucharest city (Fig. 6.4). Hence, by the beginning of the 1960s, as a result of the rapid industrialisation process, the metropolitan area experienced a demographic growth on a pace similar to the capital city. Subsequently, as a result of a policy of preventing migration to big cities in the 1980s, the population growth rate declined in both zones. Yet, since the early 1990s, the trend has changed into two different directions, indicating changes in the migration flow to the metropolitan area. This flow has been affected by an increasing number of migrants leaving Bucharest city to settle in its rural-urban fringe.

From a spatial perspective, this is an unbalanced process (Fig. 6.5). The migration between the city and its rural-urban fringe is subject to various factors, of which

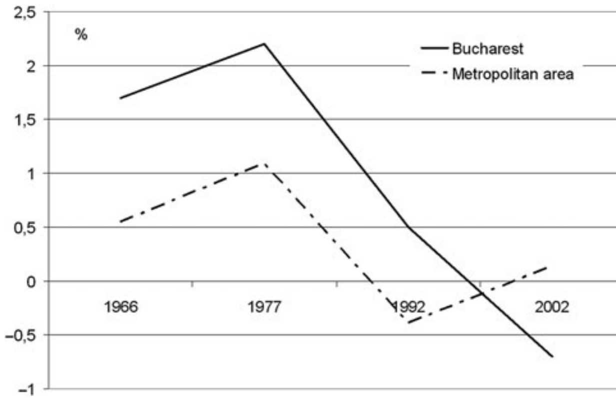

Fig. 6.4 Migration growth rates (%) in Bucharest metropolitan area, 1966–2002
Source: National Institute of Statistics

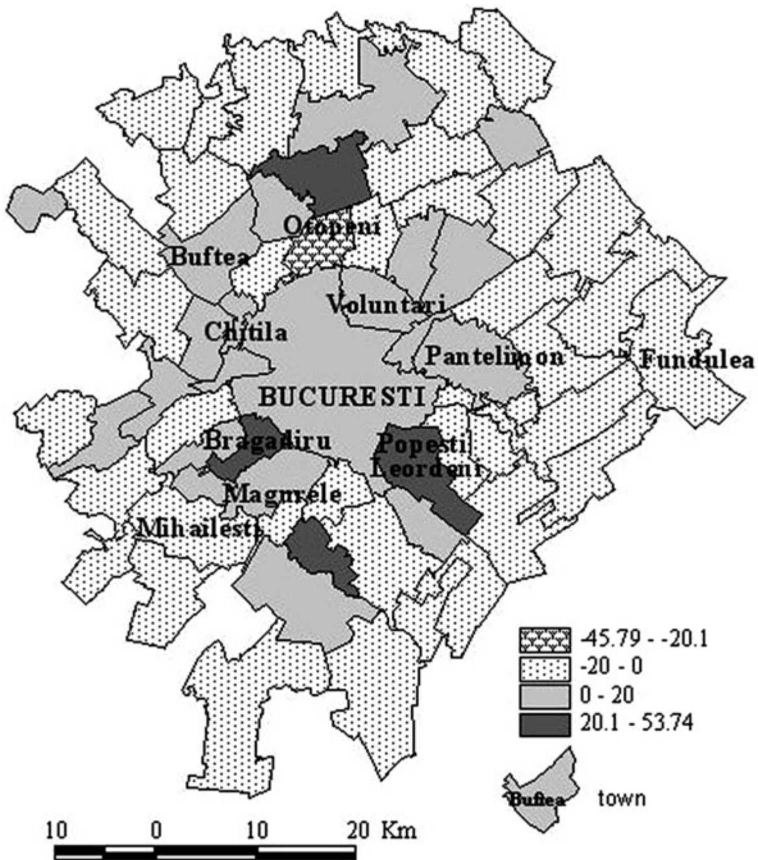

Fig. 6.5 Migration growth rates (%) in Bucharest metropolitan area, 1990–2008
Source: National Institute of Statistics

the settlement distance from the capital city and the degree of accessibility ranked high. Thus, settlements within the belt located closer to Bucharest are characterised by higher migration growth rates and have experienced a rapid population growth compared with those located further out. This pattern has been supported by the presence of major connecting roads and railway lines that enable population growth even in more distant villages. A good example is the communes located to the north of the capital. By comparison, the settlements in the south of Bucharest, particularly those further out from the city, have experienced negative population growth due to a relatively poor accessibility. The differences between the areas to the north and south of the metropolitan perimeter can be also explained by the fact that they are in the vicinity of regions characterised by different economic development potentials. Whilst the northern zone is on the main road linking to the more economically developed Prahova valley, the southern zone serves as a link to a less developed and less attractive peripheral area, the Giurgiu county.

6.6 Voluntari and Brăneşti – Two Case Studies

The settlements discussed in this section are considered two typical case studies of the rural-urban fringe which may be regarded as a transition zone where urban and rural land uses mix and often clash. This area expresses metropolitan expansion, which has occurred as a result of two opposite flows: rural people moving off the farms and residents of the densely urbanised areas shifting to the surrounding rural belt. Economic growth and preferences for housing and lifestyles, enabled by available transportation and communications technologies, prompt new housing development and new land-use patterns (Clouser, 2005). The landscape of this specific belt is the product of the interaction of urban and rural land uses. The form of interaction between the urban economy and the rural space, and the resulting changes in land use, are the end results of various forces that drive farmers, urban dwellers, homeowners and institutions (Heimlich & Anderson, 2001). Mechanisms contributing to the urbanisation of this belt include, among others, increased population mobility, changing location advantages of the fringe rural communities, differences in costs of land, changes in the desired lifestyle, housing availability, employment opportunities locally and in the surrounding area and public policy. The major resulting processes that have shaped the rural-urban fringe include: the declining role of farming and its derived income; the loss of prime agricultural land; the diversification of the economic base; the changing nature of rural communities and their socio-demographic structure due to in- and out-migration; increasing social inequalities between the farmers and higher income urban newcomers; the appearance of environmental issues and nuisances unknown before; and even increasing income gap inside and between communities (Sofer & Applebaum, 2006). Altogether, the in-migration of population into this belt has had a significant impact on the rural (now ex-rural) communities in economic, social, cultural and physical terms.

Located in the north-eastern part of the capital city (Fig. 6.5), no further than 8 km from the capital, the town of Voluntari has for long time been under Bucharest's influence. This fact enabled a hasty and continuous development process compared to Brăneşti commune, which is further out (18 km), to the east. Both settlements are characterised by a picturesque environment with numerous lakes and well-known forests, elements that always attracted the inhabitants of the big city. Beside, the short distances and the good links offered by major roads and railway lines provided developmental infrastructure for the two settlements.

From the administrative point of view, the two settlements are located in Ilfov county[4] and consist of two or more units. The town of Voluntari contains two residential districts, which were former villages of the commune, Voluntari and Pipera, and Brăneşti has four villages, Pasărea, Izlaz, Vadu Anei and Brăneşti, the last being the largest one. The two settlements (town and commune) are spread over relatively large area: Voluntari over 3740 ha, and Brăneşti over 5326 ha. Their land-use structures differ by their relative shares: in Voluntari, the residential area, the agricultural area and the forests have almost equal shares (35, 35, and 30%, respectively), whilst in the commune of Brăneşti, the agricultural land covers 63% of the territory, the woods cover 24%, and the built-up area only 13%. These differences indicate the major functions of each settlement. Voluntari developed mainly as a residential and commercial settlement compared to Brăneşti, which remained up to now a dominantly agricultural settlement.

In terms of population size and density, Voluntari is much larger (30,484 inhabitants) and densely populated (815 inhabitants/km^2). It was officially declared a town in 2004, but before turning into a town, it was considered the largest rural commune in Romania. By comparison, the commune of Brăneşti, with 8176 inhabitants, is less densely populated (153 inhabitants/km^2), though it is one of the biggest rural settlements in Romania (2007).[5]

The present pattern of change in both settlements is determined mainly by the migration flow and its rate. Being located much closer to Bucharest, better accessible, relatively far less densely built, offering lower land and rent prices compared to those in the city and having a status of commercial settlement, Voluntari has been an attractive destination for migrants for a long time. People migrating from different regions of the country in search of employment in Bucharest considered the then-commune a "sleeping settlement". By comparison, considered a relatively less accessible commune, Brăneşti has attracted fewer migrants and has maintained its agricultural functions even today.

Taking into consideration the changes in the migration rates, we can observe in both localities three distinct stages of development. In the first 3 years after 1989, a period when the former Communist state policy of preventing migration (and therefore residential change) to the big cities was abolished, the two settlements lost population as a significant number of people moved out to Bucharest (Fig. 6.6).

[4] Ilfov county is the NUTS 3 unit organised around Bucharest city.

[5] Data source: National Institute of Statistics.

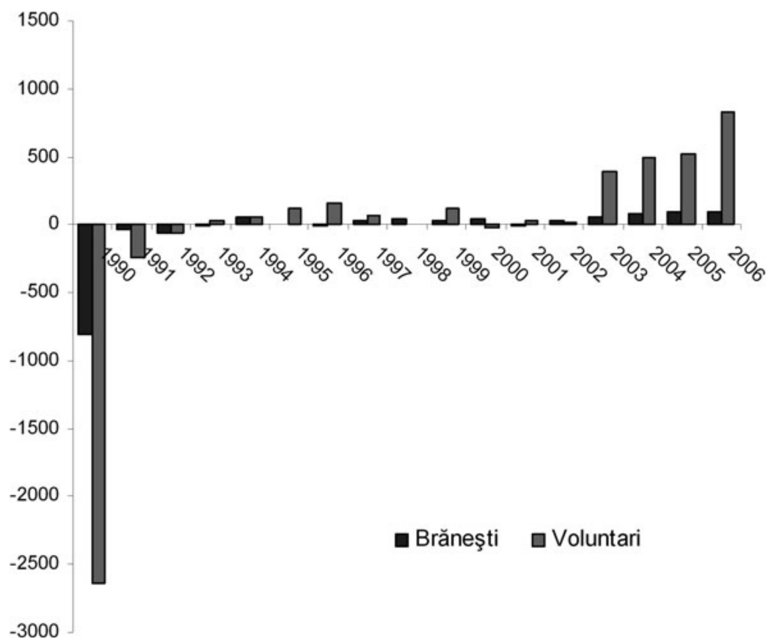

Fig. 6.6 Net migration rates: Voluntari and Brăneşti
Source: National Institute of Statistics

The second stage, the next 10 years, was a period of economic transition and slow growth associated with low incomes, and is characterised by low positive migration rates. The third stage, since 2002, has shown a significant change. As a result of accelerated economic growth, an increasing number of city dwellers shifted to the rural space, purchased land and constructed new houses, a trend expressed by significant growth in the migration rates (Fig. 6.6). Naturally, Voluntari is characterised by a larger number of out-migrants and in-migrants for most of the period since 1989.

Similar development trends can be seen by the changes in the land-use pattern expressed by the expansion of the built-up areas. There is a clear process of extension of the residential space into the agricultural land uses after 1990. A good example is Pipera residential district (a former village and today a residential quarter of Voluntari), which was developed adjacent to a forest reserve that offers natural amenities and has been considered a luxury area. It has been a tradition for well-off families to construct houses in this area and its current attractiveness brought about a spectacular development in the last 10 years. The presence of some natural and anthropic elements based on the local environment (forest, river, roads) transformed this village into a most coveted place for the newly wealthy people in the very beginning of the transition period. Consequently, today 50% of the residential buildings of Voluntari town are relatively new, whilst in the commune of Brăneşti the number is about 30%, the rest of them dating from the 1970s and 1980s.

6.7 Conclusion

The continuous process of post-Socialist transformation, which is reshaping and redefining the rural-urban fringe in Romania in general and in Bucharest in particular, raises reservations about an area's ability to retain its identity as a unique rural space and its future course. Several trends may already be discerned at this stage. Others can only be speculated upon.

First, it is clear that the transition from dependence on farming to a more diversified economic base has changed the nature of this belt from a space of production to a space of mixed production and consumption. Besides a declining volume of agricultural products, the rural-urban fringe provides the urban areas with residential and commercial products, diversified non-agricultural activities and leisure facilities. The newly shaped belt is also spreading into the labour markets by becoming an integral part of the urban employment field, supplying labour inputs to urban areas and local employment opportunities for urban dwellers. There is a clear penetration of urban-type elements to the former rural landscape, which increases its appeal to in-migrants.

Second, the current internal migration trend is generally similar to those encountered in other advanced economies. The differences are linked to a number of new mechanisms; the major ones are freedom of movement, inside and outside Romania, and the new economic conditions translated into a higher economic ability of the population. In addition, the search for better living conditions under the influence of living standards introduced from abroad, and sometimes the longing for the idyllic rural life, are also main motivators, among many others, for higher migration rates experienced by the metropolitan rural-urban fringes.

Third, the increase in the migration rates experienced by the rural-urban fringe is only one face of the changes in the migration pattern, as the directions of the population flows have also changed. In the past, the migrants to the rural-urban fringe originated from the smaller urban settlements and villages in the vicinity or further out of the metropolitan zone. At present, the urban-rural flow of people from the inner parts of the metropolitan area is a dominant flow, where the upper and middle class of urban dwellers is in search of new life idylls and enhanced amenities that are available at the fringe.

Fourth, there is an increasing heterogeneity within the rural-urban fringe in economic and social terms. This belt is no longer dominated by the agricultural population but comprises a mixture of different interest groups, such as active farmers, part-timers who practice pluriactivity and particularly new non-farming residents. The in-migration of newcomers is also changing the power structure by weakening the position of farmers and their control over the use of land. Another type of pressure on the land comes from development interest groups, which include among their ranks both external urban groups and internal groups of farm owners, all of whom wish to re-designate farm land for residential, industrial or commercial uses. Another interest is represented by the environmental protection groups, which might be concerned by the penetration of new activities and derived environmental

nuisances into the rural space. All these groups contest the control of the rural-urban fringe resources.

There are indications that this heterogeneity also is leading to growing internal inequalities across this belt, but there is very little hard data to show the scope and nature of this phenomenon. The increasing tendency of uneven development may be deduced from an analysis of the employment structure and the shape of the residential landscape. It may be assumed that in many cases farmers' non-farm income serves to reduce inequality but this has not yet been proven by hard data, and requires further research.

The overall transformation leads to a general process of counter-urbanisation combined with rural gentrification, which was unknown in Romania before 1990. There is also the permanent and sometimes total change of the rural settlements confronted with it. The new landscape reflects the social and economic transformation seen in other parts of the rural space. The different social structure is translated in modified residential land-use and its related demand for goods and services that induced the development of new functions. Consequently, urban life patterns are cascading further out and reshaping the rural-urban fringe and even further belts.

Acknowledgements This work was supported by CNCSIS – UEFISCSU, project no. 995 PNII – IDEI, cod 783/2008.

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Chapter 7
Local Embeddedness and Global Links in Rural Areas: Euclidean and Relational Space in Business Networks

Alexandre Dubois, Andrew Copus and Moa Hedström

7.1 Introduction

Rural regions and small businesses are often assumed to be marginalised in relation to contemporary processes of globalisation. Globalisation is perceived to be mainly an urban phenomenon, with indirect (and predominantly negative) impacts upon the countryside. This chapter explores the extent to which emerging rural business network configurations belie this popular misunderstanding. It presents the conceptual framework, methodology and initial findings of a study investigating the spatial and 'relational' structures of the business networks of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in rural areas of Sweden, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Lithuania and the Netherlands.[1]

Small rural firms usually cannot exploit external economies or agglomerative advantages, due to remoteness from large metropolitan markets, and (in some cases) the wide spacing of settlements within their region. For that reason, economic development processes in rural areas – especially remote and sparsely populated ones – challenge conventional development paradigms in which agglomeration economies play an important role. The hypothesis to be explored in this chapter is that successful and dynamic rural firms derive 'networking economies' from frequent and effective interaction, both with the local business environment, and with a much more extensive set of linkages, stretching out across Europe, and perhaps further afield. This implies both a degree of global integration and 'territorial anchoring', which are not mutually exclusive, but rather are complimentary aspects of a 'survival strategy' for SMEs in rural areas.

[1] This research was carried out as part of European Framework 7 project DERREG (Developing Europe's Rural Regions in the Era of Globalisation) www.derreg.eu. The authors would like to acknowledge the important contributions made by the following partners: Emilija Kairyte (NeVork, Slovenia) Milada Stastna (Mendelova Universita v Brně, Czech Republic) Irma Potočnik Slavič (Universza v Ljubljana, Slovenia) Wiebke Wellbrock (Wageningen Universiteit, Netherlands).

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_7,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

The first part of this chapter presents a review of relevant literature and establishes the conceptual framework. This is followed by an account of the empirical analysis carried out by researchers from DERREG (Developing Europe's Rural Regions in the Era of Globalisation) in five rural case study regions in the countries represented by them. The degree of global integration was first explored through an electronic questionnaire of up to 50 small businesses in each case study area. A second more in-depth phase of data collection focussed on network relationships through structured interviews with rural entrepreneurs, incorporating a qualitative scoring exercise. The chapter concludes by drawing some implications regarding the relative roles of geographic and relational space in business development in rural areas.

7.2 Conceptual Framework

The place of 'the firm' in theories of economic geography has evolved since the seminal works of Marshall (1920) and Weber (1929), in which it was considered as a site for production whose behaviour is steered by the competitive forces of the market. It is now increasingly viewed as 'a means of organising social life', using 'a constellation of network relations governed by social actors' (Yeung, 2000, p. 5). Yeung continues that 'it [the firm] is a socio-spatial construction embedded in broader discourses and practices' (ibid.). This conception of the firm as a social construction implies that economic action is 'socially embedded', as stressed in the works of the sociologist Mark Granovetter (1985). It follows that in order to fully understand and characterise a firm, it is necessary to study not only its economic output and its pattern of transactions, but also the complex web of its relationships with the full range of 'actors' in its economic and social environment.

The importance of networks in understanding how firms function has in recent years been reinforced by an appreciation of the implications for the firm's innovation capability (Cooke & Morgan, 1993) and competitiveness (Kingsley & Malecki, 2004). The increased importance of these interdependencies in the context of the interconnectedness of the global economy has been highlighted by Dicken: 'There has been a huge transformation in the nature and the degree of inter-connection in the world economy and, especially, in the speed with which such connectivity occurs, involving both a stretching and an intensification of economic relationships.' (2007, p. 7) The result, according to Amin is a need to develop a 'relational perspective' to regional development, acknowledging the 'multiple and asymmetric *interdependencies* among and between local and wider fields of action, organisation and influence' (1998, p. 153). According to this view, the global does not replace the local, but rather it supplements it. For Nederveen, 'what globalisation means in terms of social structure [. . .] is the increase in the available modes of organisation' (1994 cited in Amin, 1998, p. 154). For firms, globalisation thus brings possibilities to expand and strengthen their web of relationships beyond their regional surroundings.

This section provides an overview of the main conceptual debates that frame the empirical investigation of SME business networks in rural areas. First, the foundation of a systemic understanding of economic relations is laid by reflecting on the conceptual step from individual dyadic linkages to integrated business networks. This is followed by a discussion of the role of *proximity* as a central notion in the understanding of the role of firms in wider regional development processes. Finally, the section considers the interplay between Euclidean and relational space in economic rural development.

7.2.1 From Dyadic Linkages to Business Networks

As mentioned earlier in this section, the firm was formerly understood as the ‘acting hand’ of the market: the firm produced economic output (i.e. goods or services) and sold these outputs to other actors (i.e. transactions). Seller-buyer relations were thus conceived as central for understanding the actions of the firm. In that respect, it is assumed that, from a purely market perspective, the firm’s performance can be understood by investigating the set of transactions that the firm is involved in.

Economies may be achieved by repeatedly doing business with the same partner(s). This is because some aspects of the process can be ‘routinised’ or omitted as a relationship of trust is established. This is the point at which a transaction becomes part of a ‘business linkage’.

> It is evident that if the same pair – a buyer and a seller – is involved in similar transactions regularly and frequently, the pair will have an incentive to organise the transaction procedures and processes so that costs are reduced. The buyer and seller represent nodes connected by a specific linkage. (Johansson & Quigley, 2004, p. 169).

Once established, such a business linkage will be sustained if both partners perceive benefits in terms of transaction cost reduction. A reliable or obliging supplier, or a customer who pays promptly, will be nurtured, since risk is reduced, and some of the procedures associated with spot trading can be omitted. Business (transaction) networks are composed of a number of firms inter-connected by such linkages.

In recent years many have argued that to recognise only transaction linkages is inadequate, and that other *non-transactional* processes play an important role in regional economies. Michael Storper has coined the generic term ‘untraded interdependencies’ to encompass all forms of extra-transactional contacts between firms (1995). This concept is closely related to that of ‘embeddedness’, as propounded by sociologist Mark Granovetter (1985).

Furthermore, business networks, conceived as the integrated webs of transactional and non-transactional relationships, are not restricted to the sphere of private actors. Other types of actors, such as public agencies, local authorities, trade associations, chambers of commerce, professional associations, or universities are integral elements of these business networks (Chetty & Blankenburg Holm, 2000). They have the capacity to provide incentives and support for the development of the firms’ transactional space. This is well argued by Yeung when he claims that ‘the

activities of the firm (e.g. production, exchange, and transactions) are the collective outcome of realising social relations and obligations by these actors' (2000, p. 14). In other words, the *performance* of the firm is an outcome of the business network (as broadly defined) itself.

The concept of business networks as social constructs is associated, in the economic geography literature, with multi-layered structures, comprising *intra*-firm networks, *inter*-firm networks and *extra*-firm networks (Cooke & Morgan, 1993; Yeung, 2000). An important point to make regarding the two latter types of networks is that they are not necessarily spatially-bounded, although much of the literature on clusters, industrial districts or learning regions suggests the contrary. This point was made by Cooke and Morgan when advocating that although 'spatial proximity between customers and suppliers may be increasing in value [. . .] clustering is by no means implied for all aspects of corporate activity' (1993, p. 553). Business networks (in general) should therefore be viewed as potentially translocal, i.e. connecting actors belonging to distant localities.[2]

The working hypothesis of this study is that the business networks of SMEs located in rural areas are 'translocal'. In other words, translocality is not a feature associated only with *larger* firms in more *urban* environments. The choice of SMEs as the object of investigation renders obsolete the analysis of the *intra*-firm networks, due to the small size of the unit, which limits the complexity of internal interactions. Furthermore, it means that the economic and social aspects of the firm's networking activities – usually performed through the manager owner – are in practice closely aligned (Chetty & Blankenburg Holm, 2000). This study will therefore focus on the characteristics of *inter*-firm networks (transaction or cooperation relations with other firms) and *extra*-firm networks (encompassing relations with public agencies, research institutions or other economic development-related organisations).

7.2.2 The Role of Proximity in Economic Geography

In economic geography, the slogan 'geography matters' is generally interpreted as implying that minimising the cost of overcoming physical distance is the principal driver of regional development processes. The plethora of recent studies on clusters reflects this *normative* assumption. The emphasis on agglomeration economies as the core mechanism for business and regional development has been reinforced in recent years by the popularity of new economic geography approaches (Fujita, Krugman, & Venables, 1999; Krugman, 1991, 1994; Garretsen & Martin, 2010). Yet, this perspective, which has been influential in the design of development policies elaborated by international bodies such as the World Bank or the European Union, seems to imply that there is little hope of development opportunities for small

[2] Incidentally, this partly contradicts Storper's conception of untraded interdependencies as constituting 'region-specific assets in production' (Storper, 1997).

firms in peripheral and sparsely populated regions. Such businesses cannot benefit from either (internal) economies of scale or (external) economies of agglomeration, co-localisation or urbanisation.

Some would argue that the debate on regional development needs to open to alternative perspectives, based on a more flexible understanding of the concept of proximity. Conventionally, in economics, the concept of proximity has been associated with physical space and measurable distance-transport cost (Rallet, 2002). However a new strand of economic geography literature (Torre & Gilly, 2000; Torre & Rallet, 2005; Boschma, 2005) challenges this notion of proximity as a purely geographical phenomenon. This 'school' of economic geography theory argues that proximity may take a number of forms: institutional, organisational, spatial, social, cognitive, cultural, and so on. Each type of proximity relates to a specific mode of interaction between actors. Non-spatial modes of proximity are classified by Torre and Rallet (2005) under the generic term of 'organised' proximity.

The emerging literature on 'proximity dynamics' takes an opposing view to classical lines of thought in economic geography: spatial proximity does not have a mechanical effect on interactions, but ought to be seen as complementary to other forms of proximity (Boschma, 2005). Thus, spatial proximity brings an add-on effect, and is not a sufficient condition in itself for the enhancement of economic interactions. The relational nature of proximity dynamics is clear: for Torre and Rallet, 'organized proximity is not geographical, but relational' (2005, p. 49). However, the territorial dimension of proximity ought nevertheless still to be considered with regards to the coordination in space of interactions between economic actors (Rallet, 2002).

7.2.3 Internationalisation of Rural SMEs Business Activities

> Globalisation is not exclusively a multi-national or big firm issue. Very few companies, even small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro-firms, remain immune to the impacts of globalisation – they may face competition from overseas competitors, may be involved in world-wide supply chains, and/or be looking to expand their own market place internationally. (Winch & Bianchi, 2006, p. 73)

The increasing integration of the global economy has accentuated the need for SMEs to internationalise their business activities. It also allows domestic firms to increase their competitiveness, by developing international cooperative networks that enable them to maintain their advantageous position in domestic markets (Ibid.).

The literature suggests two alternative views on how SME business networks get internationalised. Some accounts of globalisation (Dicken, 2007; Veltz, 1996), deduce that the way forward for small firms located in the economic periphery, i.e. outside the main metropolitan areas, to be engaged in international business networks is though their integration into the value-chain of *multinational enterprises* (MNE). Multinationals thus act as gateways for SMEs, allowing them to begin to interact with the global economy. This mode of integration of SMEs into global

networks may be referred to as 'vertical': this mode is rather formal and based on contractual agreements (Nummela, Loane, & Bell, 2006).

According to other studies of the internationalisation of SMEs (Chetty & Blankenburg Holm, 2000; Nummela et al., 2006), entrepreneurial small firms are themselves capable of building inter-firm networks with foreign firms, and especially foreign small firms. Following this line of argument, Nummela et al. suggest that 'Horizontal co-operation, on the other hand, refers to partnerships and alliances with other companies on the same level of the value chain' (2006, p. 566). Furthermore, the process of internationalisation of an SME is as much connected to marketing-product-process improvement as to organisational change, both internal and external.

On reflection, these two modes are fundamentally different: The former (vertical) mode seems genuinely *global*, as it connects (albeit indirectly) the small firm with the global economy, i.e. the multinational companies. However, it hardly engages the firm in interactions crossing the national border. On the other hand, the engagement in networking activities with foreign, smaller firms can be perceived not only as transnational, but as *translocal*, since it creates relationships between locally-based firms which cross national boundaries.

7.2.4 Translocal Relational Spaces

The recent academic debates in economic geography summarised above suggest that SME business networks in rural areas may be conceptualised, and empirically investigated, as 'translocal relational spaces'. By this, we do not suggest that rural firms are less *connected* to their close neighbourhood. On the contrary, we assume that the process of 'externalisation' of the business network goes hand-in-hand with a process of territorial embedding: firms are more connected to the wider world, but also to their own territory of belonging (Johanson & Mattsson, 1988).

In fact, the dichotomy between the Euclidean *friction* forces, bringing together local actors, and the relational *centripetal* forces, enabling the actors to project themselves outside their territory of frame, may originate from different, but not unrelated, processes. We may hypothesise that Euclidean space remains important for interactions which depend upon face-to-face contact between actors (i.e. geographical proximity), whilst interactions which involve transfers of goods or 'disembodied' information may require only 'organised proximity' and may increasingly take place within 'relational space'. In this case, the centripetal friction forces can perhaps be broadly equated with what Amin and Thrift termed *institutional thickness:* 'the combination of actors including inter-institutional interaction and synergy, collective representation by many bodies, a common industrial purpose, and shared cultural norms and values' (1994, p. 15). It is ironic that tangible 'hard' transactions thus seem to be released from the 'tyranny of distance' more readily than 'softer' forms of interaction.

Yet, it would be too simplistic to equate the Euclidean/relational dichotomy to the local/global one. Globalisation is not simply an issue of *spatial scale* but rather an

issue of *economic development scope/competence*. In the local/global dialectic, the global stands for processes that cannot be steered by the local actors on their own.

There are some parallels in the sphere of policy. Territorial development policies, often based on endogenous potential theories, tend to be inward-looking, in the sense that they promote cooperation between actors that are located within the region. In effect, as highlighted by Torre and Rallet, 'local policies produce geographical proximity institutionally as a privileged mode of economic interaction' (2005, p. 52).

The development of translocal relational spaces has primarily been made possible by the development of new information and communication technologies, but the internationalisation of local development policies, for instance through the European territorial cooperation programmes, such as Interreg, have also played a role. These allow for greater interconnectedness of the business networks of firms, that would otherwise be very much confined to the borders of their home territory.

7.3 The Regional Contexts

This section describes the case study area context for the empirical exploration of business networks which follows. Table 7.1 provides a number of key socio-economic indicators.

In terms of area, Övre Norrland, in Sweden, is by far the largest case study region, at more than 165,000 km^2. This is almost 480 times the size of Westerkwartier, in the Netherlands, the smallest region. Goriška in Slovenia is also relatively small, whilst the Czech and Lithuanian case studies occupy intermediate positions.

Table 7.1 Some basic statistics for the DERREG WP1 case study areas

		Jihomoravský kraj	Övre Norrland	Goriška	Wester-kwartier	Alytus
Indicator		Czech Repub.	Sweden	Slovenia	Netherlands	Lithuania
Total area	km^2	7,196	165,296	2,325	345	5,425
Peripherality index	Larger index = more accessible	59	21	106	132	41
Population	('000) 2007	1,137	509	120	60	178
Density	(per km^2)	157.00	3.37	51.60	306.00	37.20
Population change	2000–2005 (%)	–0.23	–0.15	–0.08	0.35	–0.74
Net migration		Out	Out	In	In	Out
GDP per head	2006	16,800	27,200	19,800	51,900	8,600

Sources: Total area, population, density, and GDP per head: Eurostat REGIO database; peripherality index: DG Agriculture SERA project (Copus et al., 2006); net migration (qualitative): DERREG technical ap. 20

In population terms, the largest region, by far, is Jihomoravský kraj, in the Czech Republic, with 1.1 million. The smallest is Westerkwartier, with a mere 60,000. Goriška in Slovenia and Alytus in Lithuania have populations of 120,000 and 178,000 respectively, whilst Övre Norrland is in an intermediate position at a little more than 500,000.

Combining these areas and populations reveals some quite substantial differences in density. Westerkwartier has more than 300 persons living on every square kilometer. For Övre Norland, the equivalent figure is just 3.4. The Czech study area is relatively densely populated, at 157 persons per km^2. The Slovenian and Lithuanian areas have intermediate densities of 37 and 52 persons. It is worth stressing the fact that these average densities mask considerable variations between cities and the countryside.

The information on population change and migration provide some impressions of recent socio-economic trends in regard to whether the regions are growing or lagging, whilst the GDP per capita figures are broadly indicative of their relative income levels. The most positive situation seems to be in Westerkwartier, where population change is positive, with net in-migration, and a GDP per capita of almost €52,000 (in pps). The other extreme is represented by Alytus in Lithuania, where the population is declining by 0.74% per annum, the net migration balance is negative, and GDP per capita in 2006 was only 17% of the Dutch study region level, at €8,600. The Czech and Swedish areas exhibit both negative population trends and out-migration. The Slovenian area has population stability and net in-migration. In the case of the Swedish case study region, the negative population trend and out-migration is combined with a relatively high GDP per capita (more than €27,000). The Czech and Slovenian areas have relatively low income levels, a little less than €17,000 and €20,000 respectively.

The regions differ quite substantially in terms of economic structure. The Swedish region has a strong resource base with forestry and mining, a relatively small agricultural sector, and a relatively strong entrepreneurial culture, bringing in secondary and tertiary activities. The other case study regions all have significant agricultural sectors (often of varying importance across different subregions). All are diversifying. In most cases, the small towns and villages lead the way. In the former communist regions, diversification is intensified by continuing transition processes.

The Swedish, Lithuanian and Slovenian case study regions are all close to international borders. This both impacts upon the development of their economy and complicates the interpretation of the information on 'international' linkages.

Finally the three New Member States (NMS) case study areas differ considerably from those of the Netherlands and Sweden in terms of policy heritage and attitudes to entrepreneurship, although these aspects are very difficult to measure, and changes have been rapid in the years since EU accession. The Dutch case study area differs from the Swedish one in terms of planning and business development policy, a key feature in the former being the strict zoning of economic activities, which has probably directed some dynamic and globalised SMEs towards adjacent urban areas.

7.4 Research Design, Methodology and Data

The empirical observations presented below are derived from two surveys. The first was an email survey of entrepreneurs conducted during spring 2010. Participant firms had between 5 and 49 employees, were located outside the main urban centres of the case study regions, and provided goods or services which could potentially be traded outside the local market. The investigation was performed in all five case study regions presented in the previous section. The target sample in each case study region was 50 firms, and ultimately a total of more than 200 (usable) questionnaires was accumulated. No claims are made for the statistical representativeness of the samples, although it is assumed that the empirical results presented below are broadly *illustrative* of the manner and degree to which rural businesses in the case study regions have developed their networks in recent years.

The aim of this survey was to collect *perception data*, i.e. reflecting SME manager's perspectives on their firm's relations with other actors. Respondents were asked to assess, using standard scoring procedures, the intensity of their interactions with a predefined set of 'actor groups'. The actor groups represented the full range of potential network partners: customers, suppliers, other private organisations (SMEs, large firms and MNE), public agencies, financial and economic actors. For each category, the respondents were asked to assess the intensity of the relationship between their firm and each actor group, distinguishing four geographical zones: regional, national, European and the 'rest of the world'. 'Intensity' of interaction was assessed either in terms of percentages of sales and purchases, or (in the case of non-market linkages) a Likert-scale, graded from 0 (no relationship) to 4 (high intensity relationship).

Analysis of the data was with two exceptions confined to the estimation of simple descriptive statistics and graphs. The first exception was the adaptation of the OECD's SME Index of Globalization (OECD, 1997; Herdzina et al., 2004) as a means of summarising the information on transaction linkages. The second was use of tools and methods from the Social Network Analysis[3] (Wasserman & Faust, 1994) to analyse the Likert interaction intensity scores. This allowed the 'mapping' of the overall structure of inter-firm networks (rather than a collection of individual relationships). It facilitated the assessment of the 'centrality' of each of the 'actor groups' in relation to the sampled firms in each case study area.

The second survey (summer 2010) took the form of face-to-face structured interviews, designed to explore in more detail the characteristics of different kinds of interaction, and the interviewees' evaluation of them. Again interviews were carried out in all five case study regions, the target being fifteen in each. Interviewees were selected from those firms which the first survey had identified as more internationalised in their networking.

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[3] Especially UCINET 6 Software (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002). A UCINET tutorial by Bob Hanneman and Mark Riddle is available at http://faculty.ucr.edu/~hanneman/nettext/

Although these interviews were essentially qualitative in nature, because the subject is intrinsically rather abstract, a simple graphical 'actor map' was used as a device to try to ensure a degree of common understanding of the issues and terminology. This enhanced the potential for comparisons between interviewees and between the five case study areas. Nevertheless, the findings presented below inevitably draw most upon those of the Swedish case study area, with which the authors are most familiar. The findings are not presented separately, but are rather used to 'enrich' the analysis of the first survey.

7.5 Case Study Findings

In this section, we consider what our two surveys tell us about the openness of rural economies, embedded (non-market) collaboration, global engagement, the functions of rural business networks, and interaction between SMEs and supporting agencies.

7.5.1 'Open' Rural Economies

Recent macro-scale socio-economic processes have substantially changed the business environment of European SMEs. The continued globalisation of markets, the expansion of the EU single market, the emergence of e-commerce and the opening up of the institutional landscape, both at the international level (e.g. WTO) and regional level (e.g. European Territorial Cooperation) have extended the 'activity space' of SMEs beyond their local/regional context (Holmlund, Kock, & Vanyushyn, 2007). Rural businesses are not insulated from these changes, and many rural SMEs are engaged to some extent in globalisation processes (Herdzina et al., 2004). A regional economy may be described as 'open' when a significant proportion the trade partners of its SMEs are 'external' to the region, whether domestically or internationally.

The index of globalisation results, based on the electronic survey data relating to transaction linkages (Table 7.2), allow us to allocate respondent firms to four categories, according to the degree to which they carry out transactions at regional, national, or international scales.[4]

The Lithuanian SMEs are the least engaged in extra-regional trade activities. Here, more than three quarters of the firms confined their transaction activities to within the region, and less than one-fifth were partly or fully internationalised. The explanation of this is complex, and it cannot be explored in detail here. However, a lack of familiarity with overseas markets, and an economic structure still to some extent focused on primary production would seem to be key issues. The Dutch sample is also strongly orientated towards regional (65%) and national markets (15%).

[4] 'Partly internationalised' means that either sales or purchases were internationalised, 'fully internationalised' means that both sales and purchases were involved.

Table 7.2 Classification of firms according to degree of internationalisation of business activities in the five case study areas

Country (sample size)	Sweden (47)	Czech Republic (40)	Lithuania (42)	Netherlands (38)	Slovenia (20)
Mostly regional	13%	37%	78%	65%	5%
National	34%	5%	4%	15%	15%
Partly internationalised	32%	33%	15%	8%	45%
Fully internationalised	21%	26%	4%	13%	35%

Source: DERREG project, Workpackage 1, electronic survey

Only 21% of the Dutch firms have operations that are partly or fully internationalised. It seems likely that this can only be interpreted within the context of strict Dutch land-use zoning, which tends to exclude all but the very smallest firms from the case study area.

By contrast, well over half of the Czech firms sampled have partially (33%) or fully (26%) internationalised operations. The distribution is 'bi-polar', as over one-third have predominantly regional operations, whilst there are very few firms in the 'national' category. The Swedish sample has a more 'normal' distribution: The two central categories (national and partly internationalised) each account for about one-third of firms, the fully internationalised for about a fifth, and regional firms for just 13%.

Finally, the Slovenian sample of SMEs is the smallest (20 firms) and should therefore be treated with caution. Here, 80% of firms were classified as partly internationalised (45%) or fully internationalised (35%), and only 5% were regional. The large proportion of internationalised firms may well be explained by the fact that the case study region is on the border (of a relatively small country).

These findings suggest that the degree of 'open-ness' of rural economies is quite variable, and dependent upon a range of geographical, structural, policy and institutional contextual factors. Nevertheless, a very simple general conclusion is worth underlining; all the regions (even the very peripheral and sparsely populated Övre Norrland) showed some evidence of their SME networks opening up to interact beyond regional and national borders. Obviously, improvements in transport and telecommunications infrastructure have been crucial in facilitating this. One Swedish interviewee explained that 'Without the good internet and flight connections [. . .] we would not be able to build a network reaching beyond the local market.' Another stated that: 'A good internet connection is crucial for a firm located as far from any larger markets as we are, and with the ambitions of acting on a larger market.'

7.5.2 Embedded Collaboration

The 'collaborative space' of rural businesses is defined by the web of non-market relations developed by firms (provision of informal advice, discussion of issues of mutual interest, social contacts and so on). Such interaction is very important in the

process of product and process development, as well as for market consolidation and expansion. These interactions are especially important for firms that are too small to afford to fully internalise activities such as research and development or marketing. Many SMEs need to engage in collaborative interactions with other firms to secure their long-term development: 'the strategic use of external resources through inter-firm networks [. . .] that are often embedded in regions [. . .] provide an important growth mechanism' (Lechner & Dowling, 2003, p. 2).

The results of the Social Network Analysis of non-market interaction patterns (derived from the Likert scores recorded in the email survey) are presented in the form of cobweb graphs in Fig. 7.1. These may be interpreted as follows. The four

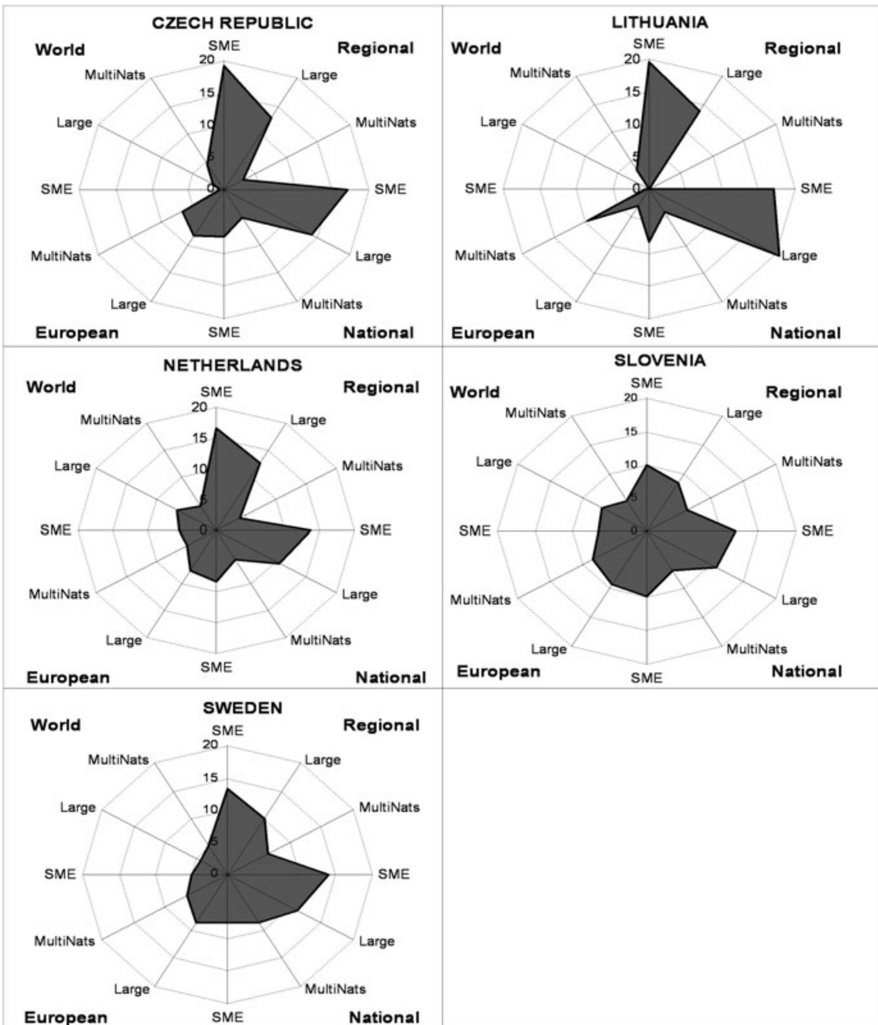

Fig. 7.1 Patterns of non-market interaction in the five case study regions
Source: DERREG project, Workpackage 1, electronic survey

quadrants (clockwise from top right) represent four concentric geographic zones within which interaction partners may be located: regional, national, Europe and the rest of the world. Within each of these quadrants the three axes represent SMEs, large firms and MNEs. These are calibrated in per cent of total interaction activity. The percentage of interaction associated with each zone/firm type combination is represented by the grey polygon in the centre of each graph.

These graphs give an immediate impression that the main 'arenas' for non-market interaction are within the case study region, and within the national space (i.e. the grey polygons are located mainly in the right hand quadrants). The Slovenian and Swedish case study areas have more globalised non-market interaction patterns, as they did in terms of transactions.

These non-market interaction patterns suggest that the 'collaboration space' of SMEs remains more firmly rooted in the region or the national territory, to some extent irrespective of the degree of internationalisation of transaction networks. The collaboration space thus focuses on other small domestic firms. This perhaps suggests a reappraisal of the alignment of transaction and non-market linkages, identified by Tödtling and Kaufmann (1999) and Kaufmann and Tödtling (2000). It may point to the role of 'institutional proximity' (i.e. shared institutions, social norms and 'local' culture) in building trust between firms, and in facilitating the establishment of collaborative relations.

In the interview transcripts, these issues were manifest in terms of repeated references to the importance of informal face-to-face contact with other members of the business community. Thus a Swedish interviewee argued that it was '. . . important to take some time to call the customers instead of always sending an e-mail. Even though it might take you an extra half an hour this is how you build the relationships, through talking about everything but work for a while. . .'. Another stated: 'Sometimes the most valuable meetings among us in the network are the lunches, or the times we meet to watch an ice hockey game. Then we can really talk and give each other good advice. These meetings can also end with new orders and hence new jobs for us.' A third entrepreneur talked about the 'good chemistry' within the local business community, which meant that he 'can always just cross the street and go and ask the others for help and ideas. . .'.

7.5.3 Global Engagement Through 'Translocal Integration'

As mentioned above, global engagement of small firms has often been assumed to take the form of either *vertical integration* (based on buyer-supplier linkages, with the small firm acting as supplier to large firms or an MNE). Alternatively, it could be achieved through *translocal integration,* based on transaction and cooperation linkages between firms that have equivalent positions in the production chain (i.e. SMEs) in different countries.

So far, our empirical evidence has shown that many rural firms, across a variety of geographical contexts have transactional links extending well beyond the regional market, whilst at the same time domestic milieu are still extremely important as the context for non-market cooperation processes. As Fig. 7.1 shows, the idea that small

rural firms seek involvement in international settings through vertical integration, i.e. through cooperation with regional and national MNEs, is not supported by the evidence from the case study areas. The graphs illustrate very clearly the fact that the responding SMEs mainly interacted with other SMEs, to a lesser extent with large firms, and even less with MNEs. Only in the Swedish and Slovenian case study areas do regional or national MNEs play a significant role in non-market interaction. In Sweden (at least) it is likely that the explanation lies in the importance of MNEs in resource-based industries (mining and timber).

The email survey, upon which Table 7.1 and Fig. 7.1 are based, asked questions about the scale and intensity of interaction. The face-to-face interviews provided a further insight into the geography of rural business networking. The interviews used the 'actor map' as a device to capture implicit valuations of the relative importance to the business of regional, national and international actors. For example, in the Swedish case study area, it is possible to deduce that although the interviewees identified about one-third of the actors in their networks as either located in Europe or further afield, the overall 'weight' or value assigned to these international contacts was substantially greater than that associated with the other two-thirds of (regional or national) actors. This finding was corroborated by a number of statements by the interviewees. For example, one Swedish interviewee stated: 'Doing business with international actors is very time consuming but it is also exciting and makes us more interesting among actors back home.'

Global engagement is, as we have already hinted above, not a purely transactional process, but rather a complex process of cooperation-transaction leading to the internationalisation of outlook and activity space. Furthermore, unlike local/regional *embeddedness*, the notion of global *engagement* does not presuppose the existence of 'strong' relations, in the sense of intense and frequent interactions. On the contrary, it echoes Granovetter's (1973) notion of '*the strength of weak ties*', or the memorable phrase coined by Bathelt, Malmberg, and Maskell '*local buzz and global pipeline*' (2004). Both of these convey the idea that a handful of low-intensity interactions with distant partners may have a disproportionate impact upon the performance of SMEs. Thus, for small firms, global engagement is effected through the acquisition of (perhaps less substantial) linkages which (among other things) provide access to a 'proxy insider's view' of the market trends, institutions, norms and business culture in the wider world. Such information increases the capacity of the firm to respond to global trends in demand, and facilitates the international diffusion of innovations.

7.5.4 Networking Benefits Relate More to Market Intelligence than Technical Innovation

The face-to-face interviews allowed an assessment of the relative importance of different 'network functions', which, following Oerlemans and Meeus (2005), were classified as production, marketing, capital or compliance.

For those case study areas which seem most open to external actors (Slovenia, Sweden, and to a lesser extent the Czech Republic), the main networking benefits relate to the acquisition of market intelligence (i.e. feedback on market requirements, finding new customers etc). Thus one Swedish entrepreneur stated that '. . .well developed personal relations with customers, colleagues, competitors and suppliers all around Europe makes us able to understand and predict the development of the European market.' The use of networking to source technical information to improve products or production processes took second place for most firms.

In the case study areas which were more oriented towards domestic markets (i.e. the Dutch and Lithuanian ones), greater emphasis was placed on the benefits of networking in terms of 'compliance with rules and regulations'. These results provide an interesting perspective, slightly at odds with the business networking literature, where 'global pipelines' and 'weak ties' are generally associated with diffusion of innovation. Clearly, this emphasises the need for a broad understanding of innovation, incorporating marketing aspects.

7.5.5 The 'Support Space' Is Still Regional or National

An important element of the business networks of rural firms relates to their interaction with 'support' institutions, including public agencies, trade organisations, research institutes and business consultants. These were explored through the email survey and the Likert scale scores of perceived intensity of interaction were analysed in the same way as non-market relations with other private businesses (Section 7.5.2). The results are summarised in Fig. 7.2.

What is immediately very apparent is the fact that all the case study areas exhibit close relationships between the interviewed firms and regional or national agencies, but less intense interaction with European or global actors. To some extent this reflects the tendency for European agencies to work through national or regional offices. However, this only serves to underline the crucial role played by face-to-face contacts and that the associated 'friction of distance' within the 'support space' of rural firms is rather stronger than that encountered in the context of transaction activity. This is clearly an important finding in a policy context.

7.6 Discussion

This chapter has explored the degree to which SMEs in rural areas participate in the globalisation processes which are more often associated with the economies of large cities. It has argued that each of the five case study areas, which include remote and sparsely populated environments, a peri-urban area, and both 'Old' and New Member States, exhibits some evidence of globalisation. This has taken a 'translocal' form, in that it generally involves direct linkages (market or non-market)

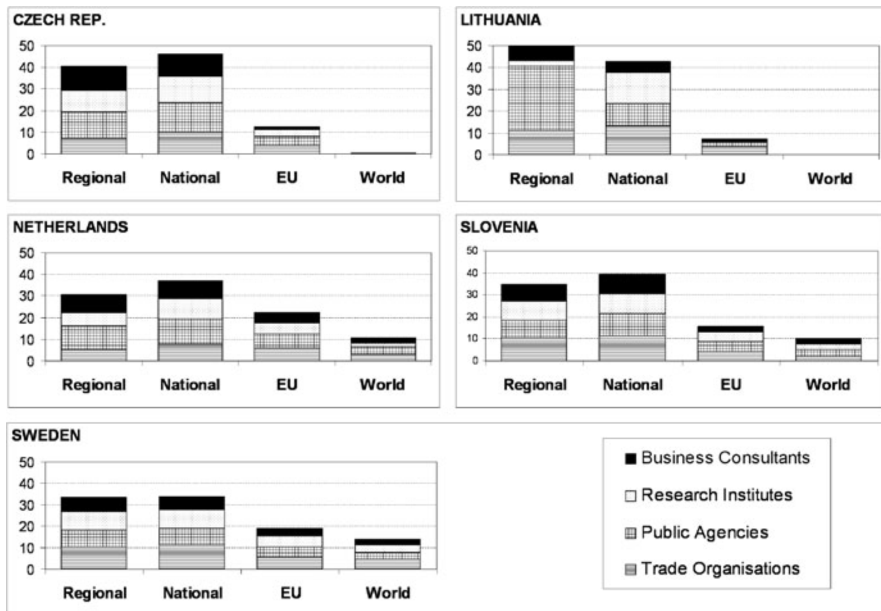

Fig. 7.2 Patterns of interaction with supporting institutions in the five case study regions. *Note*: All graphs show the relative intensity of interaction with each actor/region combination as a percentage of total interaction (based on social network analysis of Likert scores)
Source: DERREG project, Workpackage 1, electronic survey

between SMEs across international boundaries, without involving multinational intermediary firms. However, both non-market collaborative activities, and the 'support space' of rural SMEs are more constrained by geographical proximity.

In the review of concepts at the beginning of this chapter, the conventional view of the role of spatial proximity in business networks, agglomeration, the formation of clusters, or 'industrial districts' was contrasted with the arguments of the 'Proximity School', which stress the importance of 'organised proximity' and 'relational space'. The picture that has emerged from our case studies suggests that reality is a complex hybrid of these two perspectives.

It is important not to fall into the trap of thinking that geographic and organised proximity are in some way mutually exclusive. They are of course simply alternative perspectives, parallel dimensions, of any business network configuration. The importance of good relationships, trust and common interests that lie behind the various kinds of 'organised proximity' have always been important, even in the last century, when transport costs and slower communications meant that agglomeration tendencies were relatively more powerful than they are now. Within this environment geographic and organised proximity tended to be more or less *co-located*.

The results of our case study analysis suggest that what is happening is a partial *dislocation* of spatial and organised proximity; a divergence between the

geographical and relational space of rural business networks. For some elements of the SME's networks, especially market-orientated interaction with other SMEs, the friction of distance has been reduced, allowing them to expand out into European and global arenas. This has advantages in terms of the search for market intelligence and technical innovation. At the same time, the role of face-to-face contact is still extremely important, so that much business-to-business collaboration retains strong local or regional roots. Support and advice linkages also remain constrained by geographical space.

The policy implications of this view of rural business networking are relatively simple. Business development initiatives that implicitly seek to develop (geographic) clustering, in order to derive agglomeration benefits, are not sufficient. Strengthening the 'local buzz' needs to be accompanied by the building of 'global pipelines'. Rural SMEs still need to develop organised proximity with regard to their neighbours within the region but they will also benefit greatly from good relationships with a limited number of distant partners.

This has important implications for rural development initiatives that stress closer urban-rural interaction (within regions), for two reasons. First because it weakens the assumed ties between the rural economy and adjacent 'central paces', and second because it underlines the fact that rural areas are therefore capable of independent, endogenous, dynamics, sustained by networks that extend well beyond the 'city regions' which are assumed by rural-urban cooperation policies.

The study of globalisation and business networks in a rural context is not one with established and accepted methodologies. Much of the data collection and analysis featured in this chapter has been experimental and innovative. Much remains to be done to establish reliable procedures which may lead to the accumulation of comparative information across a range of contexts. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the findings presented above may contribute to correcting stereotypes regarding the impact of globalisation on the rural economy.

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Part II
International Mobilities: A Tension Between Scales

Chapter 8
When the World Goes Rural: Transnational Potentials of International Migration in Rural Swedish Labour Markets

Charlotta Hedberg, Gunnel Forsberg and Ali Najib

8.1 Introduction

International migrants connect rural areas to the world through their transnational networks containing potential for translocal dynamic change. The web of networks that tie migrants to their homeland can be an opportunity for rural areas to increase their international contacts, which could also be of importance to the dynamics of local labour markets. The global network economy involves not only 'world cities' and other urban areas, but it also includes rural areas in terms of intensifying international relations and global economic processes (McCarthy, 2008; Woods, 2007; Young, 2010). In the same vein, international migration processes contribute to the demographic and dynamic restructuring of rural areas, which is why Hugo and Morén-Alegret (2008, p. 477) suggest that 'international migration will play an increasingly important role in that change over the next two decades'. Immigration is crucial in order to increase the working-age population, which will be decreasing in the near future in most OECD countries (OECD, 2007). In rural areas in particular, international migration contributes considerably to balancing ageing population structures (Camarero et al., 2009; Glesbygdsverket, 2008; Hedberg, 2010; Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2005).

Not only the demographic structure, but also qualitative aspects of the countryside are influenced by the influx of international migrants. Immigration constitutes an important part of the socio-economic restructuring of rural areas (Halfacree, 2008). In Greece, international migration has 'produced its own dynamics' while playing a crucial role not only in the structural transformation of the agricultural sector but also by engaging in a range of sectors, including manufacturing, household work and tourism (Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2005). Accordingly, migrants are part of a rural labour force that has multifaceted influences on rural areas both economically and socially (Kasimis, Papadopoulos, & Pappas, 2010). Similarly, it is

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_8,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

argued that international migrants would have the potential to create dynamics in rural areas of other European countries, not least through migrant entrepreneurship and by connecting national firms to the home countries of migrants (Fonseca, 2008; Hojem, 2010, p. 7). However, the generally low participation of migrants in the labour market is viewed as an obstacle to reaching the full potential of international migration dynamics.

This chapter analyses the possible dynamics that international migration could bring to rural areas from a transnational perspective. It investigates the translocal effects and potentials of international migration on local labour markets in rural Sweden through the example of a case study in the western Swedish inland. The case study is based on interviews with three different actors: local authorities, local firms in the manufacturing sector and migrant entrepreneurs. In this way, the chapter analyses if rural areas are connected by transnational linkages of international labour, which would tie rural areas to other international localities in a process of global *upscaling* of rural space.

8.2 Transnational Networks, Trade and Entrepreneurship

International migration processes are connected to changing ruralities in high-income countries both numerically and qualitatively. A translocal perspective here emphasises the transnational web of contacts that is being created through in- and out-migration between countries, which is based on the ability of migrants to mobilise social networks, social capital and relational and structural embeddedness in places (Faist, 2000; Vertovec, 2003). Transnational links are closely tied to the agency of individual migrants, through which transnational effects are transferred to the institutional level (Faist, 2007). As such, they affect society in a multifaceted way, ranging from the economic and political to the social, cultural and religious spheres, thus implying an inherent dynamic in migration processes (Hedberg, 2007; Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007). One area where the dynamics of transnational migration flows are manifested is within international trade and entrepreneurship and their effects on local labour markets. Economic practices such as the flow of knowledge, capital and transactions are embodied in individual migrants and transferred between places of in- and out-migration (Zhou & Tseng, 2001).

Accordingly, as we view it in this chapter, this process can be discussed from two important and complementary angles. The first aspect concerns international migrants as employees in the local labour market, and how they, in their role as *intermediators* between sending and receiving areas, establish links that are entered into by international firms. A number of international studies have established a strong quantitative relationship between trade and international migration (see, for instance, Baker & Benjamin, 1996; Hatzigeorgiou, 2009; Sanderson & Kentor, 2008). One important question to ask here is how immigrant workers are tapping into transnational business networks and how such networks affect bilateral trade and other trade relations between the receiving area and the homeland. It is

important to investigate if migrants function as 'transnational agents', who contribute to trade through their networks and knowledge about markets, language and culture.

The second aspect concerns international migrants as *transnational entrepreneurs*. Recent research on international migration shows that most international migrants engage occasionally or regularly in some kind of cross-border economic or social relations with the country of origin or/and with diasporas elsewhere (Drori, Honig, & Wright, 2009). In their study of transnational economic relations of Latin American groups in the USA, Portes, Guarnizo, and Haller (2002) distinguished a class of transnational entrepreneurs from the traditional ethnic entrepreneurs. Whereas the activities of the latter were limited to the local market of the host society, transnational entrepreneurs were seen as 'self-employed immigrants whose business activities require frequent travel abroad and who depend for the success of their firms on their contacts and associates in another country, primarily their country of origin' (Portes et al., 2002, p. 287). Accordingly, transnational economic relations and social ties facilitate the entrepreneurship of migrants.

This chapter concerns with the effects of transnational networks in translocal labour markets in rural areas. Several studies have emphasised the effect of transnational networks on development in sending areas, not least through the economic remittances that international migrants send to their home countries (de Haas, 2005; Najib, 1986; Page & Plaza, 2006). However, as we argue in this book, transnational networks affect regional development in receiving countries as well, through the translocal dynamics they bring to the countryside. In this chapter, we focus on the transnational economic networks that would connect rural areas to the world and intensify the participation of rural areas and their labour markets in the global economy. Accordingly, transnational networks could contribute to the rescaling of regional power relations while connecting rural areas to the global arena (cf. Swyngedouw, 2000). If the translocal dynamics of transnational migration are recognised, the processes could thus be part of a global up-scaling of rural areas.

8.3 The Case Study Area in Context

8.3.1 Characteristics of International Migration in Rural Sweden

From a numerical point of view, the inflow of international migrants to the countryside is rather small (Aslund, 2005; Statistics Sweden, 2008). Whereas 30 percent of the total population resided in rural areas[1] in 2007, according to data from Statistics Sweden, the equivalent figure for the foreign-born population was only 15 percent (Hedberg, 2010). Accordingly, rural areas are more homogeneous, which could mean that they have less potential for transnational contacts. Nonetheless, when seen

[1] Rural areas are here defined as localities with up to 3000 inhabitants.

over a 10-year period, the share of international migrants increased in rural areas, with an annual growth rate that was higher than in urban areas. Moreover, there were counter-flows of mobility from urban areas to rural areas, which are concealed in the net figures. The clear majority of the migrants in rural areas originated from western Europe, mainly from the neighbouring Nordic countries. However, rural areas were also inhabited by migrants from eastern Europe and east Asia. The latter are mainly female, and many arrive as 'family migrants' in order to get married in Sweden (Niedomysl, Osth, & van Ham, 2010). However, there were relatively few migrants from west Asia, which instead was quite common in urban areas.

Just as with the total Swedish population, the age distribution differs, with an older foreign-born population in rural areas than in larger localities. Compared to the native-born population, however, the international migrant population is still relatively young in rural areas (Hedberg, 2010). This effect is higher in rural areas than in more urban localities, implying that international migration constitutes an important demographic opportunity to counterbalance the ageing population structure in the countryside. This demographic 'refill' could to some extent already be recognised in rural labour markets. Although employment figures for international migrants were low in rural areas, employment was slightly higher than in urban areas and the differences towards the native-born population was smaller. When migrant characteristics such as country of birth, age and gender were controlled for, the employment of international migrants was equally high in rural and urban areas. Accordingly, it is relevant to investigate the effects of international migration to rural labour markets as a distinct but interconnected process to those of larger localities and to scrutinise the translocal dynamics that transnational links of international migrants could create.

8.3.2 The Process of Repopulation in Rural Sweden

Population flows and dynamic changes in rural areas have a long history. What has often been analysed as only minor changes is to a considerable degree due to a focus on net figures, concealing the demographic changes that have occurred in specific places. Of particular interest is the de- and repopulation since the mid-1980s, when a situation that seemed to be a revival of the Green Wave, which means migration from urban to rural areas, was identified. In contrast to the dominating research agenda, which focused on rural areas as areas of stagnation, new research[2] pointed out that the transformation of rural population structures was guided by individuals' attraction to the countryside for lifestyle purposes rather than for reasons having to do with livelihood. This implies a change in the view of rural spaces from an economic to a social arena. In accordance with this, it is necessary to analyse the

[2] The research project was *The countryside of Mälardalen in transformation* (Sw. 'Mälardalens landbygd i förändring'), which focused on the reformation of the countryside and its population (see, for instance, Forsberg & Carlbrand, 1993; Forsberg, 1998).

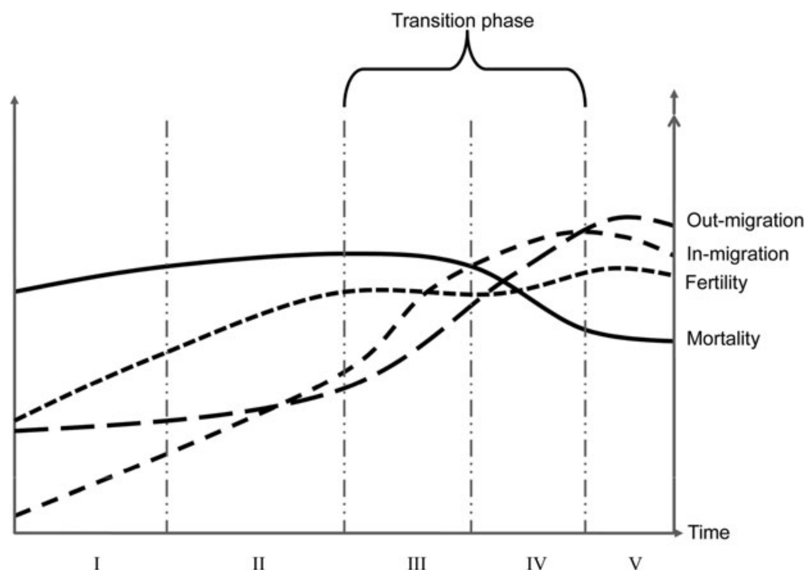

Fig. 8.1 The migration transition model in dynamic countrysides

multiplicity of rural places, due to their contexts and spatial relations, which implies the identification of various countrysides. Furthermore, in order to grasp the transformation of rural areas, population changes must be analysed by gross migration figures.

This view of rural areas entails a stepwise model of the transition process of the post-modern countryside (Fig. 8.1). The model concerns (mainly internal) migration flows and subsequent changes in fertility and morality rates. In the *first* stage, out-migration is extensive (especially by young people), while in-migration is low. As a consequence, the fertility rate is low, the mortality rate is high and the rural population decreases. In the *second* stage, the out-migration is still considerable but the in-migration of young families in particular increases slowly. There is still a decrease in population, due to the high age amongst the population along with high mortality rates. In the *third* stage, the out-migration is still considerable, but in-migration starts to increase to such an extent that it outnumbers the out-migration flow. Still, the mortality rate is higher than the fertility rate. In total, the net change is close to zero, which conceals the dynamic population changes that are occurring. In the *fourth* stage, in-migration is higher than out-migration and an increase of young families leads to high fertility rates that are higher than the mortality rates. The population increases. In the *fifth* stage, the flows of in-migration and out-migration are similar and the net migration rate is zero. The population reformation has changed the population structure, which implies that the fertility rate outnumbers the mortality rate.

This process of transition was identified as varied in geography as well as in time (Amcoff, Forsberg, & Stenbacka, 1995; Forsberg, 1994). There were places where

no significant changes took place (or where there was a process of depopulation and out-migration), and they were labelled *parishes of tradition.* Some places were beginning the process of re-population and where thus categorised as *parishes of acceleration.* Other places had been under transformation for a long period. Those that had low but accelerating in-migration in the beginning of the investigation period were identified as *parishes of in-migration* and those that had significant in-migration during the whole period were identified as *parishes under transition.* The last category identified were places which had left an earlier transformation process and now had reached the fifth stage in the transition model, and they were called *parishes of stability*.

The position of rural areas in the transition model also has implications in relation to international migration. Parishes of acceleration, parishes of in-migration, parishes under transition and parishes of stability contain dynamics that primarily are subject to migration processes internally in Sweden. Parishes of tradition, on the other hand, which are often located in remote areas, still struggle with problems of out-migration and population decline. It is to these areas in particular that international migration flows imply a 'demographic refill'. Indeed, international migrants offer the possibility for these areas to enter into the subsequent stages of the transition model. In accordance with this analysis, the transformation of rural areas from areas of population decline to areas of stable population would include an increasing component of international migration.

8.4 The Case Study Area – Transnational Potentials

This chapter focuses on a remotely located case study area in the western Swedish inland. The area is situated in a sparsely populated region, far away from the capital region in central Sweden. The case study area consists of a set of small localities, which are categorised as rural areas due to their population size (<3000 inhabitants). They are located in two municipalities, in this study called[3] Vikdala and Furunäs, which have varying locations in relation to the main city in the region, called Vedåstad (Fig. 8.2). The distance to Vedåstad strongly influences their position in the migration transition model, so that the further they are from the city the more they are subject to population decline (Fig. 8.1). Accordingly, Furunäs is typical of a *parish of tradition*. However, as this chapter will show, the location in the western Swedish inland also means that the localities within commuting distance to Vedåstad encounter scarcities of resources that are related to the population structure. Thus, international migration would have the potential to bring dynamics to the case study area both in terms of the population structure and also due to transnational networks that would strengthen the regions' international interconnectedness.

[3] All localities in the text have been given pseudonyms.

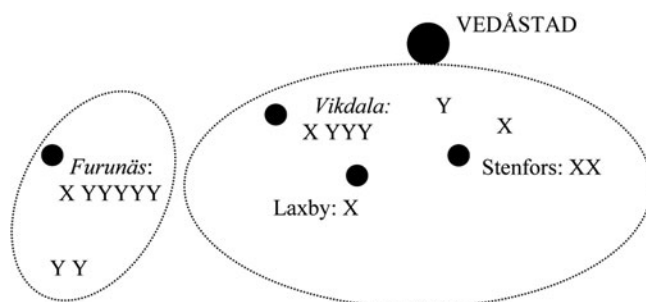

Fig. 8.2 Schematic map of the case study area with the locations and fake names of the localities. X = interviewed manufacturing firms, Y = interviewed migrant entrepreneurs

In the case study area, the share of migrants is lower than in rural areas in Sweden generally. In 2006, only 5 percent of the population was foreign-born. Just like in other rural areas, the vast majority of the migrants were from western Europe although, all in all, the migrants originated from around 50 countries altogether. Most common was migration from the Nordic countries, while other migrants were from Germany, the Netherlands, Thailand, Iraq, the former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and the former Soviet Union. In these figures lie various stories of immigration, ranging from lifestyle migration, which means migrating to improve the quality of life through a change of environment, and marriage to refuge from political persecution and war. Accordingly, the migrants can be linked to their home countries in a wide variety of ways, which would provide a diversity of transnational networks to the labour market.

Within this region, three sets of interviews were performed with (1) local authorities, (2) local firms and (3) migrant entrepreneurs. Interviews with local *authorities* were mainly performed in the Vikdala municipality, consisting of six recorded interviews with the business advisor, the integration advisor, an employee at the local employment agency and three 'job coaches', who were employed in a municipal project aimed at coaching newly arrived migrants to enter the local labour market. Complementary interviews were also performed with local authorities in Furunäs.

The local *firms* interviewed were mainly found in the manufacturing sector, which is the typical sector for the employment of international migrants, both men and women, in rural Sweden (Hedberg, 2010). The large manufacturing industry was mainly located in Vikdala, where most interviews were performed (Fig. 8.2). Here, five out of six of the main local firms agreed to be interviewed. Additionally, the main private employer in Furunäs was interviewed. The interviews were face-to-face with the managing directors (MD), except for the firm in Furunäs where the person responsible for employment issues was consulted.

The third set of interviews consisted of 11 in-depth interviews with *migrant entrepreneurs*. In principle, all migrant entrepreneurs in the region that could be found were interviewed. In the analysis, they have been divided into non-EU entrepreneurs (8 interviews) and EU-entrepreneurs (3 interviews). The non-EU

entrepreneurs are located in the municipality centres, mainly running restaurants and shops, whereas the EU-entrepreneurs are found in the countryside, providing diverse services that are related to the surrounding nature (planting trees, tourism, etc) (Fig. 8.2).

8.4.1 Transnational Potentials Identified by Local Authorities

The local authorities emphasise that international migrants are important because they help to counterbalance the ageing population structure. The region is hit by the continuous outmigration of the young population and immigration would be a way to slow down this process. According to the local business advisor, there is concern about the future recruitment of labour in the region due to the demographic situation. He argues that the firms are too conservative and that the traditional method of recruitment, through personal networks in the region, is unsustainable for the future. The integration advisor agrees:

> It is an important resource. We need all the people we can get here [. . .]. Every soul is needed! Because we see that the young people are leaving, we are becoming an ageing population and everybody is very important. We need lots of in-migration.

Some interviewees interweave the demographic promise of immigration with translocal opportunities. The local business advisor strongly believes that international migrants not only contribute general labour but also offer particular skills that the region needs:

> These individuals posses key knowledge that doesn't exist here. Here there are few individuals who know these languages, there are actually few people who have these experiences. Then it would be relatively interesting for the firms to capitalise on it.

He argues that it is vital for export-oriented firms to search for new markets and to 'learn how they think outside our borders'. So, he believes that the transnational networks of international migrants, and the resources they bring to the region, should be seen as an opportunity by the firms. One of the job coaches agrees that immigration brings dynamics to the region that could 'drive development forward'. As an example, he uses a painter, who 'has his way of painting. One can be inspired by such a person, colour-wise, knowledge-wise – and that goes in both directions.'

So far, however, these respondents are critical to the local firms' understanding of international migrants as a resource. The business advisor speculates that they might have 'wrong assumptions' about migrants and that they might fear 'cultural differences'. In particular, he mentions an expanding local service sector, which is facing a growing need to employ individuals from outside the region, but which avoids employing international migrants. One job coach is troubled that many employers give too much weight to perfect knowledge of the Swedish language. He admits that there has been some resistance among local firms to employing newly arrived migrants. Instead, he tries to find employment for international migrants in Vedåstad, which is within commuting distance:

> In the city, I experience it as different – that they are a little more open [. . .] towards other cultures. [. . .] But further out in the villages [. . .] it is a little more narrow-minded and old-fashioned.

An additional explanation that is put forward by the job coaches is that local firms often are very small, with limited possibilities for employment. However, in the small but entrepreneurial village Laxby, around half of the 80 firms have employees, but only one of them was born in a foreign country.[4] In opposition to the negative suggestion that local firms avoid employing international migrants, local authorities mention Stenfors as a success story. The village has high migrant employment, which, according to the integration advisor, goes hand-in-hand with the great hospitality that the local community has showed towards newly arrived refugees.

One of the job coaches mentions that migrant entrepreneurship had been a goal when they started their project to employ newly arrived migrants. The coach believes in the potential of migrants to 'get things started' and has noticed that: 'In some [policy] circles, you can observe a great belief in immigrants' ability to start up a business, to create some life in the countryside'. However, no participant in their project has yet tried to start up a business.

Two of the interviewees at the local authorities are not convinced that international migrants can bring dynamic influences to the region. According to them, the local labour market is not specified enough to profit from transnational networks. One job coach cannot imagine what kind of knowledge international migrants could possess that the local labour market could use. If there was a need, she believes that the firms would identify the competences of international migrants automatically.

Accordingly, the local authorities recognise the demographic need of the municipality to have an inflow of international migrants. When it comes to more qualitative, translocal gains of international migration to the region, opinions differ. However, most of them would agree on the possibilities that transnational networks could bring to the region and some are troubled that the local firms seem to have little awareness of this.

8.4.2 A Translocal Labour Market?

Local firms in the manufacturing sector have adopted various translocal recruitment strategies on both the national and international levels to cope with their location in a remote, rural region in the western Swedish inland. Generally, they experience a shortage of labour with the right skills in the region. To solve this problem, two firms in Vikdala have managed to recruit the majority of their higher-skilled employees on a national basis. Accordingly, people with the right education have made an active choice to move from southern and central Sweden in order to work for these firms.

[4] This figure is according to the MD of a firm that works with infrastructure and the clustering of firms in Laxby.

Additionally, one of them has employed a Dutch seller residing in the Netherlands, while the other firm had far-reaching plans to recruit Polish workers with a specific technical competence that could not be found in the region. These plans were never carried out, though. The small firm in Laxby, on the contrary, is quite locally oriented regarding the recruitment of staff. Their labour turnover has been low, and so they have not experienced any scarcity in the region in terms of finding the right employees either for higher- or lower-skilled labour.

The firm in Furunäs, which is by far the most remote of the firms, expresses the most concern about the scarcity of competent local labour. The firm has employed two sellers from Germany, it occasionally employs workers from Poland on a short-term basis and it has evaluated the possibility of employing newly-arrived refugees who reside in the region. They have arranged educational visits for groups of refugees, but they find it a structural problem in terms of validating the refugees' skills and education from their home countries. Otherwise, they think that refugees might be an important local resource:

> We know that there is a lot of knowledge in Furunäs amongst the newly arrived who nobody utilises or uses. And if one could only be reassured that they can do what is said on their papers then one could use them a lot really. [...] There is a lot of knowledge there and it is unfortunate that one cannot use it. Particularly in Furunäs where one can say that – there isn't a lack of people, but there is a lack of competence.

Despite these examples, the recruitment of international labour is an exception rather than a rule in these firms. The managers admit that they seldom include newly arrived migrants such as refugees for 'practical training', which is a state-subsidised system to facilitate the employment of international migrants: 'Unfortunately there we don't live as I wish'. Instead, the recruitment process is mainly based on local networks within the 'circle of the friend's brother', meaning that they prefer to recruit those that they already know. Only the two firms in Stenfors differ substantially from this pattern due to their history of engaging international migrants in the labour force 'on the floor'. Today around 10 percent of their labour force is foreign-born, originating from Asia, Africa and Europe, and in the 1980s it was twice that.

The firms generally believe that international labour would bring some qualities to the firm that cannot be gained through local recruitment. These translocal advantages can be both *internal*, by creating dynamics within the firm, and *external*, through the transnational contacts migrants could establish with their home countries. The exception from this is the small firm in Laxby, which sees no advantages with international labour.

The internal advantages from employing international migrants are illustrated by the firms in Stenfors. They have had positive experiences from employing migrants, who have proved to be 'grateful, willing to work and skilled'. The migrants arrived at a time when the local labour force had low motivation to work and their employment is described as having improved the working moral of the total labour force regarding issues such as coming to work and discipline at the workplace. The migrants also brought a positive influx of international experiences to the firms:

> They contribute to opening up everyone's eyes; that there are people outside the region [. . .] and outside of Sweden who are very good and who can do a lot. Because if we take this region that we represent here [. . .] I promise you that I have at least ten people who hardly have been outside the village.

The migrants in Stenfors have been relatively involved in the social life of the village, which seems to have gone hand-in-hand with their involvement in the local labour market. The firm in Vikdala, which has recruited many employees within Sweden but lacks international employees, sees the situation in the same way:

> It adds something – mixing in general! If it is men/women, from different parts of the country or different parts of the world. It simply creates positive influences. We learn from each other. [. . .] Including other cultures would [create] different dynamics and enrich it all actually. We know different things. So I would like to have it, but unfortunately. . .

The external contacts that would be linked with international migrants are related to the transnational relations of the firms in general, their international export markets and their future expansion plans. One of the firms has no international export, since it is the Swedish branch of a large international corporation. Accordingly, this firm does not see the transnational network potential of foreign-born workers in the labour force. The small firm in Laxby also sees no potential for transnational relations, but for the opposite reason. They export as much as 85 percent of their production to the global market and they already have well-established international channels through which they find new international markets.

The other firms, however, think that, at least in theory, international employees could contribute transnational networks that would be beneficial to their export. The main export market of these firms is the Nordic countries, although they also sell to other countries in the European Union. Some of them plan to increase their exports within the EU and it is primarily here that they can imagine the transnational potential of international labour. According to the firm in Furunäs, its two German employees have increased their exports to Germany and France, both through their linguistic skills and through their knowledge of other cultures:

> We have had some problems finding French-speaking people, and then it's even better when you find someone who speaks both French and German. [. . .] The biggest gain, I still think, is that one is familiar with the culture. [. . .] How to get along with people. [. . .] You know exactly how to deal with the problems.

One firm in Vikdala exports to countries in both Europe and northern Africa. The firm has a Dutch seller residing in the Netherlands and the MD argues that more international employees in these positions would bring several advantages:

> It is language and culture. If we talk northern Africa, then it is good to be able to speak Arabic, have some check on Ramadan and other things. Now we are getting to know this ourselves, actually, since we are pretty active there, but Arabic we don't know. Yes – and networks, as long as they have them.

He emphasises that the firm 'tries to be open to things' and that the employment of people from other countries might be interesting for the firm in terms of entering new markets. In his mind, however, the person would be a resident in the export

country and it is not primarily a question of including international migrants who are present in the region.

The firms in Stenfors, who recognised the internal dynamics of an international labour force, do not identify the external transnational advantages to the same extent. Although the larger firm plans to widen the export markets, and acknowledges the importance of having an established personal network in this process, the MD does not include export to the countries where his employees come from, particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina. The transnational potential that the present labour could possess in terms of networks and skills is not reflected on and he thinks that the market in Bosnia and Herzegovina is both remote and difficult to enter.

When Bosnian employees have tried to influence the firms in Stenfors to make business in their home country, the larger firm has left these initiatives with an offer to provide assistance if the migrants would want to establish a business on their own. So far, however, the initiatives have fallen: 'The will and enthusiasm is there, but often they lack the money.' The smaller firm, however, leaves the door open to future involvement:

> Oh, yes, he [a Bosnian employee] is on me all the time and says we should start up a factory in Bosnia (laughter). We often talk about that. But it's like I said, outsourcing our production wouldn't be profitable. [. . .] However, I have told him that he could check if it's possible to sell [our product] in Bosnia. But it's not really on the agenda yet. It could become, you never know. They are steadily improving down there.

In summary, there is a wide variation in the translocal experiences of and attitudes towards international workers amongst the larger manufacturing firms in the region. Whereas the majority of firms has little experience in employing international migrants more than occasionally, they can argue for particular qualities that would in theory follow from this. Accordingly, there is a gap between the positive discourse around the dynamics of immigration and the everyday practice of the firms. The translocal advantages gained through international labour and transnational networks can, from the firm's point of view, be both internal, to improve dynamics and multiculturalism within the own firm, and external, through the international contacts migration would bring. Employing international labour would also be particularly valuable in remote regions with limited supplies of linguistic and educational skills. Thus, many firms acknowledge a translocal potential in the skills and networks that international labour could bring to the firm, although few firms carry this out.

8.4.3 Transnational Migrant Entrepreneurs

The other side of the coin, where translocal dynamics of international migration are concerned, is constituted by migrant entrepreneurs. The remote location in the western Swedish inland constitutes a demanding environment for their entrepreneurial activities. The areas have limited access to large markets and restricted infrastructure, which makes travel distances prohibitive. In particular,

migrant entrepreneurs lack access to co-ethnic customers that entrepreneurs in urban areas may have. Accordingly, the rural environment presents a genuine challenge to the establishment and performance of migrant entrepreneurs.

However, these challenges can be enhanced by drawing on the migrants' transnational social and business networks. These networks may enable individual rural migrant entrepreneurs to mobilise non-local resources in order to establish and operate their rural small businesses. An increased understanding of the dynamics of individual entrepreneurs in rural Sweden involves a close assessment of how various migrants originating from EU and non-EU countries use different types of social and economic networks to mobilise an array of resources that are less accessible in rural communities.

A number of key similarities and differences exist between EU and non-EU rural migrant entrepreneurs. Surprisingly, the reasons for starting their businesses in a remote rural community in the western Swedish inland were more or less similar between the groups; that is, they chose rural Sweden for its natural environment and to start a new lifestyle. However, when investigating this more closely, the EU migrants were lifestyle-seekers, who had settled there primarily to change their earlier way of life for a different one. The non-EU migrants, on the other hand, had come to the rural areas as a result of being part of a transnational network of family or kin ties.

Hence, transnational co-ethnic links already existed when the non-EU migrants entered the region, and they served as a crucial resource for the nurturing of small business activity. It was obvious that transnational networks played an extremely important role, both locally, to connect people and businesses to one another, and also internationally, connecting the entrepreneurs to the outside world, especially in remote rural communities like Furunäs. So, in other words, networks could directly link to business performance in rural areas.

More specifically, transnational networks were used in three domains: to *access financial capital*, to *recruit labour* and to *receive information* about the possibilities for entrepreneurship. One similarity between non-EU entrepreneurs and EU entrepreneurs regards access to financial capital, where most entrepreneurs funded their business with a combination of personal savings and bank loans. This is significant since access to financial capital through banks or other financial institutions was not as important as one could assume. One respondent said:

> I do not want to borrow from a bank; it is uncertain and expensive. I would rather use my savings in combination with loans from family members. When I started some years ago, I borrowed almost half of my initial capital from my half-brother, who runs his business in Dubai.

This quote is an example of how most of the non-EU migrants were more likely to use their transnational contacts to mobilise financial capital from abroad, such as from family and friends, rather than from external institutions, whereas the EU migrant entrepreneurs were more likely to have their own savings or to borrow from formal credit institutions. Additionally, all EU migrant entrepreneurs had brought with them initial capital when they arrived in Sweden. Like many other non-EU

migrants, this entrepreneur explains how global transnational networks enhanced his access to capital and information:

> We Kurds have relatives in Sweden, Germany, USA, Canada, Middle East and, of course, in Turkey; many of them are in business and we all help each other with advice and financing when needed. Last year I visited my cousin (who is my best friend) in Los Angeles; it is much easier to make money there compared to Sweden.

Another non-EU migrant, who owns a restaurant in Furunäs, has borrowed a large part of his initial capital from his father, who runs businesses in both Germany and Turkey. The loan is associated with a cultural conflict about the right to serve alcohol:

> My father loaned me most of our initial capital when we bought this place; he has his own businesses in both Berlin and Istanbul. The only condition he had was not to sell alcohol in my restaurant, it is haram (religiously forbidden), but as you can see, our clients are not Muslims; we have to serve alcohol.

Another aspect concerns the recruitment of co-ethnic labour, where non-EU migrants are more likely to use transnational networks than EU migrants. They reside in the town centres, where other co-ethnics reside as well. For example, Turkish/Kurdish migrants interviewed in Furunäs used their pre-existing ties to support or to get help from other Kurds in Furunäs to emigrate from southern Turkey to Europe or to support second-movers from elsewhere in Sweden to resettle in Furunäs. This served as a basis for the employment of co-ethnics. The small businesses of the non-EU entrepreneurs are heavily segmented in traditional marginal immigrant business activities, such as restaurant and retail activities, and spatially concentrated in small rural municipality centres, following the paths of co-ethnics and early immigrants.

On the contrary, EU entrepreneurs tended to be embedded in the local community; for instance, as members of local business associations or in local development. As the business activities of the EU migrant entrepreneurs are spatially dispersed throughout the countryside, they also tend to be sectorally diversified into various economic activities. Furthermore, they were more involved in professional business networks, and they did not engage co-ethnic labour, although two of them temporarily recruited nationals to Sweden. Instead of recruiting relatives, however, this German entrepreneur in the tree-planting business drew on his cultural and linguistic skills to recruit transnationally:

> My company temporarily needs to recruit many people during the summer months. I often advertise on the internet and in some local newspapers in [Vedåstad], but also in Germany and Holland. Over one-third of our employees are from Germany, Holland, Belgium and even from Italy and France. They are often young and they are curious about life in the 'land of forest' in Scandinavia.

This division between migrants, who use transnational networks within the extended family, and migrants, who use less personal transnational networks, also showed in other respects. Accordingly, non-EU entrepreneurs were more likely to be engaged in various aspects of social family networking, including transnational activities, such as sending remittance, and regular home visits. The EU entrepreneurs, on the

contrary, sent no remittances and their visits to the country of origin were sporadic rather than regular. Furthermore, non-EU entrepreneurs were more likely to have other family members who are entrepreneurs in the studied region than EU migrant entrepreneurs. This increases the chance for translocal mentorship and assistance between family members. One woman from Thailand has integrated transnational and local functions into her business, since her shop serves as a translocal meeting place for both national and international contacts:

> There are many Thai women in Furunäs, and [. . .] some of them come over to my shop to chat a little about life in Sweden. But they come mainly to meet with other Thai women, call home and get information about Thailand and family and relatives back home. If a Thai woman visits Thailand, she must come here and tell the other women here about her latest experiences there.

In line with this, while non-EU migrants were highly engaged in various forms of translocal regional and international networks with co-ethnics, EU migrants were less engaged in such relations. Instead, they seemed to act more individually and were more engaged in weak tie-relations rather than in strong family or kin relations. One possible explanation is that EU migrants have higher education (all three had university educations) and have been living in Sweden for a longer period; their average residency in Sweden is 8 years, compared to 5 years amongst non-EU migrants. Also, EU migrants had more business experience and they mastered the Swedish language to a much higher extent than their non-EU counterparts.

The results reveal that all the interviewed business owners were engaged in translocal social and economic networks that reached both locally and internationally. The content of the transnational networks varied between EU and non-EU entrepreneurs, but they were all engaged in transnational activities to strengthen the performance of their businesses. The transnational networks were of particular importance for these entrepreneurs since they were located in remote, rural areas. The challenges that these areas comprise, not least through limited access to co-ethnic customers, were to some extent overcome by transnational networks.

8.5 Conclusions

This chapter has investigated the translocal effects of transnational networks in rural labour markets through the example of a case study area in the western Swedish inland. Behind the analysis lies a broad understanding of migration processes as transgressing international borders through networks that connect local places in sending and receiving areas. International migrants, and the links they embody to the homeland, contribute to the establishment of a wide range of transnational networks, which not only connect the migrants themselves but also have dynamic translocal effects on the areas and local labour markets they intersect with. The chapter investigated labour market effects of transnational networks from two angles: either the migrants would act as 'transnational agents', linking local firms to their homeland,

or the migrants would be transnational entrepreneurs, who use their networks in the entrepreneurial process.

In the chapter, we argued that international migration should be seen as a process that affects the population structure of rural areas. They serve as a 'demographic refill', particularly in those rural areas that have an ageing and declining population, the so-called *parishes of tradition*. The currently growing element of international migrants to rural areas would increasingly affect the migration transition model that rural areas are part of. With this follows an increasing transnational connectedness of rural areas, which would imply the potential for rural labour markets to thrive.

The results indicate that transnational networks in practice exist in rural labour markets, but that there are opportunities to increase them substantially in the future. The most obvious establishment of transnational networks in rural labour markets is materialised by the *migrant entrepreneurs*. Although there were differences between the entrepreneurs depending on their country of origin, diverse transnational networks affected their entrepreneurial strategies, choices of business activity and business locations. While migrants from EU countries were more engaged in weak ties to the homeland, based on language and culture, the non-EU migrants tended to be involved in strong, family-related networks. In many cases, the transnational networks served as a way to manage the challenge of being a migrant entrepreneur in a remote, rural area that lacks a co-ethnic customer base. On the contrary, the *local firms in the manufacturing sector* seldom grasped the potential that international migrants could bring to the firm, whether as a 'demographic refill' to the labour force or as a way of bringing translocal dynamics to the firm. In a few cases, however, translocal effects could be discerned, either as *internal* effects, creating dynamics and openness within the firms, or as *external* effects, establishing transnational networks to the migrants' homelands. The openness was greater towards ethnic heterogeneity regarding internal effects, whereas the external effects exclusively concerned migrants from (western) European countries. This neglect of international migrants as a resource was regretted by representatives of the local authorities.

Hence, it is not an exaggeration to conclude that in today's Swedish countryside, transnational migration is slowly changing the economic and social circumstances of the local communities and rural communities by connecting them directly to the global economy. The transnational networks that the migrants are involved in and contribute to are to various degrees involved in the local labour market. Transnational networks contribute mutually to the benefit of the migrants and to the translocal openness and dynamics of the host society. In this way, we can conclude that international migrants contribute to a *global up-scaling of rural space*. For many local employers, however, this translocal potential still awaits to be discovered. In the future, due to an ageing population structure in general as well as an increasing share of international migration directed to the countryside, it will be crucial for the local labour market to recognise the transnational potential that is generated by international migration processes.

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Chapter 9
Foreigners, Neighbours, Immigrants: Translocal Mobilities in Rural Areas in Spain

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9.1 Introduction: Mobilities and Fixities in a Translocal Rurality

New migratory movements, residential strategies and forms of work organisation are transforming rural areas into translocal landscapes. We cannot understand these rural societies today without analysing the connections between their labour markets and global production processes, international migration flows, the social networks that sustain them and the residential patterns unfolding in an increasingly nomadic society. Different authors have stressed the necessity of addressing not only all of these mobilities (Massey et al., 1998; Castells, 1996; Urry, 2006) but also the immobilities (fixities) upon which all of these flows are based (Adey, 2006; Hannam, Sheller, & Urry, 2006; Bell & Osti, 2010), the global inequalities on which they are established (Marsden, 2009), as well as the social hierarchies and power relationships inherent within them (Cresswell, 2001, 2006).

Included within many of these migratory movements are other potential mobilities – return migrations, family reunifications – and this takes the analysis beyond an individual focus to the analysis of transnational social networks. There may also be "enfolded mobilities" (Williams, 2009, p. 315), which connect different mobilities, as is the case of international labour migrations of individuals coming from the north of Europe to work in services related to residential tourism along the Spanish Mediterranean coast.

Perhaps the presence of foreigners is one of the realities that most clearly express the profound transformation of the nature of contemporary rural life: the foreigner is seen in contrast to the characteristics of familiarity, closeness and the endogenous relationships associated with the traditional life of the country. As Buller (1994, p. 9) pointed out, "foreigners are called on to play an increasingly important role, directly or indirectly, in the evolution of the rural space and world." On the other

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_9,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

hand, the foreign population gives the rural area a translocal character, as it connects in a deep and long lasting way local realities to the realities new settlers come from and to which they remain tied (Waldinger, 2010; Hedberg & Carmo, 2011). The new settlers also illustrate through their deep heterogeneity the production of different mobilities in which the resources mobilised and the opportunities enjoyed by different groups of transmigrants vary: differences in reasons for moving, in speed and rhythm of movement, routes travelled, subjective experiences and difficulties gone through, as pointed out by Cresswell (2009). They also have diverse strategies and different itineraries, trajectories, ties and levels of rootedness or unrootedness toward the region where they have settled.

The complex nature of international migration to rural areas means that its impact is not lineal but rather selective and ambiguous. On the one hand, places (local cultures and economies, demographic and productive structures, etc.) do not serve merely as support but rather as real active elements (Hedberg & Carmo, 2011). Its effects combine with other long existing processes, such as the Fordist exodus from the country to the city that had a dramatic impact on the demographic structures of rural communities, or agrarian industrialisation that brought about the decline of the logic of family labour in agriculture. On the other hand, these processes raise new questions for rural research related to the meaning of post-productive rurality or regarding the traditional profiles of counterurbanisation (Halfacree, 2008). Finally, these migratory strategies present distinct elements not only in contrast to the Fordist migrations of the fifties, sixties and seventies in Europe but also in relation to the theoretical models of just a decade ago.

For example, recent research identified a specific pattern of migration in the south of Europe related to late capitalist and industrial development, characterised by the importance of agriculture and tourism, speculative urban development and an informal economy based on family networks (King, 2000; Katseli, 2004). In this migratory process, rural destinations, as well as the sectors and activities related to rural economies, acquire an important role alongside those of metropolitan and industrial destinations (Fonseca, 2008; Kasimis, 2008; Kasimis, Papadoulos, & Pappas, 2010; Labriandis & Sykas, 2009; Oliva, 2010). While some defining characteristics of this pattern have been maintained – such as the weight of undocumented migration, the informal economy as the target activity, or its coexistence with high rates of local unemployment – other characteristics have tended to fade in importance due to the new weight acquired by female migration or the diversification of the economic activities in which migrant labour is employed – services, manufacturing, etc.

In the following sections, we have carried out an initial exploration of the profile and the residential and occupational trajectories of foreign residents in Spanish rural areas. In order to understand the strategies that seem to guide their migratory plans, and the impact of their presence in rural localities, we have paid extra attention to the interrelations between geographical and occupational and social mobility. The data support the findings of previous studies in that they show the subsidiary role of agriculture and rural areas over the employment and residential strategies of immigrants. In addition to local employment opportunities, family migration patterns also seem to play an important role in these new residents settling in rural areas. In the

conclusion, the consequences of our findings are discussed in relation to the new translocal rurality.

Our research is based on the National Immigrant Survey (ENI) conducted in 2007. This survey of all foreign residents over 15 years of age is the first to offer representative information at the national level on immigrants' residential and occupational trajectories. This is undoubtedly the best source at the moment for analysing the impact of immigration on Spanish society. The primary decision that was made in order to carry out our analysis of the foreign population in rural areas was to only look at data for those persons who have resided in Spain for at least 3 years. Regarding the variable "size of habitat", we were unable to obtain information for approximately 22% of the cases; however, given the volume and distinct contrasts carried out, this is not expected to produce important biases in the information analysed here.

9.2 The Internationalisation of Spanish Rurality

The Spanish case is especially useful for the analysis of new migratory patterns (Arango, 2000) as well as the complex interrelationship between the different types of mobility that converge in rural areas. It illustrates the profound impact of these processes in the configuration of new rural landscapes that have not yet been adequately theorised. Whether the newcomers eventually take root in these areas or just settle there for a short time (depending on the cycles of the local labour market or the life and family chances) the continuous movements that today characterise rural areas set a different, translocal reality.

Between 1998 and 2008, the foreign resident population in Spain grew from 640,000 (1.6% of the population) to well over 5 million (11.4%). Although the majority have settled in urban areas, the impact has also been significant in rural areas, where this population has grown from 5.8 to 9.3% of the rural population in the same period.

The presence of foreign residents in rural Spain responds to different migratory processes and different types of mobility with diverse social and territorial impacts. On the one hand, there is the retirement migration of those from the centre and the north of Europe, who come to the Mediterranean coast and the islands, which are agreeable locations for who that are no longer economically active. This migration wave began coming in the mid-1980s (King, Warnes, & William, 2000; Rodriguez, Fernández-Mayoralas, & Rojo, 2004; O'Reilly, 2000) to destinations in particular counties and has grown in importance as the large European "baby boom" cohorts have entered retirement age. In addition, those who have studied this phenomenon have verified more rural and individualised residential orientations (King et al., 2000; Casado, Kaiser, & Warnes, 2004; Gustafson, 2008) and others that we might refer to as a timid "transnational neoruralism", nourished by young people looking for employment in the services and activities required by the former group (O'Reilly, 2007).

Another migratory movement to rural areas has been the return of the descendants of older generations of Spanish emigrants to other European countries (France,

Switzerland, Germany), who are returning to their places of origin, or from Latin America (Argentina, Venezuela, Colombia, Uruguay or Cuba), where the economic crisis brings children and even grandchildren of those emigrants back to places where there are still family ties. This type of migration has a more pronounced impact in areas that were more affected by emigration in the past, such as certain rural areas in Galicia.

But most of the international movement toward rural areas is fed by the immigration of labour and is especially linked to areas of industrial agriculture and the development of tourism and construction and fed by groups coming from the Maghreb (Moroccans, Algerians, etc.), eastern Europe (Romanians, Bulgarians, etc.), and Latin America (Ecuadorians, Colombians, Argentineans, etc.) (Hoggart & Mendoza, 1999; Mendoza, 2003; Pedreño, 2005; Morén-Alegret, 2008; Camarero et al., 2009; Oliva, 2010).

This labour migration clearly responds to the pattern that Enrico Pugliese (1993) called post-industrial migration. The post-industrial migrations of the nineteen-eighties and nineties and the first decade of the 21st century have occurred in the context of a deep crisis in the restructuring of labour relations, the weakening of the welfare state and an increasingly precarious and informal labour market. Unlike migration flows linked to the industrial growth of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s in Europe, migrations today bring together many more nationalities, are linked to much more varied occupational sectors and turn the countries of southern Europe into net receptors of migrants.

Foreign immigrant labour represents a group with high spatial and sectorial mobility. It constitutes a "new proletariat" endowed with enormous flexibility, which has come to occupy economic sectors with a structural demand for cheap, flexible labour. It is a group that is willing to accept difficult work and that is not very demanding in terms of stability and the formal recognition of its rights as workers (Pedreño & Riquelme, 2006). In Spain, the spectacular growth of these migratory flows corresponds to the confluence of a period of intense economic growth with the entry into the workforce of reduced autochthonous cohorts with high levels of education and greater job expectations (Cachón, 2002). For the Spanish population, difficult, unstable and poorly paid occupations have become increasingly unacceptable. What has occurred overall nationally is also true in the rural areas. Economic activity in rural areas in Spain has been sustained to a great extent by the inflow of foreign labour, the autochthonous supply of labour having run out in many cases (jobs within the family, amongst the youth and women) in sectors like agriculture, construction, manufacturing, hotel and catering services, retail or domestic work and care-giving (Pedreño & Riquelme, 2006).

Labour migration has played a leading role in the major changes that have occurred in the Spanish social structure and in rural areas. Those who participate in these changes are called "immigrants", a category that does not include other foreign residents. This is a category of social order, a category that is at once unifying and differentiating. As Balibar and Wallerstein have pointed out, "immigrant is a catch-all category, combining ethnic and class criteria, into which foreigners are dumped indiscriminately, though not all foreigners and not only foreigners" (Balibar

& Wallerstein, 1991), so that migrants involved in migration retirement or a return to Spain or foreigners with high employment or professional qualifications are not considered "immigrants". In contrast, labour migration flows imply, for those who are involved, being labelled as immigrants, a label which is maintained even after having obtained Spanish nationality and which is often transmitted to their children who were born in Spain.

Balibar and Wallerstein (1991) pointed out that the categories "immigration" and "immigrant" acted as the functional substitute for "race" in the modus operandi of racist discourse after the processes of decolonisation and the migration flows to northern and central Europe after the Second World War. Before the crisis of the seventies, immigration appeared above all as a class phenomenon: immigrants appeared as foreign workers; after the crisis, they began to be foreigners, (vaguely defined in ethnic/cultural terms) workers or not (Cachón, 2006).

We therefore find ourselves with an initial differentiation between distinct mobilities which justify, in our subsequent analysis, the differentiation between foreign residents from western Europe (EU 15) – who in general are not regarded by public opinion as immigrants – and those from Latin America, the Maghreb and eastern Europe, the fundamental protagonists of the labour migrations.

Keeping in mind this basic distinction, we can see how the data (Table 9.1) reveal great diversity in terms of place of origin and the situation of foreigners residing in rural areas, even though three nationalities (Moroccans, Ecuadorians, and Romanians) make up one-third of the total (34%). While in Spain overall, Moroccans comprise the largest and most longstanding group, in rural areas Romanians are the largest group (comprising one out of every six foreigners). What we have called retirement migrations are concentrated amongst fewer nationalities, especially British (6.5%), French (6.1%) and Germans (4.2%).

The geographic distribution of foreign residents in rural areas (Fig. 9.1) shows that the eastern and Mediterranean coasts continue to be strong poles of attraction for immigrant labour. But the expansion of metropolitan areas, the agro-industrial

Table 9.1 The 10 principal nationalities in rural areas

Country of birth	(%)
Romania	15.65
Morocco	12.74
United Kingdom	6.49
France	6.14
Ecuador	5.96
Bulgaria	4.92
Argentina	4.82
Colombia	4.32
Portugal	4.29
Germany	4.17

Weight (%) of different nationalities over total number of foreigners in rural areas. Arrivals before 2005
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

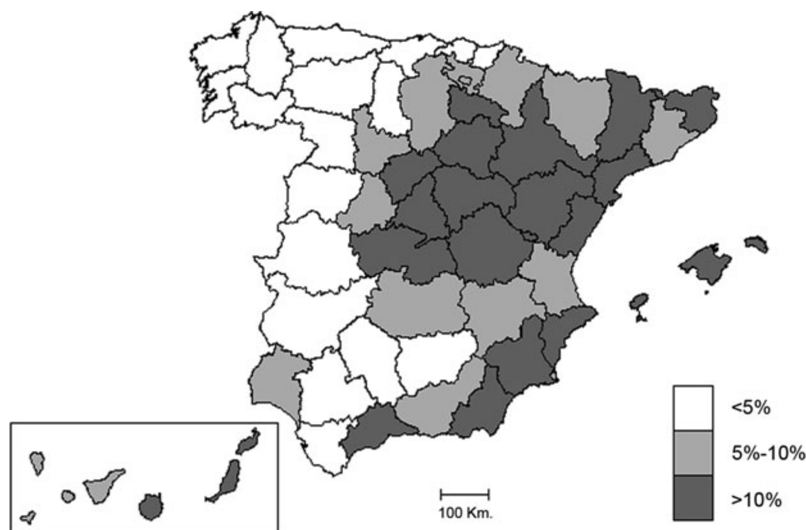

Fig. 9.1 Weight of resident immigrant population in rural areas 2008
Source: Municipal Register (2008). INE. Expanded on by the authors

complexes in certain areas of the country as well as local manufacturing throughout rural zones have spread the migration phenomenon to a large part of the interior, the eastern peninsula and the archipelagos.

On the new map of rural immigration, we can detect other types of phenomena. As a result of programmes to fight depopulation, rural areas that seem to have been fated to depopulation are now welcoming new groups of foreign residents, in small numbers but with a significant impact locally. Many politicians in small towns have viewed the inflows of immigrants as the last opportunity to avoid their town's disappearance. The immigrants, at least those most accepted because of their "cultural proximity", have revitalised these areas demographically. The question is whether rural immigration is going to be capable of correcting the deep demographic imbalances affecting many rural areas.

9.3 The Demographic Impact of International Immigration in Rural Areas

Here we will examine the demographic impact international migration flows have had on the rural areas of Spain.

A linear interpretation would lead one to assume that immigrants fill the gaps that demographic imbalances have produced in rural population structures. The data, however, do not support this hypothesis as it is too simple, not taking into account the dynamics of rural areas themselves, or the role of immigrant populations in constructing their own residential and occupational trajectories.

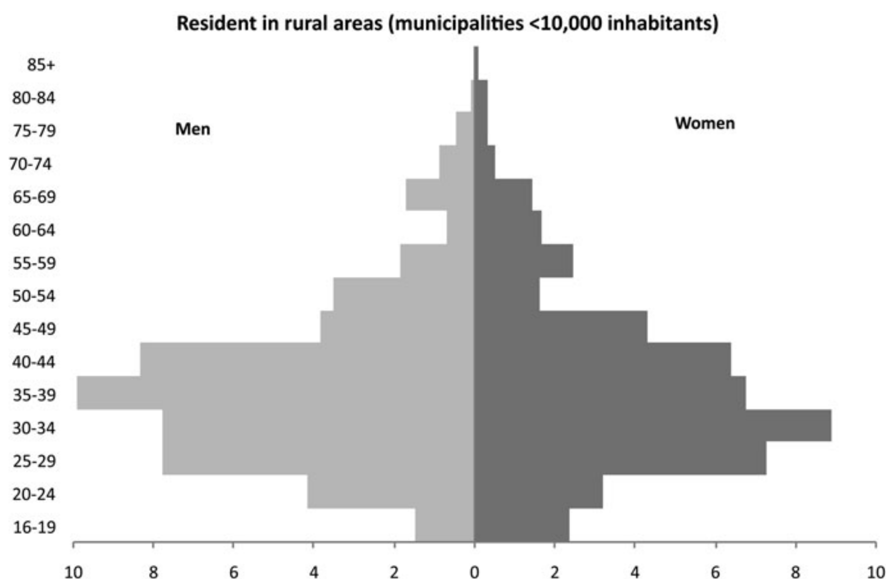

Fig. 9.2 Immigrant population structures. Arrivals before 2005
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

As in neighbouring countries, Spain's rural population exhibits deep demographic imbalances: fundamentally an aged and masculinised population. If we look at the demographic structure of foreign residents in rural areas, we see that it is very concentrated generationally and very unbalanced by sex, with the same masculinisation that has affected Spanish rural areas for decades (Fig. 9.2). In this sense, immigration could be seen to have exacerbated this gender imbalance.

If we distinguish foreigners who come from western Europe (EU 15) from the rest, we find very different circumstances, as corresponds to populations with different socio-economic levels and different mobilities.

Those from the European Union 15 (see Fig. 9.3) are, first of all, older (here emigration related to retirement and return predominates) and in general predominantly male, although this is not the case for all age groups (especially amongst intermediate ages). Place of residence for those from the European Union 15 is strongly influenced by family relations, as more than 40% are married to or have partners who are Spanish (Table 9.2). This could explain the feminisation at younger ages. This is also an emigration whose settlement in rural areas has to do with the residential preferences typical of professional groups and has no connection to local labour markets.

Regarding foreigners not from the EU 15, the demographic structure is more concentrated in intermediate age groups, amongst the economically active, and is notably masculinised but with somewhat more of a balance between the sexes for those in their thirties (Fig. 9.4). In this sense, labour migration has come to

Fig. 9.3 Rural immigrant population structure from EU-15. Arrivals before 2005, Residents in municipalities <10,000 inhabitants
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

Table 9.2 Forms of co-existence amongst couples in resident immigrant population in rural areas

			Non-EU 15		EU15	
			Men	Women	Men	Women
Not married			21.6	21.7	21.6	16.0
Married or living with partner	Spouse lives in Spain but in other housing		1.0	1.1	0.0	1.0
	Living with partner in same home	Intranational	56.6	45.9	29.9	23.9
		Transnational	3.6	4.1	5.4	9.8
		Mixed	10.5	25.8	41.9	48.6
	Spouse resides in other country		6.8	1.4	1.2	0.7
Total			100%	100%	100%	100%

Arrivals before 2005, residents in municipalities: <10,000 inhabitants; intra-national: both spouses/partners same nationality; transnational: spouses/partners of different nationalities; mixed: one spouse/partner is Spanish
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

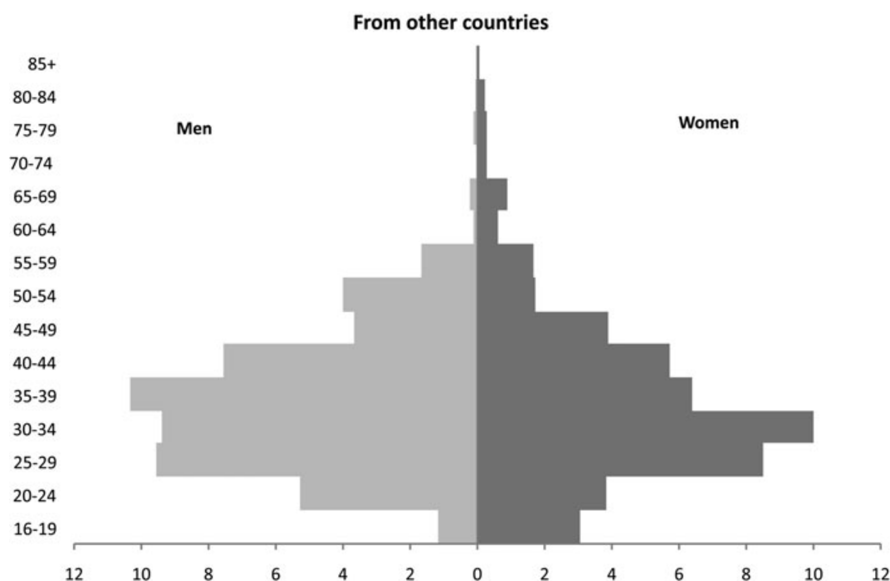

Fig. 9.4 Rural immigrant population structure from other countries. Arrivals before 2005, Residents in municipalities <10,000 inhabitants
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

strengthen the Spanish local population of intermediate ages, although, as was previously pointed out, it has exacerbated the gender imbalance.

Today there is a tendency towards increasing feminisation in migratory patterns. This is a recent process that has to do with the processes of migratory selection in the countries of origin as well as with the demand for labour in occupations that have traditionally been for women in the country of destination – primarily domestic work and care-giving, but also in hotels, retail and food services. The case of Latin American women in Spain is a good example of this phenomenon. The entry of Spanish women into the labour market, the weakness of public social services to support families and the ageing of the population have reinforced the role of these "global care chains", as Hochschild (2000) labelled them, in international migratory movements. In spite of this, however, the weight of the very male-dominated Moroccan immigration to Spanish rural areas has maintained the seeming masculinisation in the overall data.

The data in Table 9.2 allow us to link migration flows to some of the effects of rural masculinisation. For example, one-fourth of foreign women who do not come from the EU 15 and who reside in rural areas are married to Spanish men. Thus, marriage appears to be an important factor in settlement, which in turn is linked to the high proportion of unmarried men in the autochthonous population.

In brief, the consequences of immigration on the rural demographic structure are contradictory. On the one hand, the arrival of new residents deepens some of the traditional imbalances, such as the masculinisation of rural areas. Nevertheless, there

are also trends toward the revitalisation of the rural population as the immigrant population is at reproductive ages, the impact of which could be vital in a demographic sense. Although it is quite complex technically to evaluate this impact, the data show that a higher percentage of immigrants in rural areas live with their children (56%) than those who live in urban areas (50%).

9.4 Labour Migrations and Rural Labour Markets

Immigrant workers settling in rural areas are integrated into a labour market that is concentrated in a limited range of activities and occupations, which in turn are also highly differentiated by sex. One out of every three men is employed in construction, while women are employed in retail work, hotel and catering services and domestic services (Table 9.3).

In general terms, the data show that agricultural activity is not especially important for foreigners, nor do significant differences appear with respect to the autochthonous population. The 2007 Survey of the Active Population (EPA) revealed that 5.6% of Spanish men and 3% of Spanish women were employed in agricultural occupations, figures that are not very different from those for the foreign population (7.3% for men and 2.5% for women).

Employment in agriculture is closely linked to certain nationalities: Moroccans, Ecuadorians and Romanians make up more than 50% of the foreigners working in agriculture. Foreign workers make up 14.4% of all workers in this sector. In other

Table 9.3 Foreign population residingin rural areas (<10,000 inhabitants) – occupation by industry

	Total foreign born population		Non-EU15		EU 15	
Industry	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Agriculture	12.0	4.0	13.8	4.2	5.0	3.3
Manufacturing	20.5	12.6	21.7	12.4	15.7	13.2
Construction	32.6	0.1	35.3	0.2	21.6	0.0
Retail	9.0	17.1	9.3	17.1	8.1	17.2
Hotel/catering	4.7	18.4	3.8	19.3	8.6	14.8
Transport, mining, energy and fishing	8.7	3.3	7.3	2.3	14.4	6.9
Business services	5.8	12.6	3.5	11.9	14.9	15.2
Administration and education	2.7	4.9	1.4	3.1	7.8	11.4
Personal services	3.2	10.8	3.1	10.0	3.9	13.9
Household employment	0.7	16.2	0.8	19.5	0.0	4.0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Arrivals before 2005

Source: ENI (2007). Expanded on by the authors

words, one out of every six agricultural workers in Spain is a foreigner. Three-quarters of foreign workers employed in agriculture are unskilled workers. However, for these immigrant groups, agriculture is not their main source of employment. For Ecuadorians and Romanians, agriculture accounts for only 7% of their employment, while it is higher for Moroccans, reaching 15%. Only those from Gambia, which represents a very small group numerically, have a rate close to 30%.

As paradoxical as it may seem, agriculture, of all the sectors, ends up being the one with the least local and least settled labour force. Only one-fourth of the foreigners working in agriculture reside in rural municipalities. If we keep in mind the fundamental role of spatial mobility in the employment strategies of immigrants, we can easily understand that the seasonal nature of agricultural work accentuates this mobility. It is possible to work in the country but to take advantage of the housing rental possibilities offered in cities; it is possible to be in a state of permanent itinerancy between the different agricultural harvests throughout Spain (Viruela, 2010), or to spend periods of time in one's home country and return to Spain for the months when there is work, as is the case of workers from the Maghreb.

Mobility between place of residence and place of employment also takes place in the opposite direction; foreign workers who reside in small towns commute daily to work in urban labour markets (something that is very common in the suburbs of large cities). The case of construction work is perhaps the clearest example. Crews of construction workers travel great distances from rural zones to urban centres, which are more dynamic in terms of real estate development, or to other rural areas in which the increase in second residences has contributed to revitalising construction. Extra-local labour markets have also acquired great importance in the case of women, especially in the domestic service and business services sectors.

The importance of temporary contracts in the industries in which foreign workers are concentrated reveals that their main occupations are precisely those in which employment is the most precarious. Subordinate integration into the labour market is one of the social foundations of international labour migration. Migration supplies an extremely flexible workforce for the jobs that are least attractive to nationals. For example, in the case of foreign males residing in rural areas, 56% of those working in agriculture have temporary contracts, 48% of those in construction, 37% of those in manufacturing, and 28% of those in retail. In the case of women, 47% of those working in agriculture hold temporary contracts, 31% of those in manufacturing, 30% of those in retail and hotel/catering services, and approximately 34% of those working in domestic service and personal services. The phenomenon of labour migrations results in what Pedreño called the ethno-fragmentation of the labour market (Pedreño, 2005). The segmentation of labour markets produces and thus sanctions social differentiation and the transmission of inequalities.

Thus, if we look at Table 9.3, which shows the occupational structure of foreigners coming from the EU 15 countries – a group that has a higher percentage of inactivity – we can see that this group is overrepresented in economic sectors less given to job insecurity (administration and education, business services, transport, mining and energy, etc.).

9.5 Exploring the Trajectories of International Migrants: Residential Mobility, Occupational Mobility and Family Migration Patterns

Fundamental to the employment strategies of immigrants is spatial mobility (Pedreño & Riquelme, 2006). Mobility refers, first of all, to the journey from the country of origin and thus the creation of a translocal social space. Second, it refers to the residential and occupational mobility involved in migration, which ranges from situations of administrative irregularity and employment in difficult and grossly underpaid jobs in rural or peripheral areas to situations of legality, in higher paid jobs in urban environments with more dynamic labour markets.

A basic question is the role rural areas play in the strategies and life plans of migrants. Up to what point is the countryside only a "way station", or can it become, under certain conditions and for certain groups, a destination with lasting roots? We believe that this question can be addressed by identifying patterns of residential and occupational mobility and different family migration patterns amongst the different national groups.

9.5.1 Residential Mobility

All of the research carried out up until now shows high residential mobility amongst foreigners. The research based on Residential Variations Statistics shows that the internal migratory patterns of foreigners differ in intensity and spatial structure from those of the native Spanish (Recaño, 2006). Ten years ago, foreigners changed their place of residence approximately 40,000 times, 4.2% of the total changes of residency, and in 2007 they moved more than half a million times, 30% of the total (Viruela, 2010). Internal movement is fundamentally related to labour and housing markets (Pomares, García, & Asensio, 2006), and this continuously alters the distribution of the foreign resident population in Spain (García, 2005).

A specific analysis of urban rural mobility reveals that immigrants' first place of residence is urban: small towns account for only 1 out of every 10 recent arrivals (Table 9.4). Those from the EU 15 settle in rural areas a little more often than others, but in both cases migration is primarily to urban areas. However, with increasing length of residence, those from the EU 15 increase their presence in rural areas. In contrast, although the presence of immigrants from other countries in urban areas has also declined, this does not mean they are settling in rural areas; rather, intermediate rural and urban environments, such as small cities, peri-metropolitan municipalities and county seats, are becoming more important.

If we analyse the movements of immigrants more closely, we see that there are few changes of residency from rural to urban areas and vice versa (Table 9.5). In the case of foreigners from the EU 15, the trend is toward ruralisation (5.5% have gone from initially living in a village to living in a city while 10% have moved in the opposite direction). However, for the rest of the foreign population, even though the

Table 9.4 Size of municipalities of arrival and final settlement of immigrants

	Municipality upon arrival			Municipality of final settlement		
Size	Total	Non-EU 15	EU 15	Total	Non-EU 15	EU 15
<10,000	11.7	11.1	14.2	13.5	12.3	18.7
10,001–20,000	9.1	7.9	14.4	10.8	9.7	16.1
20,001–50,000	14.0	13.1	17.9	18.0	16.9	23.0
>50,000	65.3	67.9	53.6	57.7	61.2	42.3
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Arrivals before 2005
Source: ENI (2007). Expanded on by the authors

Table 9.5 Relationship between place of arrival and current place of residence

	Total	Non-EU 15	EU 15
Have always resided in rural municipalities	6.7	6.3	8.6
Municipality of arrival urban; current municipality rural	6.8	6.0	10.0
Municipality of arrival rural; current municipality urban	4.9	4.8	5.5
Have always resided in urban municipalities	81.6	82.9	75.8
Total	100%	100%	100%

Arrivals before 2005
Source: ENI (2007). Expanded on by the authors

trend is along the same lines, the difference between the two movements is hardly noticeable and is probably related more to the dynamic of urban sprawl in which the urban population moves to the peripheries than to choices related to rural labour markets. This process can be better understood by analysing occupation trajectories.

9.5.2 Occupational Mobility

Occupational trajectories show that agriculture has considerable importance in the initial employment in Spain for foreign-born men (approximately one-third have their first job in agriculture) while a substantial proportion of women begin working in domestic service (Table 9.6).

Different studies have shown that for immigrants, the ability to get a job in construction in the case of men or in the service sector in the case of women is a step forward in their migratory project, allowing them to leave work in agriculture, which is considered more unrewarding, unstable, poorly paid and poorly regarded (Muñoz, 2005; Pedone, 2005, 2006).

In fact, the occupational structure of immigrants has changed in the last 6 years, coinciding with the settlement of new rural residents (Table 9.7). While in 2001, agricultural activity was the main source of employment for immigrant men in rural

Table 9.6 Immigrants residing in rural areas according to initial employment held in Spain

	Men	Women
Agriculture	33.2	8.6
Manufacturing	13.5	10.6
Construction	24.2	1.1
Retail	7.3	10.7
Hotel/catering	6.2	19.7
Transport, mining, energy and fishing	6.0	3.8
Business services	4.2	8.9
Administration and education	2.8	3.7
Personal services	2.4	7.0
Domestic services	0.4	25.9
Total	100%	100%

Arrivals before 2005
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

Table 9.7 Variations in immigrant occupational structure (2001–2007)

	Men			Women		
Occupation	2001	2007	Difference	2001	2007	Difference
Agriculture	26.6	12.0	–14.6	10.9	4.0	–6.9
Manufacturing	17.3	20.5	3.2	12.5	12.6	0.1
Construction	24.9	32.6	7.7	3.0	0.1	–2.9
Retail	9.2	9.0	–0.2	12.1	17.1	5.0
Hotel/catering	7.1	4.7	–2.4	20.1	18.4	–1.7
Transport, mining, energy and fishing	5.1	8.7	3.6	3.1	3.3	0.2
Business services	3.6	5.8	2.2	6.8	12.6	5.8
Administration and education	2.8	2.7	–0.1	6.6	4.9	–1.7
Personal services	2.7	3.2	0.5	8.3	10.8	2.5
Domestic services	0.8	0.7	–0.1	16.5	16.2	–0.3
Total	100%	100%		100%	100%	

Source: 2001; Data: Population Census (2001). INE (2007) Data: ENI (2007). Expanded on by the authors

areas, it is now construction. And there has also been a significant shift of women away from employment in agriculture to jobs in the retail sector and in business services.

Abandoning employment in agriculture seems, therefore, to be a step forward in the migratory trajectory. The capacity to advance in this upwardly mobile direction depends in part on what has been referred to as a process of ethnic stratification of the labour market (Pedreño, 2005). This process refers to the way in which employers appeal to cultural differences to legitimise classifying the work aptitudes and qualifications of immigrants based on their nationality. In the case of agriculture,

it has been shown that an ethnic hierarchy exists in which eastern European workers are the most highly regarded, Moroccans are the lowest on the totem pole, and Latin Americans are somewhere in between. North Africans are relegated to the hardest jobs with the least responsibility (Viruela, 2002). This process is the same in other sectors such as construction, where employers attribute higher qualifications to eastern European workers in comparison to north Africans (Colectivo IOE, 1998). In the area of domestic work, a series of qualities defined in terms of ethnicity are attributed to women; for example, it is said that eastern European women are "beautiful and intelligent"; Latin American women are "sweet and affectionate", and Muslim women are "strange and submissive" (Pedreño & Riquelme, 2006).

The ethnic stratification of the labour market reveals the inequalities operating in regard to gaining access to employment networks, even in the context of labour migrations. It tells us something about the social production of different mobilities. For example, with respect to employment in agriculture, it is generally the most recent arrivals who occupy those jobs. Perhaps the only exception would be Moroccans, who occupy the lowest position in the ethnic stratification of labour markets and for whom the nearness of their country of origin makes agricultural work a seasonal activity and supplementary to others that they do in their home country, or perhaps a temporary work strategy that is part of their plan of taking advantage of their family residence in Morocco.

9.6 Family Migration Patterns

The data show that immigrants over time participate in the same process of disengagement from agriculture experienced by the Spanish population and that they find greater opportunities in urban and peri-urban areas for their plans for economic progress (finding supplementary employment, reducing downtime between seasonal jobs, improving access to transport for moving around the country).

The presence and potential for settlement of new foreign residents depends on local employment opportunities or opportunities – via commuting – to connect to the most dynamic urban labour markets. But settling in rural areas also seems to be related to the opportunity for family consolidation.

As shown in Table 9.8, there is a significant difference in family structure amongst the foreign population according to place of residence. Rural foreigners more often live in families; they are more often married or living with their partners than urban foreigners. This suggests that their presence is linked to family settlement. Settlement occurs when family coexistence can be consolidated.

This fact leads us to introduce family migration patterns into our analysis. The very different demographic structures presented by immigrants, according to their nationality, has made it possible to identify different family migration patterns (Camarero & García, 2004; Camarero, 2010), which appear to be connected to occupation and residency patterns and which potentially condition their tendency to settle in rural areas.

Table 9.8 Forms of co-existence amongst the foreign-born population by size of habitat

	<10,000	10,001–20,000	20,001–50,000	>50,000
Not married	16.70	26.53	24.27	26.22
Married and living with spouse or partner	75.02	63.50	64.83	64.49
Married, spouse living in other country	8.28	9.96	10.90	9.29
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Arrivals before 2005
Source: ENI (2007). INE. Expanded on by the authors

The comparison of the demographic structures of Moroccan and Dominican immigrants, for example, reveals very different migration strategies (Camarero & García, 2004). The Moroccan population is represented by a marked masculinisation. They are predominantly single young men between 25 and 35 years of age. There are many more married men than married women, which indicates that the families of these men continue to reside in Morocco; thus, these are translocal transnational families. Family reunification is low in relative terms. This structure tells us that there is a seasonal pattern of migration: for many Moroccans, Spain is a transitory destination or at least not a place where one settles down; rather, it is a place that you leave after a few years. This is consistent with employment being primarily in agriculture and construction, which is seasonal and under the most precarious of situations, and more frequently in rural and intermediate areas than in large metropolitan areas.

In contrast, Dominican immigration is characterised by a pronounced feminisation; these are women with children. During the initial years, their children remain in the Dominican Republic, creating translocal families in this case as well. In the majority of the cases, these female heads of households are employed in domestic work. These are entirely feminine chains in which the women emigrate first and later bring their children and only in some cases their partners. In other cases, the partner never comes, and what was already a de facto single-parent family in the country of origin is consolidated in Spain, or blended families are formed, often with Spanish men. In contrast to both of these patterns, migrants from eastern Europe, such as Bulgarians or Romanians, present migration patterns that are much more family-oriented. They migrate with the whole family at the same time (Camarero, 2010).

The potential capacity to consolidate families living together in rural areas therefore varies amongst the different immigrant groups.

These different family migration patterns show us that there is a dual selection process, first in the place of origin and then in the place of destination: some must go and others must stay. The family appears as a powerful institution regulating individual mobility as well as an institution of solidarity and translocal cohesiveness through space and time, but one whose relationships also appear to be shaken by the very experience of mobility (Camarero, 2010).

9.7 Conclusion

The presence of immigrants in the countryside is another demonstration of the definitively translocal nature of rural areas. They are one element in the complex social landscape of globalised and post-modern rurality, one more element that has come to stay. Foreigners have been seen as a solution to the problems of depopulation and the loss of the economically active population in rural areas. They have also been viewed as a threat because of the social heterogeneity they introduce into a space that is seen as being socially and culturally homogeneous. In any case, the study of immigrants in rural areas offers us the opportunity to observe the social production of different mobilities: return or retirement migrations versus labour migrations, new neighbours versus "immigrants", etc. Labour migration in rural environments cannot be separated from processes of ethnic fragmentation of the labour market, which define the status of immigrants through their subordinate position in the labour market, nor can it be separated from the ethnic stratification within the immigrant population, which separates and places the different nationalities in a hierarchy based on supposed ethnic differences or affinities.

The consequences of immigration for the demographic structure of rural areas are contradictory. On the one hand, immigrants have come to reinforce the active generations that support rural communities by introducing an element of vitality. On the other hand, on occasion they have reinforced the masculinisation of rural areas, which is one of the most serious threats to their social sustainability. However, the feminisation of migrations can increase the opportunity for autochthonous men to find partners and therefore strengthen the formation of families.

In general, the data related to the residential and occupational trajectories of immigrants point to the fact that agricultural and rural areas are not especially valued destinations for immigrants and that they are seen more as entry points or stations on the way to urban or peri-urban environments. The countryside continues to be a world where diverse fixities (Bell, Lloyd, & Vatovec, 2010) and inflexibilities (local cultures, local labour markets, habitat structure or environmental conditions, etc.) converge, as the capacity for movement and connection to employment networks is reduced and dependencies connected to family responsibilities are increased. The presence of international migrants in rural areas cannot be considered apart from the high social and economic value given to urban settlements in the receiving country. Their rural-urban mobility strategies express, in a stronger way even than those of the autochthonous people, the close interdependence between rural and urban areas in our mobile societies.

Whether new residents settle in rural areas is going to depend, as with the autochthonous population, on the existence of employment opportunities at the local level or the possibility of being connected to a more dynamic urban labour market via commuting. But it also has to do in an important way with the opportunities for the consolidation of the family in rural villages. In this sense, the different family migration patterns of immigrants from different countries have an impact on settlement in rural areas. Those patterns that favour family reunification or the formation of families with a Spanish partner have an added advantage. This is another

example of the way international migrants "bring with them" the places where they come from, and the definitive translocal nature of rural areas.

The results of our analysis reveal a liquid rurality, a rurality in motion and in endless transformation. All of these processes we have analysed demonstrate a need for more research as well as imagination in the elaboration of policies for rural development that take these new migratory flows into consideration.

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Chapter 10
Transnational Immigration in Rural Greece: Analysing the Different Mobilities of Albanian Immigrants

Apostolos G. Papadopoulos

10.1 Introduction

Rural communities cannot be treated as stable, static and homogeneous places, as early rural theories suggested. On the contrary, rural communities are dynamic and contingent entities and are constantly evolving in view of social and economic restructuring (Woods, 2011, p. 178). The increased mobility of rural society and economy always challenges the constitution of rural communities. Three types of mobility are related to the transformation of rural communities. Firstly, the out-migration of people from rural communities, leading to the depopulation of rural areas, which then challenges their viability and social cohesion. Secondly, the in-migration of people to rural communities, which includes two aspects. One has to do with counterurbanisation and the "return to the countryside" as an inclination of urban populations in developed countries (Halfacree & Boyle, 1998; Mitchell, 2004; Halfacree, 2009a, 2009b). The other aspect refers to the inflow of international immigrants to rural communities which is a recent phenomenon affecting the rural areas of Europe (Jentch, 2007). Thirdly, the members of rural communities become increasingly more mobile; that is, they tend to move for work, leisure and/or tourism or they are part-time residents of rural communities and thereby are in between places.

This chapter aims to depict the spiral evolution of immigrants' presence in rural Greece. More particularly, the different mobilities of immigrants will be analysed in order to depict both their social integration prospects and their transnationalism in their host rural society. The main focus will be on Albanians, who represent the majority of the immigrant population in the country.

The notion of mobility surmounts the dichotomy of urban/rural since the rural is at least as mobile as the urban. Moreover, many rural places have witnessed significant turbulence due to changes in housing and land markets, local economies and

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_10,
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cultures, service and retail provisions and rural policies. The rural becomes an arena of cross-cutting mobilities and gradually many rural places have been stripped of their demarcating characteristics (Bell & Osti, 2010).

There is currently a dramatic reconstitution of rural populations and the formation of new rural socioeconomic and cultural geographies (Smith, 2007). Rural population change is much more complicated than depicting a uni-directional movement. More particularly, it includes: movements into, out of, within and through rural places; journeys of a few metres and journeys of many hundreds of kilometres; linear flows between particular locations and more complex spatial patterns of movement; stops of a few hours, days or weeks as well as many decades; journeys of necessity and choice; economic and lifestyle movements; hyper and im-mobilities; conflicts and complementarities; and uneven power relations and processes of marginalisation (Milbourne, 2007).

Woods (2007) refers to the "global countryside", which implies the existence of global interconnectivity and interdependency of rural places. Globalisation remakes rural places not through a politics of domination and subordination, but through everyday micropolitics of negotiation and hybridisation (Massey, 2005). Rural places are affected by the "globalization of mobility", which does not refer to the creation of new structures but rather to the multiplication, intensification and stretching of existing networks and processes (Woods, 2007). Migrants frequently come from rural places in their countries of origin and they provide labour for rural places in host countries due to the social and economic restructuring in the latter. Rural communities become "spaces where people of different origins meet, compete and negotiate their place" (Skaptadóttir & Wojtynska, 2008, p. 119). There are complex interrelationships between mobility and place – considering Massey's "place as throwntogetherness of people" (2005) – which leads to the re-territorialisation of rural places and to translocal rural spaces (Bærenholt & Granås, 2008; Gustafson, 2009; Hedberg & Carmo, 2011).

In this context, "mobility is central to the enactment of the rural" (Bell & Osti, 2010, p. 199). The rural-urban axis is not the only dimension for dealing with rural mobilities. Increasingly, international migration emerges as an issue that cross-cuts the rural-urban axis as people move between rural areas of different countries in search of rural employment. Often, it is overlooked that internal migration is connected to international migration. In some cases, internal movement may lead to international migration; in other cases, the sequence may be reversed. Moreover, internal migrants can be considered a different population group compared to international migrants; there are a number of discriminating factors between the two. The choice between internal and international mobility may be subject to the individual/family strategies of potential migrants who consider the opportunities available to them. Taken together, internal and international mobilities are part of a mobility system that operates at different scales and involves a constellation of countries, and all movements should be seen in connection to the others (King, Skeldon, & Vullnetari, 2008).

Zelinsky (1971) was one of the first geographers who saw the interconnections between territorial and social mobility, stressing that one kind of movement cannot

be realistically analysed while the other is ignored. On this basis, he attempted to integrate the different types of mobility – extending from the shortest, routinised iterative movements to the most adventurous intercontinental movements – under an integrated theoretical schema called "the hypothesis of the mobility transition". He constructed his theoretical schema by conflating the different phases of the mobility transition with a number of socio-economic transitions (e.g. demographic, occupational, educational) occurring in modern societies (Zelinsky, 1971, p. 277).

The incorporation of migration and various forms of mobility in the same theoretical frame, as suggested by Zelinsky, anticipated the recent "new mobilities paradigm" by nearly 30 years (King et al., 2008, p. 17). The mobilities paradigm does not simply assert the novelty of mobility in the modern world, but rather it seeks to institutionalise "a broader theoretical project aimed at going beyond the imagery of 'terrains' as spatially fixed geographical containers for social processes, and calling into question scalar logics such as local/global as descriptors of regional extent" (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 209). The mobilities paradigm emphasises that all places are part of networks of connections and cannot be considered as isolated spaces. Moreover, it is important to mention that the mobilities are related to the "de-territorialisation" processes associated with "liquid modernity" (Urry, 2000a, 2000b) and consequently to the "re-territorialisation" of social activities. There is a complex relationality of places and people who are connected through performances. Mobilities are intermingled with the power geometries of everyday life. Thus, there are places and technologies that enhance the mobility of certain group of people and places that heighten the immobility of others. Mobility is a type of resource that is not equally distributed amongst people.[1] The movement between places can be a source of status and power; where movement is coerced, it may generate deprivation and difficulties (Sheller & Urry, 2006, pp. 213–214). For a number of social groups, the lack of mobility is the real problem, while they seek to enhance their social capital through access to greater mobility. Mobility is instrumental for holding social networks together, while physical travel facilitates face-to-face co-present conversations in order to make links and social connections endure over time (Urry, 2002).

Migration studies are central to the new mobilities paradigm in the sense that the movement of migrants immediately brings to attention the immobility, fixity and stability of non-migrants to specific places (Hannam, Sheller, & Urry, 2006). Much of the social and political discourse on migration that follows the main assumptions of the nation-state sees migration – not to mention the nomadic lifestyle – as a deviation from the normal conventions of settled life and migrants as victims of external forces or suspects who may be seeking unfair advantage over the residents and who therefore pose a threat to the prevailing social order. In such a guise, migration is considered a problem to be tackled and mobility as a potential problem/threat

[1] Here we could mention the concept of "motility", which is defined as "the capacity of entities (e.g. goods, information or persons) to be mobile in social and geographical space" (Kaufman, Bergmann, & Joye, 2004, p. 750).

to the receiving societies (Papastergiadis, 2010). One issue central to migration is how the legal frameworks governing migration facilitate some types of mobility while restricting others, such as that of asylum-seekers and economic migrants. The mobility of undocumented immigrants is likewise seen as particularly undesirable by host societies and developed countries: metaphors of uncontrolled flow, "floods", "tides" and/or "waves" of immigrants are deployed as a matter of course in discussions of the phenomenon of migration (Merriman, 2009, pp. 136–137).

Migration studies are crucial to the politics of mobility. It should be noted that "studies of migration, diasporas and transnational citizenship offered trenchant critiques of the bounded and static categories of nation, ethnicity, community, place and state within much social science" (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 10). This has become possible through the analysis of different types of migrant mobility, of the relationships between dwelling and mobility, and of the way transnational and diaspora networks and other connections are mobilised (Blunt, 2007). Migration should be seen as a dynamic and constitutive feature of social life. Migrants themselves can no longer be considered either passive victims who are "pushed and pulled" by external forces, or deviants who threaten social order (Papastergiadis, 2010, p. 354). This is widely acknowledged by migration researchers, who increasingly consider migration in the context of social transformation both in origin and host countries (Castles & Miller, 2009).

The mobile constitution of society in the modern era implies that mobilities increase the complexity in societies and therefore societies are continually reconstituted as hybrids instead of being simply reproduced (Urry, 2000a, 2000b; Cresswell, 2006; Söderstöm & Crot, 2010). The concept of mobilities have been harshly criticised for adopting a "mobility fetishism" and for seeing "flows" everywhere, often in a horizontal manner (Canzler, Kaufmann, & Kesselring, 2008; Kaufman, 2010; Knowles, 2010). However, mobility remains a useful concept due to the fact that it emphasises the changing constellations and configurations of mobile and stable elements in modern societies.

In order to use the notion of mobility, it is important to underline two points. First, mobility cannot be considered solely in terms of movement, but it also includes a system of potentials characterised by intentions, strategies and choices. Second, to be mobile is not only an issue of geographical space, but also, and more importantly, of social space (Kaufman et al., 2004; Kesselring, 2006; Canzler et al., 2008).

Three interconnected dimensions of mobility are specified by Cresswell (2006, 2008), which are combined into different "constellations of mobility" and shape the "politics of mobility". First, mobilities entail movements that are closely associated with place, due to the fact that mobility happens in places and through places. Second, mobilities are full of meaning since they are socially and culturally constructed by different people. In this guise, mobilities can be depicted through discourses, narratives and stories about the fact of movement. Third, mobilities are practised, which means that movements are experienced by people and this experience may be extremely different depending on a number of factors. To sum up, mobilities combine physical movement, meanings and experiences of movement.

10.2 Greece as a New Country for Immigration

By the mid-1980s, the southern European countries, which in the past were a labour reserve for Western Europe and North America, experienced migration transition. Economic growth in combination with low birth rates led to serious labour shortages that facilitated the entry of immigrant labour from northern Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Italy, Spain, Portugal and Greece are considered a distinctive sub-group of EU states that underwent significant changes when compared to the rest of Europe. These countries remain demarcated by the key role played by the underground economy in shaping immigrant inflows, by the preponderance of undocumented migration in overall migration and by low governmental capacity to regulate immigrant flows (Castles & Miller, 2009).

Today, immigrants represent a large proportion of the population of southern Europe. According to recent data (2006), over 9 million foreign-born people live in Europe's southern regions, whose overall population amounts to 124 million. Italy has the lowest proportion of foreigners (4.3 per cent), followed by Portugal (7.2 per cent), Greece (8.8 per cent) and finally Spain, which has the largest share (10.9 per cent) (Münz, 2008).

At the end of the 1980s, the collapse of the central and eastern European regimes together with the strategic geopolitical position of Greece as a gateway to the European Union transformed Greece to a recipient of a massive, uncontrollable, inflow of immigrants. Some factors that may explain this phenomenon are: the country's geographical characteristics (long coastlines and borders that are difficult to control), the rapid economic growth of the country, which has narrowed the socioeconomic distance from the other EU countries, and the large size of the informal, family-centred local economy, which is mainly based on agriculture, tourism and construction. In line with these developments, young Greeks seek improved living standards and education and thereby they look down on low-status and low-income jobs.

The population census of 1981 recorded 180,595 foreigners (1.9 per cent of the total population), one-third of whom were EU nationals. By 1991, the figure was 167,276 foreigners (1.6 per cent of the total population), one-fifth of them being EU nationals. By 2001, there were 797,091 foreigners (7.3 per cent of the total population), with only 6 per cent of them EU nationals. The main immigrant nationalities recorded by the population census of 2001 were: Albanians (57.5 per cent), followed by Bulgarians, Georgians, Romanians, Russians, Ukrainians and Poles (National Statistical Service of Greece, 2001).

Most of the Albanians arrived in the first wave of immigration to Greece (1990–1995), but many also came in the wake of the collapse of the enormous "pyramid schemes" in Albania's banking sector in 1996. The second wave of immigration (1996–2001) involved much greater numbers of migrants from other Balkan states, the former Soviet Union, Pakistan and India. Recent waves (2002–2010) consist of undocumented immigrants from Africa and Asia, who are mainly employed as seasonal labour.

According to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, 518,675 immigrants had valid residence permits by March 2010. The majority of legal immigrants are Albanians,

Table 10.1 Immigrants with valid residence permits in Greece, 2010

Nationality	Males	%	Females	%	Total	%
Albania	222,219	74.8	146,050	66.0	368,269	71.0
Ukraine	3,539	1.2	14,997	6.8	18,536	3.6
Pakistan	14,222	4.8	987	0.4	15,209	2.9
Georgia	4,983	1.7	10,074	4.5	15,057	2.9
Egypt	10,454	3.5	2,761	1.2	13,215	2.5
India	9,569	3.2	2,610	1.2	12,179	2.3
Russia	1,876	0.6	9,259	4.2	11,135	2.1
Moldavia	3,240	1.1	7,358	3.3	10,598	2.0
Philippines	2,175	0.7	6,134	2.8	8,309	1.6
Other countries	24,978	8.4	21,190	9.6	46,168	8.9
Total	297,255	100.0	221,420	100.0	518,675	100.0

Source: Ministry of Internal Affairs (2010)

followed by Ukrainians, Pakistanis and Georgians (Table 10.1). There are gender imbalances between the different immigrant nationalities. For example, immigrants from Pakistan, Egypt and India are mostly men, whereas immigrants from the Ukraine, Georgia, Russia, Moldavia and the Philippines are mostly women. Moreover, there are 126,000 EU citizens, 45,310 of whom are Bulgarians, 34,151 Romanians and 10,654 Poles (Tsioukas, 2009, p. 52).

The size of the immigrant population in the country is estimated to be much larger than the number of legal immigrants. This is due to the extensive amounts of undocumented immigrants who entered the country in the last years. Judging by the recent figures of the apprehensions at the border, the basic inflow of undocumented immigrants is through the Greek-Albanian border (30 per cent), while there are expanding inflows through the Greek-Turkish borders (29 per cent).[2] A significant change that occurred in the last year is that the immigrant flows shifted from the sea border to the land border with Turkey. Moreover, the changes in the inflows reflect changes in the nationalities of immigrants entering the country. It is evident from Table 10.2 that the number of undocumented Albanians remains the most important, but has been declining over the years. The number of Asians (i.e. Afghan, Pakistani, Bengali, Iraqi, Palestinian) and Africans (i.e. Somali, Eritrean, Algerian, Moroccan) is expanding significantly, accounting for nearly 57 per cent of apprehensions by 2010 (Table 10.2).

One recent estimate for Greece raises the number of migrants to 1–1.2 million or 10 per cent of the country's population (Triantaffylidou, 2009). The consecutive regularisation laws (1997–1998, 2001 and 2005) have resulted in the legalisation of a significant number of immigrants. Although by the beginning of 2010 only 518,675 people had valid residence permits (Ministry of Internal Affairs, 2010), a

[2] The figures are made available by the Ministry for Citizen Protection.

Table 10.2 Apprehensions of undocumented immigrants by region and main nationality per region, 2006–2010

Regions/countries of origin	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (9 months)
Balkans	65.2	60.3	50.1	50.8	40.6
– Albania	60.3	59.5	49.5	50.4	40.8
Countries of former USSR	2.7	1.7	2.5	2.5	1.4
– Georgia	1.8	1.3	2.0	2.0	1.1
North Africa	1.4	1.0	0.7	0.7	6.5
– Algeria	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.3	4.7
Sub-Saharan Africa	4.7	4.6	6.4	8.0	8.5
– Somalia	2.7	3.3	4.6	6.1	5.9
Middle East	13.5	17.0	15.7	16.5	11.6
– Iraq	8.6	11.2	10.9	6.1	3.9
Asia	12.4	15.2	24.4	21.1	30.8
– Afghanistan	5.5	10.3	16.8	14.1	21.9
Rest of the world	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.1
No nationality	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total number	95,239	112,364	146,337	126,145	95,398

Source: Ministry for Citizen Protection (2010)

large number of foreigners are in the process of renewing their permits. This nevertheless confirms, to some extent, the estimate that almost one-quarter to one-third of the foreign population remains undocumented.

In terms of immigrants' geographic distribution and their presence in regional/rural labour markets, a large majority of the immigrant population (over 40 per cent) is concentrated in Attica, 15 per cent in central Macedonia, 7 per cent in Crete and in Thessaly and 6 per cent in the Peloponnese and in Sterea Hellas.[3] Moreover, one point to be made is that immigrants show significant geographical mobility, which is related to the seasonal and multifunctional character of the rural economy. Thus, the size of the immigrant labour in many areas varies seasonally with the fluctuations in demand for labour in agriculture, construction and tourism. Immigrants whose residence permits have been issued in one place may well in the meantime have moved and be employed elsewhere. It is assumed that the geographical distribution of undocumented immigrants follows that of immigrants with residence permits, but they also tend to gravitate to areas that need an agricultural labour force and also during the peak tourist period.

Though the bulk of the foreign population is concentrated in the cities, almost one-fifth live in rural areas, with some gender differentiations. Female immigrants tend to live in urban areas due to better employment opportunities for them in services. The proportion of males is higher in rural areas. In general, immigrants tend to accumulate in regions where tourism and services are well developed (e.g.

[3] The data is from the Ministry of Internal Affairs (2010) and refer to residence permits.

Zakynthos with 13.2 per cent, the Cyclades with 9.6 per cent, the Dodecanese with 9.1 per cent, Cephalonia with 9 per cent, Lasithi with 8.9 per cent) or in regions with intensive agriculture (Boeotia with 9.5 per cent, Corinthia with 8.8 per cent and Argolida with 8.6 per cent).[4] Migrant employment in the different economic sectors depends on the sectoral mix of each prefecture. However, at a regional level, migrant employment has been important in agriculture due to its prevalence in the rural areas of Greece. The employment of migrants in the construction sector is a special feature of regional labour markets where there is a dynamic service or agricultural sector. In the majority of regional/rural labour markets, migrants undertake the less skilled jobs, but in the more developed labour markets, migrants also have the opportunity to undertake semi-skilled or skilled tasks. In remote labour markets, migrants take any job available but most of the jobs are unskilled (Papadopoulos, 2009).

10.3 Immigrants' Presence and Employment in Rural Greece

10.3.1 Methodology

The empirical analysis draws on three research projects that were carried out in rural Greece between 2000 and 2008. The most recent one (2006–2008)[5] investigated the dynamics of immigration flows and the implications for the labour market of immigrant employment in two regions with different sectoral and labour market characteristics. The first region was the municipality of Vouprassia (prefecture of Elia in Western Greece), where dynamic and intensive agriculture has been developing over the past few years using all-immigrant labour. The second was the municipality of Arkadion (prefecture of Zakynthos in the Ionian Islands), where the economy is based on a mutually complementary mix of agriculture, tourism and construction. In the context of this project, survey data were collected by means of a semi-structured questionnaire addressed to immigrants, with 205 questionnaires completed in the two study areas. The respondents were located through snowball sampling because the main objective was to trace and question both legal and undocumented immigrants. In addition, 18 qualitative interviews were carried out with local stakeholders and migrants (Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2008).

Additionally, quantitative and qualitative material will be utilised from two projects that were conducted in 2000–2002 and 2004–2006 (as a follow-up),[6] which aimed at researching the socio-economic impact of immigrant employment on rural

[4] The data comes from the Population Census of 2001 and is the only available data on immigrants' employment by sector.

[5] The HuReDePIS project was financed by INTERREG IIIB – ARCHIMED 2000–2006 and involved collaboration between border areas between Greece and Italy, namely western Greece and the Ionian Islands (Greece) and Puglia (Italy).

[6] The two projects were: (a) C. Kasimis, V. Nitsiakos, E. Zacopoulou, A.G. Papadopoulos (2002), The Implications of the Settlement and Employment of Migrant Labour in Rural Greece, Universities of Patras and Ioannina (in Greek), (b) C. Kasimis, A.G. Papadopoulos (2006), The

Greece. The field work in both periods was carried out in three paradigmatic study areas in rural Greece: an area of intensive agriculture (municipality of Velo, prefecture of Corinth in the Peloponnese), a pluriactive island area (the municipalities of Kissamos and Innaxorion, prefecture of Chania in Crete) and a marginal mountainous area (the municipalities of Konitsa and Mastorochoria, prefecture of Ioannina in Epirus). The main research hypothesis of these projects was that immigrant labour responded successfully to four structural socio-economic needs in rural Greece. One was that they provided a solution to the longstanding shortages of labour in rural Greece, which had resulted from the restructuring of its agricultural sector and rural economy. They also offered a short- to medium-term response to the demographic crisis experienced by the rural population as a result of the rural exodus connected with emigration in 1950–1970. Third, they provided labour that was not available due to the social rejection by the younger generation of life and labour in rural areas. Finally, they offered unskilled labour and therefore they increased the opportunities of the indigenous rural population for off-farm employment. In this context, 293 semi-structured questionnaires were addressed to rural households, a good number of which were also farming households, in the three study areas. Moreover, more than 120 in-depth interviews were carried out with local stakeholders (local agencies, local government, employers, etc.) and economic immigrants in all three areas (Kasimis, Papadopoulos, & Zacopoulou, 2003; Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2005; Papadopoulos, 2006).

In this chapter, I will use the rich empirical material collected through these projects in order to illustrate several issues. First, I will offer a concise discussion on immigrants' employment and their socio-economic impact in rural areas. Then the different mobilities of immigrants will be depicted, while emphasis will be given to the qualitative aspects of their movements. Third, there will be a short discussion of the social integration prospects and transnationalism of immigrants in a host rural society.

10.3.2 Temporal – Seasonal Mobility

In the 1990s, migration research in rural Greece was a largely neglected domain. The main focus was the regional labour markets, in which agriculture played a significant role (Lianos, Sarris, & Katseli, 1996). However, more focused research began to be carried out in paradigmatic rural areas and this combined agricultural and non-agricultural characteristics (Kasimis et al., 2003; Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2005; Papadopoulos, 2006). Since Albanians represent the main immigrant nationality in rural Greece, the analysis of the empirical findings refers to them unless it is stated otherwise.

Multifunctional Role of Migrants in Rural Greece and Rural Southern Europe, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (USA).

It has been found that immigrant employment is present both in those households that have a farm enterprise and in those that do not own a farm. In quantitative terms, nearly one-fifth of rural households employ immigrants for different domestic tasks. Such tasks are: house maintenance, taking care of the garden or the orchards, cutting the wood and bringing provisions, and minding the house or minding the children and/or the elderly. Of course in rural areas that have a lower standard or life, the proportion of immigrants doing domestic work is smaller. However, it is important to stress how extensive the use of immigrant labour for domestic tasks is in all the study areas.

Notably, immigrant labour in rural areas mainly concerns the farm households. As many as two-thirds of farm households employ non-family labour. Non-family labour represents one-quarter of total farm labour, while 90 per cent of this is contributed by immigrants. However, there is a significant differentiation of immigrant labour by farm size. Approximately 62 per cent of farm households with less than 5 ha employ immigrants, while 86 per cent of those with over 5 ha do. In addition, the farm households with less than 5 ha represent 71 per cent of farms and make use of 34 per cent of immigrant labour days, but those over 5 ha include the remaining 29 per cent of farms and make use of 66 per cent of immigrant labour days. The relatively larger farms seem to have benefited more from immigrant employment due to the availability of low-cost labour, the opportunities for modernisation, the facilitation of the division between mental and manual labour within the farm and the improved organisation and management of farm holdings.

Immigrant employment should be demarcated into two types: permanent and seasonal labour. Permanent labour is considered by immigrants to be more favourable since it secures a stable income for the entire year, while seasonal labour necessitates extensive geographical mobility, so immigrants then represent a fluid labour force. In quantitative terms, in the study areas, nearly 9 per cent of the farms employed permanent immigrant labour and they absorbed 54 per cent of the total immigrant labour. On the other hand, about 57 per cent of farm households employed seasonal immigrant labour and took up 46 per cent of the total immigrant labour.

The majority of permanent immigrant labourers are Albanians, followed by Bulgarians, Romanians, Pakistani, Yugoslavians and so on. The majority of them perform all the agricultural tasks, the back-breaking jobs such as harvesting, hoeing, loading and weeding; these are tasks that the family labour mostly avoid. However, a significant number performs the more specialised tasks, such as pruning, spraying (fertilising) and using tractors. The latter tasks are given to immigrants as a recognition of their long-term presence in the rural community, due to the fact they are trusted by the local farmers and due as well to the workload (and/or the age) of their employers. Thus, the longer the immigrants stay in the host rural community, the more it becomes possible for them to gain better employment and to undertake more responsible labour tasks.

> The Albanians will do all the heavy jobs; they will hoe, they will prune. (Interview 1, p. 9)
>
> Not the tractor . . . Some of us give it. I, personally, don't give it, because they [the Albanians] don't have . . . But I see some immigrants working the tractor. They don't have

a driving licence, they don't have anything and still they get it. It's not that we don't want to give it to them. Simply, I don't trust them in this job. Which is very delicate . . . (Interview 7, p. 3–4)

Yes, they perform specialised tasks. Since I am an agronomist, it happened that I discussed it with a farmer, who in the end handed the phone over so I could to speak with the Albanian he had in the fields. I had to tell the immigrant what fertilisers/pesticides to use from the ones his employer already bought. That is, the farmer did not even go at the fields. The spraying was carried out by the Albanian, who used the tractor. (Interview 6, p. 4)

Meanwhile, the farmers who employ permanent labourers consider them their "Black & Deckers" (as mentioned by the farmers), which means toolkits for all kinds of sophisticated tasks. They often go so far as to employ them further by demanding that they perform additional labour tasks in their leisure time. Notably, one out of three permanent labourers performs additional tasks for their employers for extra payment. The tasks they perform include: house repairs, housework (for females), the transport of produce, or work in the (non-farm) family enterprise. This relationship between farmers-employers and their permanent immigrant labourers has two aspects. First, the farmer takes full advantage of immigrant labourers and transforms immigrants to flexible labour in order to solve different problems (i.e., in the household, the farm or the family business) and/or perform miscellaneous tasks. Second, immigrants themselves are upgraded so they become the "right arm" of the farmer – by becoming indispensable; they earn extra income and they "honour" the relationship they have built with their employers. This relationship is part of an unspoken agreement between the two parties. Thus, immigrants are indebted/"obliged" to farmers-employers. The latter introduce the immigrants to their fellow villagers and to other farmers, and they help migrants create personal networks with the locals. This is a way of building up interpersonal social networks between the indigenous population and the immigrants. Those networks are important for both sides but for the farmers it is a way of managing immigrant mobilities. This suggests that what counts most is the power of flows over the space of flows (Hannam et al., 2006; Sheller & Urry, 2006).

Yes, some [farmers] permanently host Albanians at their houses. Sometimes, it is a couple of Albanians, that is, a man and his wife. The man works in the fields and his wife may be working in the fields, or elsewhere, or do domestic tasks. Taking care of the family's children, or doing housework, or taking care of the garden. (Interview 8, p. 23)

In addition, a large majority of permanent labourers either stay in a dwelling that belongs to the farmer or in the same house (on the lower, ground floor or in the basement) with the farmer. Only a relatively small number (40 per cent) have a residence independent/far from their employers. This is an idiomorphic type of social control operated by the farmers, who become guarantors and mediators of immigrants' labour in the rural labour markets.

On the other hand, permanent immigrant labourers enjoy a more stable income – they are not bound to search for day payments with different employers/farmers – since half of them are paid by the month and the other half by the day. Three out of five have insurance, whereas the rest remain uninsured. Even when insured, migrants pay the cost of their social insurance by themselves due to the fact that

farmers do not wish to pay additional labour costs. The farmers are normally in control of migrants' social insurance because, on the basis of their farming activity and crop production, they declare a number of working days to the Organisation of Agricultural Insurance (OGA), where migrants pay the cost of their insurance. It is important to note that immigrants depend on farmers' declarations since the latter are vital for justifying their employment. Thus, permanent immigrant labourers acquire a legal position in the local economies and societies on the basis of their relations of trust with the employer. Of course, these employment relations have become the basis for immigrants to settle in host rural communities and to expand their interpersonal networks.

> In the beginning, they came alone and there were many, without women and children. Subsequently, when they consolidated their job positions, they started to bring back their own people. First came their brothers and sisters and next they brought their families. Some got married in the process, because they were young and brought their wives from Albania so that they could put down roots, settle; that is, they found opportune ground. (Interview 15, page 3)

This description illustrates how the interpersonal networks facilitated chain migration and transformed the initial character of Albanian migration to Greece from a short-term seasonal/circular cross-border immigration to long-term transnational immigration (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007; Vertovec, 2009).

The nationalities of seasonal immigrant labour do not differ significantly from those who work as permanent labourers. Only a small proportion of the seasonal labourers belong to the indigenous population. The majority of the seasonal immigrant labour mainly works doing harvesting, hoeing and loading (80 per cent) and only marginally in pruning, watering, spraying and using the tractor (20 per cent). It will be argued later that in the course of the years, some categories and/or nationalities of immigrants become more acceptable and are entrusted with the more specialised and thereby better-paid tasks. Moreover, it should be taken for granted that seasonal immigrant labour is highly geographically mobile and that such immigrants tend to move from rural community to rural community, depending on the agricultural products collected seasonally, and on the information they receive for labour demand in certain local labour markets.

The farmers employ immigrants as seasonal labour mainly because the immigrants are the only available labour force, the Greeks do not like agricultural employment and the immigrants have a lower cost. The farmers-employers recruit their immigrant seasonal labourers at the local piazzas – in their village or in nearby villages – or they get them through locals or friends from another village. This means that farmers employ those whom they find locally and/or those who are recommended by their social networks. Moreover, the majority of the farmers consider the nationality as a major criterion for choosing the right people for their farm. The preferred nationalities are Albanians, Bulgarians, Polish, Indians and Romanians. Despite the fact of the availability of immigrant nationalities in the particular rural communities, of utmost importance for the farmers-employers is their relations of

trust with the immigrant labourers and, more particularly, immigrants' disciplined behaviour.

Thus, immigrant employment has become a steady characteristic of farm households since the beginning of the 1990s. For the last two decades, immigrants have been providing the majority of permanent and seasonal labour that is necessary for agricultural production (Kasimis et al., 2003; Kasimis & Papadopoulos, 2005; Lambrianidis & Sykas, 2009a, 2009b; Kasimis et al., 2010). Both types of employment have become indispensable to Greek farmers-employers. But apart from agriculture, all economic sectors have benefitted from immigrant labour in the rural areas of the country.

> We cannot operate without immigrants anymore. We have expanded our jobs and our land and so on and with no Albanians we can no longer survive. (Interview 6, p. 7)
>
> They [the immigrants] have regenerated all farms, they have cultivated all fields. If they did not exist, most of the fields would be abandoned. (Interview 1, p. 19)
>
> [Without the immigrants] we would face serious problems, because we would have a reduction in production and we could not cope with the demands. We cannot find Greeks; I still search to find some Greeks for permanent labourers and I cannot find any. (Interview 16, p. 9)

This is also clear to the immigrants themselves, who are conscious of the positive impacts of their labour for their farmers-employers and also of the side-effects of their labour for the rural community.

> I have been in this village for many years . . .. I have done all kinds of jobs. Everything. He [his employer] does not let me go away. I will leave him [he says jokingly] and come back in one year. Even now, I do not stay here all year long. I come and go [visit regularly Albania] . . . (Paolin, male)
>
> Low wages helped agriculture a lot. At the beginning when we came, many plots were left uncultivated. You could not step in the fields because of the briars. Now the jobs have opened up. They cultivate extensively . . . And on the other hand, some [farmers] . . . became lazy. You don't see young people [among the Greeks] working in the fields. Only the old men are working . . .. Those who have another job in the city give the farm plots to us [Albanians] as misiaka [a form of sharecropping]. Farms with olives, peaches and oranges. I do all the tasks, we collect the crop and we divide the profits . . . (Thoma, male)

The appreciation of the positive implications of migrant employment in the rural economy, in general, is more or less similar amongst farm and non-farm households. The main positive implications includes the following: migrants have covered the demand for wage labour, they have contributed to the low cost of production, demand for goods and consumption has increased, some people were assisted in keeping their enterprises and the locals expanded and increased their business.

10.3.3 Social Mobility

The immigrant's legal status plays a crucial role in determining mobility and/or immobility, for the simple reason that illegal immigrants live in fear of arrest

and deportation. In the post-2005 period, immigrant flows remain largely undocumented, because they arrived after the last regularisation, which was carried out in 2005 and offered the opportunity for legalisation to a significant number of irregular immigrants.

Most of the immigrants see their legalisation as a ticket to free movement and to organising the migration of their relatives, family and friends. Legal status, the duration of their stay and their nationality are some factors that cross-cut and create "civic stratifications" (Kofman, 2002), which need to be taken into account when considering immigrant mobility and integration prospects in the host country.

> If you don't have papers you are like a hare chased by the dog . . . If you have papers, then you may drink a coffee in peace; if you don't have papers you sit on thorns. (Arian, male)

From the side of the indigenous population, the legalisation of immigrants in the post-2001 period implied a number of transformations for the everyday life of immigrants. The immigrants regained their (lost) dignity and self-respect, their social lives improved and they came out into the public space without the fear and the insecurity of the outlaw.

> The Albanian has calmed down [due to legalization]. He behaved differently then. He is different now; he's cooled down. (Interview 20, p. 7)
>
> Most of them [the immigrants of the rural community] have valid residence cards; they are allowed to move freely, to trade, to go out . . . And today I could say that they are, to a large extent, integrated into the local society. It won't be an exaggeration to say that many times, it is impossible to tell whether a person is an Albanian or not. You sit in a cafe and you can't tell if a person in an Albanian. I could say that Albanians stand out in a positive way. That is, if you see someone wearing labour clothes, this person will be possibly a Greek, because the Albanian will take care of his appearance before going to the street. (Interview 10, p. 9)

Our research survey has shown that the average Albanian immigrant in Greece has crossed the Greek-Albanian borders at least ten times. A sizeable proportion (30 per cent) have crossed the borders over fifteen times in their lifetimes. This is a reflection of the fact that, in many cases, due to their irregular status, it has not been easy for Albanian immigrants to stay for long periods in Greece. The irregularity has at least two repercussions for immigrants. There is the danger of being arrested and deported, and they can get stuck in their host country, unable to return to their country of origin. The vast majority of immigrants (75 per cent) who have not revisited their homeland are undocumented. The problem is more acute for immigrants who come from countries much further away, beyond the borders of the Balkans (e.g. Asians, Africans).

On the other hand, Albanians with legal status tend to visit their native country regularly. This is a pattern not followed by the other nationalities. Mobility of this type is contingent on the status of the immigrant and the distance from the country of origin. Two-thirds of Albanians visit their country at least once per year, while only one-third of the other nationalities do the same. It seems to be a strategy for Albanians to divide their time between Greece and Albania, especially when their family is still living there or when they are engaged with building a house or making

an investment in their country of origin. Four out of ten Albanian immigrants have built a house in their country with the money they earned during their stay in Greece.

The strategies of Albanians are worthy of closer scrutiny since they constitute the largest nationality in Greece. The majority of them (73 per cent) who have built a house in their country of origin are married with children. They are in most cases immigrants who have been in Greece for over 10 years, enjoy legal status in Greece and have elaborated family strategies with a number of facets to them. Building a house in their country of origin secures the option of return for them, but they also gain a higher social status there due to the fact that they have spent a large sum of money and constructed something that is a source of pride. The second aspect is prefigured by their having built a house for their parents' sake and for the eventuality that they might wish to retire in their homeland. Albanians have therefore created sophisticated strategies for securing social status in their country of origin and have proceeded to lay the foundations for achieving a higher social status in their host country.

Over half of the Albanians and one-fifth of the other nationalities have bought a car from the income they earned in Greece. As for satisfaction from the housing – mostly rented – nearly 70 per cent of the immigrants say that they have gradually found better, often much better, housing than what they had at first. This implies that there has been a noteworthy improvement in the housing situation of immigrants over the last decade or so.

The critical turning point in the career trajectory of immigrants is when they become legalised, which reflects acceptance by the host society and an increased opportunity to be deemed trustworthy and potentially capable of establishing interpersonal networks with the indigenous population. Their legal status allows them to be more mobile, also making it possible for them to have higher expectations of the local labour markets. It became evident from the empirical research that immigrants' employment experience is acquired over time and that most immigrants are highly mobile geographically, occupationally and socially. Those who have succeeded in developing stronger, more effective, extended and varied social networks are better informed about available employment opportunities, and continue to be in a position to make comparisons and choices and are ultimately better prepared to get ahead in the local labour market.

> We came straight here . . . to Zakynthos . . . it is simply that we had some friends from our country, who were here [in Zakynthos] . . . They said: fine – we will find a job and they would help us – fine. And so we came here. (Meftoni, female)
>
> I came to the area [municipality of Vouprasia in Elia] in February 1991. I came from Albania on foot. There were six of us kids. We split in Arta [Epirus] and three of us ended up here. At that time, you know, we had no papers, nothing. When I first came I went to the strawberry fields . . .. Once a year I visited Albania . . .. There were just 100 Albanians in Nea Manolada. The first Bulgarians came in 1993–1994. Bulgarians and Romanians came at the same time . . .. When my family came, I left Nea Manolada and settled in Varda. . .. I changed houses . . . I have been living in Varda for 11 years now. (Aristo, male)

The geographical mobility of immigrants is intertwined with the changes in their legal status as well as their social and occupational mobility. While it is extremely

difficult to single out the most important factors underlying their mobility, it is perhaps worth mentioning that the great majority (83 per cent) of immigrants state that economic factors were the main reason for their moving.

One aspect of geographical mobility, determining migrants' inclination to stay or to move again to another area, is their perception of the way they enter the local labour market. There is a great deal of variation in the intentions of immigrants depending on the character of the local labour market. A significant proportion of the immigrants who work in the agricultural labour market would like to move to another local labour market. Meanwhile, only a very small proportion of immigrants working in the multisectoral labour market would like to move.

The geographical and occupational mobility has proved to be beneficial[7] for immigrants, who mostly say that they consider their current job to be better than their previous jobs. Over the years, immigrants move from agricultural to non-agricultural jobs, but more importantly move from unskilled to semi-skilled and skilled occupations. The longer immigrants stay in the host country, the more they tend to take up skilled employment. This is true for most of the rural labour markets, but the change is faster in multisectoral labour markets and slower in agricultural labour markets.

As for the movement of immigrants across economic sectors, this is also evident in different local labour markets. Comparing immigrants' first and current jobs, it becomes clear that immigrants are quite mobile, but they follow different trajectories in the different local labour markets. In the agricultural labour markets, the proportion of those employed in seasonal wage labour is diminishing, with a significant falloff being noticeable in the availability of regular agricultural employment. Immigrants turn to wage labour in the secondary sector, with a small number undertaking supervisory roles in the agricultural or construction sectors. Due to the sectoral limitations of the agricultural labour market, the proportion of immigrants employed in the service sector remains impressively stable. On the other hand, the multi-sectoral character of the labour market makes it possible for a significant number of immigrants to move between sectors.

In their struggle to survive or to improve their socio-economic situations, immigrants often adopt employment strategies analogous to those of the indigenous population. A significant percentage of immigrants hold down a second job in addition to their main employment. One-third of the immigrants are pluriactive. Albanians are over-represented in the pluriactive migrant populations. Namely, 42 per cent of Albanians are pluriactive, against 9 per cent of the other nationalities. There are two models for pluriactivity: (a) immigrants whose main employment is in agriculture and who have a second job in construction or services (in the agricultural labour market), and (b) immigrants whose main employment is in tourism or

[7] It is beneficial because it is accompanied by increases in income, in social and employment experience, in expertise in certain jobs and consequently in prospects for integration into the recipient society.

construction and who have a second job in agriculture or services (in the multi-sectoral labour market).

It should be stressed that pluriactivity implies hard work, long hours without much free time, and the availability of employment opportunities, something more typically associated with developed labour markets. As one Albanian put it:

> Now I am working in a hotel. I am a cook in the morning and at the reception in the evening. I have a 24-hour shift. (Fation, male).

The longer the stay in the host country, the more the pluriactivity. This is an indicator of greater integration in the local labour market and increased social status in the local society.

10.3.4 Immigrant Transnationality and Integration Trajectories

More than any other immigrant nationality, the Albanians have brought their families to Greece and more particularly to rural areas. They are the ones who tend to combine all those prerequisites that point towards their integration into the host rural society. They generally have acquired a legal status, which mainly is due to the fact that their majority came earlier than the other nationalities, they have created a chain migration that favoured their family reunification, they constructed interpersonal networks that favoured the acquirement of social capital in the host country, they adopted family and employment strategies similar to those of the indigenous population and they show significant motivation to integrate into the host country.

> These people [the Albanians] make an amazing attempt to become Greeks. This is incredible. It is incredible if one tries to interpret this by taking into account the facts. But for me . . . I consider this abrupt endeavour to become Greeks unnatural. They do it unconsciously. I don't believe that they have a strategy. They simply have an innate adaptability. It is in their blood. (Interview 5, p. 22)

Whether their adaptation to the Greek socioeconomic conditions and the acceptance of the way of living in the host country is part of their strategic plans remains to be seen. Their attempts are also visible to the indigenous population, who – in certain cases – seem "threatened" by the concerted endeavours of Albanian immigration to "become Greek".

> I say that Albania has culture. Here we found an even better one. But we are neighbours and we are similar. That is, if you help me, I know that I should say 'thank you'. That's culture. But culture is . . . to learn from the others who have more culture. From those who have learnt more than me. And in Albania there are people who have culture. They have school. How is it possible for our kids to learn here without any culture? We have culture. Our children have equal results with the Greek children. And even better. I have heard that. All people are not the same. Every family has a different culture. Some have less, others more . . . Every family has a different culture. I don't know why . . . But I want to stay somewhere people have culture. (Kastrioti, male)

There is surely an ambivalence about Albanian immigrants' intentions. The indigenous population sees a "pride" in the behaviour of Albanians, who are mostly misunderstood as "undisciplined" or "assertive". In reality, Albanians have attempted to balance their past experience in their country of origin and their current status in the host country. They seek to construct a hybrid identity by improvising in their everyday lives and by putting together a number of idiosyncratic characteristics (i.e. hard work, zeal for social acceptance, interpersonal networks, propensity to move upwards, family strategies, accepting all kinds of jobs, etc.) and this differentiates them from the other immigrant nationalities.

> I believe more in Greece because the state continues and does a clean job. And people here are more stable than in Albania. I am mostly Albanian, but to write down that I am Greek no one will come and tell me: 'Why did you become Greek?' What can they tell me? They will keep me by force? If I am not satisfied there, I will leave like.. [how do you say it here?] . . . the birds, yes, the birds. If the birds cannot find food, they fly elsewhere . . . That's what we are. (Kastrioti, male)

Albanian immigrants sense that they are "marginal people"; that is, they are in between two cultures that have different national and social values. Their attempt to bridge the two identities appears to be romantic and contradictory, but also highly desirable.

> My fortune is to have two homelands today. What I am saying may be wrong, but my first homeland is Albania and my second homeland is Greece. For me, both are very significant, Greece and Albania. When I go to Albania, nothing keeps me apart from all I have lived in Greece. When I come to Greece, nothing separates me from all I have lived in Albania. (Bilbil, male)

Against the worst fears of those amongst the indigenous population who see immigrants as some kind of threat for "national purity", the Albanian immigrants are in favour of a new identity that is more desirable: the European identity and whatever it signifies.

> Now we are . . . Europeans, I tell you. (Argyris, male)

10.4 Conclusion

Immigrants have become a new but significant factor for the social and economic restructuring of rural Greece. Their settlement in rural communities is based on a number of factors that include the demand for unskilled labour, the substitution of family labour in farming and other small-scale activities in the countryside, the support of the indigenous population by providing all types of labour (i.e. domestic, permanent, seasonal, miscellaneous, flexible) and the new divisions between manual and mental labour. The characteristics of the local labour markets are decisive for the settlement and modes of adjustment of the immigrant labourers.

The consecutive immigration waves have established amongst the rural indigenous population the idea that immigrants constitute a solid but also fluid labour

force that is moulded by the demands of rural economies and societies. The result is that there is an internal stratification of the immigrant populations on the basis of legal status, duration of stay, nationality, family status, social capital capacity and the propensity/motivation to adjust to the host rural societies.

The example of Albanian immigrants is important because it depicts the way that mobilities – both geographical and social – have transformed rural communities into translocal rural places. Albanian immigrants can be considered transnational immigrants who have developed a hybrid immigrant identity that is destined to fit with a number of diverging demands in host rural communities and of different cultural identities. Thus, the mobilities of Albanian immigrants may be seen as part of the new rurality that has been slowly but steadily developing in rural Greece. The immigrants, as a novel component of Greek rural society, should be considered both a revitalising demographic factor and a socioeconomic element that reconstitutes rural places.

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Chapter 11
Goloka Dhama: A Translocal Hare Krishna Community

Louise Meijering

11.1 Introduction

This chapter will take you to Goloka Dhama (GD), a translocal Hare Krishna community in rural Germany.[1] The community is located near the village of Abentheuer, south of Koblenz, and was founded in 1995. In this introduction, I will provide some background information on Goloka Dhama. The community is part of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON). This society was established by Shrila Prabhupada, a monk who moved from India to New York to spread his beliefs in 1965. In the 1960s and 1970s, the movement became very popular, especially amongst young people who dropped out of society and were searching for more meaningful lives. They were attracted by the "exotic" Eastern philosophy, and inspired by the different experience of faith that ISKCON provided (Bryant & Ekstrand, 2004). This is manifested, for instance, through the variety of deities and other symbols on the altars, the rituals with incense and flowers, and the importance of Indian music in spiritual practice. The songs and prayers remain in the original Sanskrit versions, whereas the main philosophical works have been translated into other languages. From the United States, the movement spread over the world; currently, it has communities in over 80 countries (International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 2010).

After the years of growth, ISKCON experienced a difficult period, with scandals about the subordinate position of women, and alleged charges of child abuse (Knott, 2004; Muster, 2004; Wolf, 2004). The movement critically evaluated its organisation in the 1990s to prevent further excesses and to improve its reputation (Goswami, 2001). Goloka Dhama was created after this most critical period in the movement

[1] The text of the results in this chapter is based on Chapter 4 of my PhD thesis, Making a place of their own. Rural intentional communities in Northwest Europe (Meijering, 2006).

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_11,
© Springer Science+Business Media B.V. 2012

Fig. 11.1 Goloka Dhama, main gate with temple building in the background

as a whole. Figure 11.1 shows the entrance gate to the community, with the temple building behind it. Although GD has learned from the crisis, it has not been able to avoid difficult periods itself. At the time of the study in 2005, the community had twenty members, about half of whom were female and half male. They were mostly aged between 25 and 50. In daily life, the members are referred to as "devotees". Most devotees live in families, and have "regular" jobs outside the community. Four priests are fully maintained by the community, because they are engaged in serving Krishna full-time. Apart from the devotees in the community, a number of followers live in surrounding villages. They use the community as a Christian would use a church, and often attend the Sunday celebration at the temple. This is a religious service, followed by a communal meal. The community functions in a locally based rural network, as well as the global ISKCON.

The membership of GD at the time of the study was very much in transition. The community was recovering from an unstable period in the late 1990s, during which an important leader, as well as many of his followers, left the community. Some even renounced Krishna Consciousness. As a result, the number of devotees living on the temple complex declined from more than eighty to around ten. Presently, the number of members is gradually increasing again. Relatively many young members from various European countries have moved in, for example from Switzerland, Finland, Croatia and the Serb Republic. The international constellation of the community exemplifies its embeddedness in the ISKCON movement and, with that, its translocal nature.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows: in the first section, the theoretical framework is set out briefly, followed by a section on data and methods. The results are discussed in the following sections, first addressing the international ideology of Krishna Consciousness, then its practice in the community of GD, and lastly focussing on the local and regional embeddedness of the community. The results are analysed in the context of the data that were collected for the study, as well as the literature on translocalism. The chapter ends with conclusions, in which the transferability of the results of a rural translocal intentional community to more "mainstream" translocalities of migration is discussed.

11.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical context of translocal ruralism has been outlined in the first chapter of this book, and complementing that chapter, I discuss some relevant theoretical points here in brief. The concept of translocalism originates from the idea that the effects of globalisation vary depending on local circumstances at the urban level. Global processes are interpreted in localised urban contexts (see, for example, Glick Schiller & Çağlar, 2009; Smith, 2001). However, as has been argued in the introduction of this book, translocalism does occur in rural areas too, and translocal dynamics are an important force in shaping rural areas. In the context of this chapter, I discuss the community of GD, and the ISKCON movement of which it is part, as forces shaping a translocal ruralities in the region. In the context of this chapter, I consider translocalities (and translocal ruralities) as places where being mobile, moving, and connecting to different places comes together with being grounded locally, which is in line with, for instance, Smith (2001) and Sinatti (2008). As Brickell and Datta (2011) argue, the main focus of studies on translocal geographies has been on local-local connections in the context of transnationalism. This chapter adds to the existing body of literature through its focus on the international and regional/local levels.

GD is a place that is connected to different places, through its integration into the global International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), an international network of like-minded communities. The communities within the society share a common ideology, daily religious practices and daily community life. Localised communities around the globe practice Krishna Consciousness in the same manner. For example, the religious services take place at the same time, and are carried out in the same language (Sanskrit) in all communities. This facilitates the international nature of the movement: members move frequently between communities, as it is easy for them to "blend in" to daily life. These transnational characteristics of GD can be discussed in terms of translocal spatialities. Translocal spatiality has been defined as "the local absorption of practices from faraway sites" (Ma, 2002, p. 132). Ma goes on to say that "[t]ranslocal spatiality is applicable to transborder youth subcultures, cult religions, special interest groups and other niche affiliations, which cut across nations to form a spatial network based on subcultural affinity" (ibid.).

As was described above, Goloka Dhama is part of an international network based on a specific subcultural affinity, namely Krishna Consciousness.

Besides its international associations, Goloka Dhama is also grounded regionally and locally. In the context of the rural aspects of translocalism, I want to draw on the notion of the translocal village, as discussed by Velayutham and Wise (2005). They discuss the example of a translocal village in Tamil Nadu, India, which they describe as a closed community, based on caste and kinship ties. Since the late 1950s, many villagers, especially single young men, have emigrated, in particular to Singapore, in an attempt to find better economic opportunities. In Singapore, the community is maintained as much as possible. Marriage partners are found in the village back in India, migrants are expected to assist family members and others in finding work in Singapore, as well as to help them financially, and to contribute to village projects such as a school or a health centre. In addition, migrants are expected to return to the village on a regular basis for important rites of passage, such as marriage and the birth of children. Through the expansion of the village relations and practices, an expanded space of belonging is created, which can be seen as a translocal rural space. As Velayutham and Wise argue, "the translocal allows us to envisage the everydayness of material, family, social, and symbolic networks and exchanges that connect [different places]" (2005, p. 40). The translocal village contains the "sociality" that is linked to the place or origin, thus creating international connections between places.

Similar processes of translocalism/ ruralism that transgress international borders have been observed, such as by Zecker (2004) in his historical study of Slovak immigrants in the United States. Through adhering to Slovakian customs, such as singing Christmas carols, the migrants maintained a sense of being part of the larger Slovakian nation. At the same time, the Slovak community also became Americanised. Simultaneous processes of nourishing both local and translocal identities are often observed in the context of migration. For example, Qureshi describes how young "Edinburgh Pakistani" (2006, p. 207) (re)produce different identities in or between Edinburgh and Pakistan and create mixed or "trans-boundary communicative spaces" (2006, p. 223).

The examples discussed above differ from GD because they address permanent international migration. GD is a place to which international migrants move, but most of them spend limited time in the community. The permanent membership is made up exclusively of Germans and German-speakers. However, the notion of the translocal village, or rural community, is expected to be useful in the context of GD too. GD has a strong local base through two types of connections in the region. As is common for other ISKCON communities, there are a large number of "outside members": people who adhere to the Krishna ideology, but who live outside the community in the surrounding rural region. As these outside members have more distance to the movement, both literally and figuratively, they form a localised factor in the dynamics of community life. GD serves as a base that ties the devotees in the region together. The second local factor is formed by the people in the rural area who do not follow the ideals of Krishna Consciousness. "Devotees" and outsiders interact with each other, such as through the local kindergarten. Also,

outsiders are welcome to participate in activities at the community, such as the weekly Sunday service. The interactions between community members, outside members and surroundings determine the extent of the mutual appeal and rejection between the community and the outside world, thus shaping the translocal practices of Goloka Dhama. Depending on the location, specific identities are emphasised or downplayed (Smith, 2001).

On a larger scale, the ISKCON communities around the globe can be seen as parts of an international translocal network, originating from a community in India that has become an important place of pilgrimage. Through the homogenised practice of religious rituals and daily chores, life in the different communities is similar, which creates a broad sense of belonging. Thus, the trans-boundary communicative spaces that Qureshi (2006) described are also created in Goloka Dhama. The issues addressed in the theoretical framework, focusing on the reproduction of local/regional (rural Germany) and international (ISKCON) spaces, were main themes in the data-analysis, and will be discussed in depth in this chapter.

11.3 Data and Methods

The study of Goloka Dhama was part of a larger PhD research project on the life course of intentional communities. In that study, I aimed to gain insight into the perspective of people who live in intentional communities, and therefore I adopted an in-depth approach. Since I was interested in the detailed and personal stories of the community members, a case study approach was appropriate. The methodology involves a study of one or a small number of cases, in their "natural" environment, exemplifying a social phenomenon, and using a variety of data sources, with attention to diverging perspectives (see, for example, Hammersley & Gomm, 2000; Robson, 1993; Swanborn, 2003). In this project, I conducted a multiple case study consisting of eight intentional communities in northwestern Europe.

GD was one of the cases and was selected as an example of an "average" religious intentional community (see Meijering, 2006). Religious communities are characterised by a strong commitment on the part of the members to common ideological values, based on religious or spiritual beliefs (Kanter, 1972; Sosis, 2000). A focus on these norms and values results in a rejection of and consequent withdrawal from mainstream society into the (rural) communities, where an alternative lifestyle is practised. Many communities have an international membership, and can be seen as translocal spaces of spirituality, which transgress international borders.

I visited GD in April 2005, and conducted in-depth interviews with fourteen of the then twenty members. In addition, three outside members, one former member, and nine local residents living in the vicinity of the community, mainly the village of Abentheuer, were interviewed. The semi-structured interviews began with a short introduction, followed by some structured questions such as about age and education level. Subsequently, a number of prepared topics were discussed, such as motivations for people to join the community, the ideology, daily life, relations with

other community members, the surroundings, and other ISKCON communities. Some issues were treated more elaborately when the respondent offered information. New subjects that arose during the interview were also discussed (Berg, 1998). Thus, the coherence, depth and denseness of information of every interview were high (Valentine, 2005). The data were analysed with the help of QSR NVivo 2, a program for qualitative data analysis. In the analysis, a grounded theory approach was adopted (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The analysis of the community is grounded in the experiences of the respondents, which is amplified through the use of quotes.

11.4 Translocal Relations at the International Level

The devotees at GD identify first and foremost with the ideas that are central to Krishna Consciousness in general. GD, the community in which they live, is one of the places where they could practice their religious ideas. The ISKCON is a religious or subcultural movement, and its manifestations are similar around the world. Therefore, it does not really matter at which community a devotee lives and practices his/her spiritual duties. Although local circumstances, people and interactions play a role in the daily life of every ISKCON community, in this section, I first discuss the general ideas and principles to which the devotees adhere.

When commenting on their reasons for joining the ISKCON, many of the devotees of GD indicated that they found Krishna Consciousness in a period during which they were searching for the meaning of life, usually when they were in their twenties. A respondent explained what she experienced when reading some of the central books on Krishna Consciousness:

> I was so excited about reading [the books], and immediately when I started, I found the essential philosophy of life, something deeply true. [. . .] I couldn't argue with the statements in the book. I had to accept it, it was so convincing, all this knowledge.[2] (Female member, 40s, date of interview 12 April 2005)

Ideology forms the essence of the shared meanings that are ascribed to the ISKCON. In some cases, the devotees had studied different religious philosophies before turning to Krishna. They were attracted by aspects of Krishna Consciousness, such as vegetarianism and belief in reincarnation. Within the Hare Krishna ideology, the idea of reincarnation is central. Devotees believe that they continue to reincarnate upon death, until they maintain a state of spiritual purity.

On a daily basis, the common goal of all the devotees in Krishna Consciousness is to revere Krishna. Krishna, or "the Supreme Personality of Godhead", is the only god in Krishna Consciousness, but it is believed that He can take many forms (Schweig, 2004). For instance, the images on the altar are representations of Krishna (see Fig. 11.2). The devotees believe Krishna is truly present in His appearance on

[2] The interviews were held in German and English. I translated the German quotes into English. After each of the quotes, the role of the respondents in the community is indicated, as well as his/her gender and age.

Fig. 11.2 The altar in Goloka Dhama's temple

the altar. A number of priests are responsible for feeding, bathing and clothing the deities and carrying out the services of worship (Arati). In Table 11.1, the daily routine as practiced in GD is presented. This routine is similar in all ISKCON communities. The services are public, and can be attended by devotees and others who feel inclined to do so. Caring for the deities is done in private by the priests.

The spiritual obligation for the devotees is to chant for two hours. God is praised through chanting the maha-mantra, which has a meditative effect[3] (International Society for Krishna Consciousness, 2010). The maha-mantra can be seen as a ritual which, although it is individually experienced, symbolises the common devotion to Krishna. Attending the services in the temple is voluntary. Krishna devotees are unified in their common reverence of Krishna, as this respondent explained:

> [All devotees] revere Him. It does not matter in which way and everybody is united. That is what keeps the whole [ISKCON] community together. [. . .] Everybody wants to trod the path as described in the Bhagavad Gita and the path is clear. It has been trodden for thousands of years, but everybody has to ascribe a personal meaning to it. (Female member, 30s, date of interview 10 April 2005)

In professing their faith, like-minded fellow worshippers are essential, as is illustrated by this quote:

[3] The maha-mantra is the mantra of deliverance: Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare

Table 11.1 Daily routine in Goloka Dhama

Activity	Time[a]	
	Accessible for priests only	Accessible for everybody
Waking up the deities	3.30–3.50	–
Balya-bhoga: mangala-sweets offering	3.50–4.00	–
Mangal Arati: worship service	–	4.15–4.45
Sila-puja and Vaisnava-homa: dressing of the deities	4.45–5.00	–
Meditation/chanting[b]	–	5.00–7.00
Darshan Arati: greeting of Krishna	–	7.15–8.00
Pratar-bhoga: breakfast offering	8.00–8.30	–
Lecture		8.00–8.30
Dhupa Arati: public offering of incense and flowers	8.30–9.00	–
Communal breakfast	–	9.00–9.30
Raja-bhoga: lunch offering	12.30–13.00	–
Raja bhoga Arati: worship service	-	13.00–13.30
Sayana-seva: putting the deities to rest	13.30–14.00	–
Communal meal	–	14.00–14.30
Waking up the deities	16.00–16.15	–
Vaikalika-bhoga: afternoon fruit offering	16.15–16.30	–
Dhupa Arati: worship service	–	16.30–17.00
Sandhya-bhoga: evening offering	18.30–19.00	–
Sandhya (Gaura) Arati: worship service	–	19.00–19.30
Ghana-dugdham: milk offering	–	21.00–21.15
Sayana-seva: putting the deities to rest	21.30–21.45	–

[a]Times and durations are approximate
[b]Personal spiritual obligation
Source: Goloka Dhama (2010)

> So, we can go to any ISKCON Temple in the world. [...] One [is amongst] family. An immense sense of togetherness arises from following common spiritual traditions. (Male member, 40s, date of interview 11 April 2005)

The shared ideology is played out in all the different ISKCON communities, and forms the basis for the network as a translocal practice. The existence of GD is irrelevant in and subordinate to that of the Hare Krishna movement. For instance, the popularity of the movement in eastern Europe in general, and Russia in particular, is highly valued by all the devotees, as they appreciate the expansion of the movement, and the possible contact with kindred spirits.

As part of a global network, GD can also be seen as an imagined community as formulated by Anderson (2000). An imagined community is a community in which not all the members know each other in person, but are bound together through a sense of community in spite of that. Although Anderson applied the concept to a nation, it can also be used in the context of networks of intentional communities. Not all members of the ISKCON know each other, but they share a collective identity, which is based on the unifying ideology within the network. Thus, the specific

community in which the members live is "just a place" in a wider network. Its existence is possibly temporary, and inferior to the continuity of the organisation as a whole. There are important places in Krishna Consciousness, however. For instance, the community members make pilgrimages to a community in India, which is one of the most important places in Krishna Consciousness because one of their deities is said to appear there. This would be the local rural basis on an international level, and GD would be a translocal "offspring" of this rural community in a different part of the world. One of the devotees described the community as follows:

> When we were in India the first time [we went to a very important] community [. . .]. In this place, Lord Caitanya appears, and it is a nice community with nice parks, nice buildings in Indian style and [. . .] fountains. (Male member, 20s, date of interview 10 April 2005)

Besides its religious meaning, the community in India is also a beautiful place, where the devotees can strengthen their spiritual development through prayer and interaction with other devotees.

It can be concluded that the devotees are united through common spiritual practices, which are reinforced through more "practical" habits. While tied together through their worship of Krishna, the respondents still take their personal path within Krishna Consciousness. In other words, the way in which Krishna is revered, the degree of spiritual devotion and of involvement in the local Hare Krishna community, and the extent of participation in society differ amongst devotees. Such differences come to the fore, especially when living together in a religious community, sharing a space for daily living. It is to the translocal community level that I turn to now, to discuss this in some more detail.

11.5 Translocal Relations Through Community Life in a Spiritual Community

While spiritual practices can be argued to unify all devotees within Krishna Consciousness, they are also the basis for a more place-based identification. The shared spiritual practices in GD are perceived as binding the community members together, as was expressed by a respondent:

> [The community members are unified through] the religious practices we carry out daily, every early morning. Also coming together in the temple room, standing together before the Lord, who is present on the altar. Singing and praying together, that unites us. And the maha-mantra that we chant as well. (Female outside member, 50s, date of interview 7 April 2005)

Although at the first ceremony of the day at 4:15 a.m., for example, usually only a few members are present, the general practices are still experienced as binding. Revering Krishna is not only the basis for the broader ISKCON, but also the essence of GD's collective identity:

> We're all here to worship Krishna, otherwise we would not be here. And that's the centre, the focus of the project. [B]ut the practical realisation, to live communally, that is difficult. What keeps [the community] together is the morale, the reverence. The goal is there and it

> is clear for everyone [. . .]. But everybody practices it in his own way, and you have to try and live in community in spite of the differences. (Female member, 30s, date of interview 11 April 2005)

The real challenge of GD (as well as the other Krishna communities) is to combine a shared spiritual life with a shared community life, where the devotees use their energy to run the community. Most respondents agreed on the spiritual focus of the project, but how to organise it practically was subject to more discussion. Such discussions are based on personal differences, as well as cultural ones, since people from a variety of European countries live together in the community. This diversity contributes to the translocal nature of the community, since it brings together traditions and ways of life from different national contexts.

Three groups of devotees can be distinguished within GD: (1) priests, (2) other members living in the community, and (3) outside members. Most of the priests live in the Temple Building (see Fig. 11.1), and three female priests reside in part of the House on the Stream (Fig. 11.3). The priests work in the temple, and carry out the religious services for Krishna. Some of them have part-time jobs outside the community, to finance extra, personal expenses, such as studies or travel. Other members buy or rent a place in the Guesthouse (Fig. 11.4), or the House on the Stream and work outside the community. They participate in some of the services and help maintain the community, such as through gardening. Outside members are devotees who live in neighbouring villages, and worship in the temple. When looking at the devotees in relation to where they live, it is interesting to observe that those who are, spiritually speaking, closest to Krishna, i.e. the priests, live closest to

Fig. 11.3 House on the stream on the grounds of Goloka Dhama

Fig. 11.4 Guesthouse in Goloka Dhama

His presence in the Temple Building. This minimises potential distraction from the services, and it is an honour to live closest to Krishna.

Within ISKCON, there are differences between urban and rural temples. According to the respondents, the urban temples are both literally and figuratively more embedded in society. In such temples, missionary activities are very important: the devotees are expected to go out on the streets to preach Krishna Consciousness, to chant the maha-mantra, to sell books, and to distribute prasadam (blessed food). Rural temples are associated more with an inward-oriented, quiet and contemplative life. It should be noted that these differences are not absolute, however: urban temples need priests too, and rural temples need “outside” activities, to generate income. Still, the ISKCON can offer its devotees a spiritual life of their own choice. ISKCON temples are located throughout the world and, depending on practical constraints such as visas and language skills, devotees can choose to move to a temple of a size and location of their choice. In addition, young people without families of their own, as well as older people without dependent children, often take the opportunity to move around between temples (internationally).

Based on the above differences between urban and rural temples, it could be expected that the former are embedded locally in the surrounding local context, whereas the latter are more isolated and spiritual places. It is this embeddedness or isolation that I turn to now, while focusing on the case of GD.

11.6 Local Embeddedness and Translocal Relations

Religious communities are held together by a common focus on spiritual life, which results in a strong inward orientation. At the same time, aspects of the outside world may be of interest. In the case of GD, this attraction lies in the interaction with its outside members in the surrounding local area, and in being part of the local community. ISKCON temples are based on ideas that are not rooted in Western culture. Devotees are willing to explain their beliefs to outsiders, and also attempt to convert them. Conversion is grounded in the movement's philosophy:

> To assume the compassion of the soul, chanting the holy name, and dedicating oneself [to Krishna] as central, and to convince others of doing the same, that is the most important element in the ideology. (Female member, 30s, my emphasis, date of interview 6 April 2005)

However, GD's remote location makes it difficult to follow missionary traditions as practised in urban temples. The devotees recognise this, and prefer to see GD as a spiritual centre, where devotees can live contemplative lives:

> Interviewer: And how do you like it here when you compare it to [the urban temple where you lived before?]
>
> Respondent: This is a more silent place, [in the urban temple], there was always something happening. This is quite a silent place but otherwise it is quite similar. [The urban temple] was more a preacher place, we did [go out and preach], there were many programs and so on. [. . .] I like this place, it is near the forest it is quiet and peaceful. (Male member, 50s, date of interview 11 April 2005)

Leading a contemplative life is facilitated by the community's rural location, which functions as a barrier to outside influences. A member described the rural, mountainous location in terms of providing shelter:

> [The community] lies behind a mountain, it's sheltered. I have the feeling that the community developed here because of that. It's very much protected, for instance from city influences, but also in case of war, or whenever, it will always be a bit sheltered. (Female member, 30s, date of interview 10 April 2005)

Ruralism is constructed as peaceful, quiet, natural, and protected. In a rural place, the community can serve as a temple where ISKCON members can withdraw from the busier life in urban temples. At the same time, being a quiet place would facilitate GD's exclusion from mainstream society. However, the community does not intend to be isolated from society, and has attempted to interest outsiders in its philosophy and way of life:

> We want people to come here and experience us, we want to show people our goals, our lifestyle. [. . .] We want to come closer to people and offer them an alternative for their own lives, because that's what people are looking for nowadays. [. . .] We have other communities in Germany, like the Veden Akademie [Vedic Academy]. [They give] seminars to people, who are looking for the roots of civilisation, the roots of knowledge, astrology, a healthy lifestyle, all in connection with nature. [. . .] These people don't have to live in a temple, but rather accept and understand some part of the philosophy and apply that in their daily lives. (Female member, 40s, date of interview 12 April 2005)

GD's members recognise that they are an "exotic" phenomenon in Western societies in general, and in their rural environment in particular, and are actively committed to being accepted. From the time of the community's establishment, the devotees have been open towards the local population about their lifestyle. A respondent described the strategy of the devotees:

> The first inhabitants immediately approached the municipality, and said we're going to live here, and we'd like to introduce ourselves to you. [. . .] That was a good initiative. They introduced their community, their beliefs, how they are financed. (Male local resident, 50s, date of interview 8 April 2005)

Initially, the local residents were afraid that the "Haris", as they call the devotees, would attempt to convert them. This was largely based on previous experiences with a sect which used to be located at the current residence of the community. Members of the sect had attempted to draw local people into their way of life. Therefore, it was soon agreed that the devotees would not undertake activities to convert others. The current relationship with the local population is based on good neighbourliness. The devotees participate in local community life, such as by sending their children to the local kindergarten and primary school. The local kindergarten attempts to respect the different lifestyles of the parents of the children, and sees them as enriching. For example, when a child eats vegetarian food, and another one eats meat, the teachers explain to the children that both choices are legitimate, and that there is no right and wrong in such matters. The children play with each other, and as a result, the parents get to know each other as well, and seem to live together harmoniously. I have written elsewhere about the integrative capacities of a local school when different groups live in the same area (see Meijering, 2006).

In addition, the devotees are integrated into the local community through work. For instance, one of the devotees is a primary school teacher. The school respects her religious beliefs, and, for example, she gets the day off on Hindu religious holidays. An example of a company run by devotees who live in Abentheuer is Govinda Versand, an internet shop for ayurvedic and natural products (see Govinda Natur GmBH, 2010). This company employs quite a number of devotees, many of whom live in GD. Through their job, they get a chance to come outside the community, and to become part of the local community. Another example is a devotee who runs a vegetarian catering company. The Hare Krishna cuisine is inspired by the Indian kitchen. This devotee just started providing meals at a school for applied science in the region. The school board was enthusiastic about the taste and healthiness of the meals, and thought it a good opportunity to provide their students with good, healthy, and slightly "different" food. In this manner, the people in the region get a chance to get to know aspects of the Hare Krishna culture. The devotees also see it as an opportunity to spread the spiritual ideals of the movement in a covert manner:

> It has to be food that has been dedicated to God, and therefore the food touches people's spiritual consciousness. When you eat prasadam, that provides a certain spiritual experience, it is not just the food itself. [. . .] When someone with a spiritual consciousness is cooking the food, that gives flavour to the food, and that is a way in which people can unconsciously develop themselves further in a spiritual sense, for instance because they say, oh this food tastes so good, I want to visit your community. I know that I ate prasadam at a festival, and

> whenever I was hungry I went back to the Hare Krishnas, even though there were many other places where they had food. (Female member, 30s, date of interview 10 April 2005)

Socially, the devotees at GD and the village people interact as well. The devotees are conscious about the environment, and want to keep the local village and its surroundings a clean, natural and beautiful place to live. Also, some of them are quite keen on keeping good relations with the villagers.

> [The devotees] are accepted as part of the village, they participate in everything. They helped with the construction of the new town hall, everybody has their own capabilities. Someone did the cooking, others did the masonry, and so on. We also clean the village every year in the spring, and they help out as well, they clean the stream. They are recognised and valued in the municipality. (Male local resident, 50s, date of interview 8 April 2005)

Besides creating social interactions by helping out in practical community matters, the devotees also organise personal social events in the community. For example, two devotees got married in the temple in GD, and gave a big party in the village afterwards. Both devotees and villagers were there, and everybody enjoyed it immensely. The devotee who got married was surprised about this, as, in accordance with the ISKCON rules, no alcohol and drugs were used at the party. The devotees actively attempt to be part of the local community, and the village people accept them. Although some of the older members in the local community were a bit reluctant at first, they gradually let go of their reservations:

> In the community, you notice that it is the older people in particular who remember the Hare Krishnas as those weird people dancing in the streets of the cities, selling books, wearing weird robes and putting make-up on their faces, but it is not like that here at all. For example, the vegetarian food; at first the local people said, I will not eat that, there may be something weird in it. But it tastes excellent, and during the construction of the town hall we always had dinner together on Saturday evenings, and the locals only wanted to eat the vegetarian food. (Male local resident, 50s, date of interview 8 April 2005)

Both groups respect each other's norms and values, which is summarised through two quotes from a local resident and a devotee:

> I think it's important [. . .] to be confronted with other ways of thinking. That enables you to realise that our vision of the world is not the only one, and to see that things can be run differently. (Female local resident, 40s, date of interview 6 April 2005)
>
> I have to say, most of the people here are very tolerant and open. They just observe whether somebody is sincere and honest. They are not prejudiced, which is what I've often experienced in cities. (Female member, 30s, date of interview 11 April 2005)

Within this atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance, the devotees are still aware of the fact that they are seen as different and exotic. They try to avoid this by looking "normal" in public space. For instance, the respondents indicated that they choose to wear "ordinary" clothes outside the community. A respondent commented:

> Personally, I would never go to town in a sari, or do shopping in a sari. [. . .] I don't want people to think, she belongs to that odd sect, and so on. (Female member, 60s, date of interview 7 April 2005)

The devotees attempt not to "offend" the local population by making their way of life invisible in public space. Thus, they negotiate their identities depending on where they are, which is in line with Smith's (2001) argument as discussed in section X.2. Within the community, wearing a sari indicates commitment to Krishna and enhances a sense of togetherness, whereas outside the community it is seen as inappropriate. The member's sensitivity about the implications of the sari reflects the awareness that GD perhaps still suffers from the negative image acquired in earlier years.

Through the presence of an "exotic", strange and new phenomenon such as GD, the rural area in which the community is situated is typically enriched or at least expanded with different cultural elements. In this manner, the area becomes a translocal rural area.

11.7 Conclusions and Discussion

Goloka Dhama (GD) can be seen as a translocal rural place, because of its embeddedness in (1) a highly functional and integrated international network and at the same time in (2) its local and regional base through interaction with the local/regional population. In other words, the community and its members derive part of their identities from the wider International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and part from the local/regional context. The functioning of GD as a translocal rural place is represented visually in Fig. 11.5. First, GD's translocal spatiality comes to the fore through being part of a larger international network of communities and, indeed, the community in itself is argued to be interchangeable with other communities in the ISKCON network. In Fig. 11.5, this is represented (in circles) through the connections between GD and the other communities around it. The spiritual practices of Krishna Consciousness are the same throughout the different communities, and therefore the communities are interchangeable at the spiritual level. The purpose of the communities is to improve the world through spiritual practice, while the goal of each individual is to become united with God. In the end, the continued existence and success of individual communities is subordinate to the continuity of the movement and its philosophy. Second, GD is a locally/regionally grounded place, as its daily life is influenced by local factors. The organisation of the group, interaction between the members, contacts with outside members, and the interaction with the local population shape the local character of GD. All these relations are also depicted in Fig. 11.5, through the lines connecting the people in the community, and the lines linking the people (representing devotees) outside. The arrows pointing outward from the community represent the interactions with the "regular" local and regional population.

GD is not a typical translocal rural place, as most discussions on translocalism focus on international migration, where translocal migrants set up new lives in new places while remaining embedded in their old lives and old places. In the case of GD, the notion of the life that is left behind is not so relevant, as the essence of that

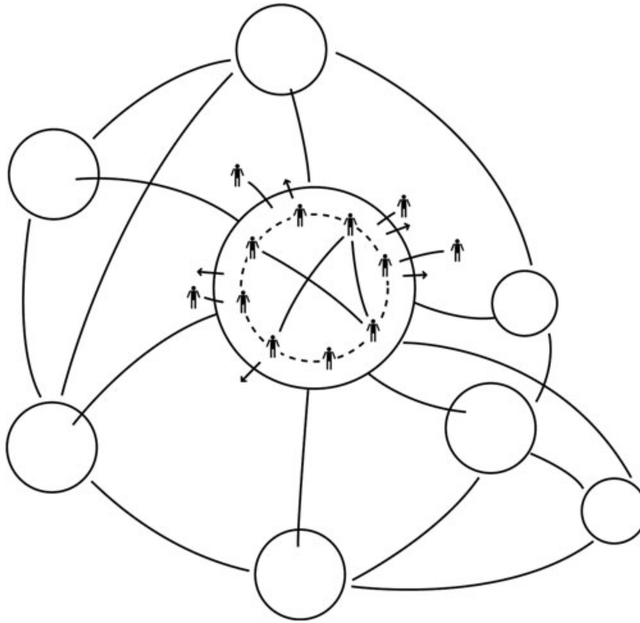

Fig. 11.5 Goloka Dhama's relations within and outside the community

life, the spiritual practice of Krishna Consciousness, is easily transferred to the new community. However, the processes of translocal ruralism that I discussed in the context of GD, such as functioning in an international subcultural network, as well as a local/regional culture, are relevant in other cases of translocal ruralism as well. In that sense, it would be interesting to compare the translocalities of intentional communities to the more "mainstream" translocalities of migration.

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Chapter 12
Boundary Crossings: Migration, Belonging/'Un-belonging' in Rural Scotland

Philomena de Lima

12.1 Introduction

While studies of population change are not new to rural areas (Smith, 2007; Milbourne, 2007), international migration and the presence of minority ethnic groups have, until recently, largely been perceived as mainly urban phenomena in the UK. This urban emphasis has resulted in binary conceptualisations of urban spaces as 'cosmopolitan', in contrast to rural spaces, which are seen as somewhat homogenous, ethnically and culturally, despite growing research that has sought to challenge these notions (Chakraborti & Garland, 2004; Philo, 1992). Migration and mobility in and out of rural areas is not new. For instance, the out-migration of Scots, particularly those from rural areas such as the Scottish Highlands and Islands, as they left for the so-called 'new world' (e.g. Canada, United States and Australia), to escape persecution and poverty and to seek a better life, and their subsequent contribution to the societies they migrated to is the subject of much attention (Hunter, 1995).

Nevertheless, despite this interest in migration, the same attention has not been accorded to the lives and experiences of minority ethnic groups and there is little if any recognition of their contribution to rural areas such as the Highlands and Islands (de Lima, 2004, 2006). However, since 2004 and the expansion of the European Union, which incorporated central and eastern European countries, labour migration into rural areas in the UK, including Scotland, has become a growing focus of attention (de Lima & Wright, 2009; Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009). In addition, in the Highlands and Islands in particular, both internal and international migration have been promoted as a way of addressing demographic challenges posed by an aging population and high levels of youth out-migration from rural areas. This has led to an increased interest in issues of integration and the retention of migrants to rural areas as a way of trying to 'fix' people to the places they have migrated to. Drawing on

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3_12,
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recent discourses related to notions of 'translocalism' and 'mobilities', and research in the Scottish rural context, it is argued that issues of rural migration and mobility are more than just movements of people from one place to another. These also include individual and household relationships and identities stretched across multiple places and spaces (Appadurai, 1993), where there is a blurring of boundaries between here and there and what is considered home and abroad.

12.2 Research Studies

This chapter will draw on qualitative research undertaken by the author, sometimes in collaboration with others (e.g. de Lima, Mackenzie, Hutchison, & Howells, 2005; de Lima, Jentsch, & Whelton, 2005; de Lima, Chaudhry, Whelton, & Arshad, 2007) in rural Scotland over the past 10 years, focusing predominantly, but not exclusively, on the north of Scotland (Grampian and the Highlands and Islands).[1] Whilst drawing on quantitative data sources such as the 1991 and 2001 censuses (de Lima, 2001; de Lima et al., 2005b) and information related to migration statistics (de Lima et al., 2005a; de Lima et al., 2007), in general the studies referred to in this chapter employed qualitative methods. These have included varying combinations of questionnaires, interviews and focus groups with minority ethnic groups, as well as service providers and employers in the case of two studies (e.g. de Lima et al., 2005a; de Lima et al., 2007). Whilst one study focused specifically on youth (de Lima, 2002), the rest focused on a range of age groups. Overall, these studies tried to ensure a balance of genders, ethnicities, ages and socio-economic backgrounds. The Highlands and Islands and Grampian are geographically diverse areas encompassing two cities (Aberdeen and Inverness) as well as small towns. Overall, they encompass large rural hinterlands and, in the case of the former, remote rural areas and islands as well.

Whilst recognising the diversity within and between what might be termed majority and minority ethnic groups in the UK, this chapter will focus on two broad categories of people. The first category is minority ethnic groups (e.g. Asians, Africans, etc) – called 'established minority ethnic' groups in this chapter – from what is sometimes referred to as the 'New Commonwealth'. These include people from countries that were decolonised in the twentieth century and are predominantly non-white and are considered to be 'developing' countries – a term which continues to be used in debates on immigration from these countries from time to time (Hennessy, 2004). The second group is more recent migrant workers from what are known as the Accession 8 and Accession 2 countries, following the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in May 2004.[2] The term 'recent minority ethnic' groups

[1] Further details on methods and samples can be obtained from the following publications: de Lima (2001, 2002, 2008); de Lima et al. (2005a, 2005b); de Lima et al. (2007).

[2] Accession 8 (A8) countries entered the EU in May 2004 and included nationals from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia; and Accession 2

is used in this chapter in relation to these groups. Two of the studies (de Lima et al., 2005a; de Lima et al., 2007) discussed in this chapter focused mainly on 'recent minority ethnic groups' and the rest mainly on 'established minority ethnic groups'.

12.3 Focus of the Chapter

This chapter shall, in the following sections, provide: a brief review of discourses on 'rural' areas, particularly focusing on how the presence of minority ethnic groups disrupts traditional romanticised conceptualisations of the rural as ' homogenous' and unchanging', and highlighting the importance of concepts such as 'translocalism' and 'mobilities' in making sense of 'rural'; an overview of population changes and trends, focusing on the more established and recent minority ethnic minority groups in rural Scotland; and a discussion of their experiences of life in rural communities, with a particular focus on issues related to belonging and identity. The latter argues for the centrality of places stretched across national boundaries, in this case rural places, which are continually evolving and changing.

12.4 Translocalism and Beyond Notions of the 'Rural Idyll'

Debates on the role of place and conceptualisations of urban and rural are far from recent. Two conceptions of the rural have continued to co-exist regarding how the rural is perceived and experienced. On the one hand, there is a prevailing conception of rural as on the wane (contrasting this with urban areas, which are associated with growth), disadvantaged and under threat because of the restructuring of its traditional economic base and passive in the face of external influences largely driven by urban interests (Bell, Lloyd, & Vatovec, 2010). However, this passive view of rural has recently been challenged by Bell et al. (2010), who argued that both mobility and stability are intrinsically embedded in both urban and rural and each exists in a strong relationship with the other:

> The changes in the rural do not denote its waning strength in the face of the urban torrent any more than urban change denotes its own waning strength. Both the urban and the rural are modes of activeness, mobilising and stabilising the material, the symbolic and the relational. (Bell et al., 2010, p. 221)

On the other hand, the close association of rural with nature makes the rural seem to have life-enhancing benefits by enabling a lifestyle that is 'socially cohesive, happy and healthy living, at a pace and quality which differs markedly from the city.' (Cloke, 2004, p. 19). Images of the 'rural' as homogenous, cohesive, and a 'good place to live' are, however, deeply embedded in popular culture in the UK,

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countries entered the EU in January 2007 and included Romania and Bulgaria. In May 2004, Ireland, Sweden and the UK were the only EU countries that allowed A8 nationals access to their labour markets.

exercising a powerful influence on the way in which rural life is perceived and at times experienced (Jedrej & Nuttall, 1996). Rural, for some people, is seen as providing an escape from the harsh realities of urban life, and the 'purity' of the rural has frequently been contrasted with the 'pollution' of the city; the latter often is closely associated with the presence of diverse communities (Lowe, 1983, cited in Agyeman & Spooner, 1997).

The framing of discourses on rural in this way (see for example, Findlay, Short, Stockdale, Li, & Philip, 1999; Jedrej & Nuttall, 1996) has led to essentialising rural-urban differences and to a reinforcement of particular conceptualisations of rural places, which have foregrounded an emphasis on homogeneity, stability and passivity. This has resulted in at least two trends. First, there are ideas of the rural as being somewhat 'timeless', 'disconnected' and isolated from global movements of people, such as international migrants and minority ethnic groups, which are perceived to be largely urban phenomena (de Lima, 2001). Also, there is a tendency amongst agencies and rural residents to deny what Cloke labels 'transgressive presences and practices' from rural spaces (2003, p. 3), in this case a general neglect until recently of the experiences of minority ethnic groups in rural areas and a reinforcement of hegemonic ideas of rural areas as largely 'white spaces'(Agyeman & Spooner, 1997). These two trends have shaped notions of presences/absences and belonging/unbelonging in particular places in rural Scotland, as well as rural parts of the UK in general (Chakraborti & Garland, 2004; Philo, 1992).

However, rural areas and populations do not exist in a vacuum, as they shape and are shaped by the same national and global policies and influences as urban areas, thus increasingly calling into the question not only the distinction between rural and urban, but also the notion of a monolithic and unchanging rural. The restructuring of rural economies, the impact of globalisation, demographic changes (e.g. a declining and ageing population) and the out-migration of young people are identified as some of the significant drivers of change in rural Scotland, and especially in remote rural regions such as the Scottish Highlands and Islands (de Lima & Wright, 2009). Overall, rural areas have a lower percentage of those in the 16–34 age bands, but a higher proportion of the population in the younger and in the 40–75 age bands (The Scottish Government, 2010, p. 7). Against this background, encouraging return migration as well as migration from other parts of the UK and internationally as part of population regeneration strategies has been actively promoted by development agencies such as the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE, 2005).

The changing policy emphasis combined with ongoing academic discourses that challenge and recast the meanings and perceptions of 'rurality', from merely denoting 'physical space' to more active conceptualisations that highlight the symbolic significance of rurality within which social and cultural characteristics are bound up (e.g. Bell et al., 2010; Milbourne, 2007), provide important opportunities to address migration and ethnicity in rural contexts. In addition, the notion of 'translocal' helps to bridge the 'situatedness' of minority ethnic groups in the rural communities in which they live or have migrated to, whilst simultaneously transgressing their local boundaries (Gilmartin, 2008). Drawing on the concept of 'translocality', which originates in the work of Appadurai (1993), provides a useful lens for identifying the

ways in which communities, in this case minority ethnic groups in rural Scotland, are spatially extended by virtue of migration. The relationship between migration, identity and belonging as dynamic and stretching across places, spaces and time, operating at different scales whilst simultaneously being situated in a specific locality, provides a challenge to the valuing of 'place and roots' at the expense of notions of mobile subjects and places (Cresswell, 2006).

12.5 Rural Scotland: Minority Ethnic Communities

The population of Scotland is estimated to be around 5.2 million, with approximately one million people living in rural areas that cover 94% (7.8 million ha in total) of its landmass. The population of Scotland was reported to have increased in all areas between 2001 and 2007. Positive net migration, half of which was international, was cited as one of the main reasons for population gain across rural and urban Scotland (Office of the Chief Researcher and Office of the Chief Economic Adviser, 2010).

So, who are the minority ethnic groups in rural Scotland? There is a dearth of accurate statistics on minority ethnic groups in Scotland. The main sources of data on the 'established minority ethnic' groups are the 1991 and 2001 censuses. According to the latter, these groups comprised 2.01 percent (101,677) of the overall Scottish population (Scottish Executive, 2004). Although the 'established minority ethnic population' is mainly urban (60 percent or 337,737), 40 percent (24,897) are dispersed throughout the mainland and islands of Scotland. All local authorities in Scotland recorded a presence, however small, of these groups in their area (de Lima et al., 2005b; Scottish Executive, 2004).

Three features have consistently been identified as characterising these minority ethnic groups or households in rural areas: they are small in number, diverse (culturally/ethnically and socio-economically) and dispersed (de Lima, 2001; de Lima et al., 2005b). Their numbers varied between the different local authorities in remote rural areas: for example, from 1,671 in the Highlands (0.8 percent of the Highland population) to 86 in the Orkney Islands (0.46 percent of the Orkney Islands population). The main ethnic groups represented amongst this population are those of mixed cultural heritage, people from Pakistan, India, China and other south Asian groups such as from Bangladesh and the Philippines (de Lima et al., 2005b).

One of the main recent contributors to increased migration into rural areas across the UK, including Scotland, has been the result of the expansion of the EU in May 2004 and the entry into the UK labour market of the A8 nationals in May 2004, joined by the A2 countries in 2007. Despite widespread concerns about the accuracy of data on these recent minority ethnic groups from the Accession 8 countries, it is widely acknowledged they have made an important contribution to population gain in Scotland (Rolfe & Metcalf, 2009). Previous waves of migration from Britain's former colonies (e.g. the West Indies, the Indian subcontinent, parts of

Africa, etc.) were predominantly urban-based. By contrast, remote rural areas such as the Highlands and Islands, which had hitherto been unused to international migration, have been recipients of minority ethnic groups from A8 countries on a scale not experienced previously (de Lima et al., 2005a; de Lima et al., 2007; Jentsch, de Lima, & MacDonald, 2007). For instance, a study undertaken in the Highlands and Islands in 2005 following the expansion of the EU identified an eleven-fold increase in National Insurance registrations (an indication of those taking up employment for the first time) with regard to those from the A8 states over the tax years 2003/2004 and 2004/2005 (de Lima et al., 2005a). Similar trends were also noted in other parts of northern Scotland, such as Grampian (de Lima et al., 2007). Minorities of Polish origin were the largest group, with smaller numbers from countries such as Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia and the Czech Republic.

Overall, the minority ethnic population tends to have a younger age profile and is employed in a narrow range of sectors with limited prospects for progression. For instance, central and eastern European workers were predominantly employed in hospitality, agriculture, and food (de Lima et al., 2005a; de Lima et al., 2007). The 'established minority ethnic' groups were concentrated in a fairly limited range of industries: wholesale and retail trade; manufacturing; health and social work; and real estate, renting and business activities. The Pakistani, Chinese and Indian communities had high rates of self-employment (de Lima et al., 2005b; Scottish Executive, 2004, pp. 38, 42–43).

12.6 Identity and Belonging: Crossing Boundaries

Hamaz and Vasta (2009, p. 21) argue that integration and transnationalism are closely associated with notions of belonging with regard to minority ethnic groups and migrants in the UK in two ways: in terms of the construction of border and boundaries and in relation to political struggles between minority and majority groups around issues such as citizenship, identity, access to services and so on. Moving between places for some can be a source of status, power or upward mobility; by contrast, for others, it can be a source of social exclusion, where notions of belonging and identity may be contested (Hannam, Sheller, & Urry, 2006). Although 'integration' as a concept is highly contested and has different meanings, there is general acknowledgment that it is most useful when perceived as a two-way process involving adjustments by both minority ethnic groups and the host communities, and that initiatives focusing on integration should be inclusive and aimed at all groups (Castles, Korac, Vasta, & Vertovec, 2002; Hamaz & Vasta, 2009; Pennix, 2004; Penninx, Spencer, & Van Hear, 2008; Samers, 2010). While it is recognised that the role and impact of the nation-state in relation to what Gilmartin (2008, p. 1883) calls the 'threat of mobile subjects' and boundary issues as well as in determining who may and may not belong through notions of 'citizenship' are important factors, this section focuses on exploring how minority ethnic groups in rural areas negotiate belonging and identity (e.g. notions of identity, community, acceptance, affiliation and home-making) as they navigate through their daily lives.

12.6.1 Motivations for Migrating: Role of Place and Translocal Relationships

Minority ethnic groups' motivations for migrating are important in understanding the relationships that they have or develop with the place they have migrated to, as well as where they have migrated from. The reasons cited for moving to rural areas in Scotland by minority ethnic groups were mainly economic (employment) and personal (joining family members or marriage), with small numbers citing other reasons, such as travel and learning English (de Lima, 2001; de Lima et al., 2005a, 2005b; de Lima et al., 2007).

The centrality of place was evident in reasons cited for being in the north of Scotland. In instances where personal factors, quality-of-life considerations and cultural factors are cited, minority ethnic groups may make a greater investment in developing enduring relationships with the place (and people) they have migrated to, whilst simultaneously maintaining relationships in their place of origin. In some instances, research participants contrasted their experience with urban areas in the UK, emphasising quality-of-life issues:

> . . .I don't like the city. I came to Edinburgh. . .my first city here. . .Scottish people are very kind. . .Liverpool was a big city. . .a lot of noise. . .here [Highlands] it is quiet, the air is clear, the scenery is very good. (Chinese female, cited in de Lima et al., 2005b, p. 87)[3]

Others referred to their countries of origin, primarily citing economic reasons, as well as the cultural familiarity of the place they had migrated to as significant in migration decisions:

> I want a better life for my children. There are economic problems at home with prices, which are similar to here [Highlands], but wages are four times lower. Latvia is like Scotland and Ireland because of the culture, people, and landscape; although these are not the same as in Latvia they are quite similar. (Female, EU accession state national, cited in de Lima et al., 2005a, p. 47)

Those whose primary motivation is to travel and learn about other cultures appear to be more likely to engage with a variety of boundary-spanning activities, such as language classes and cultural and social activities, and are more likely to see rural areas as the first step towards familiarising themselves with the country and culture before moving to a city:

> . . .young people with good qualifications perceived being in the Highlands and Islands as a good first step to finding one's feet, but were keen to move to a city as soon as an opportunity arose. (de Lima et al., 2005a, p. 74)
>
> I want to live life on my own and get some work experience internationally. . .it's exciting to be living and working abroad. (Female, Lithuanian, cited in de Lima et al., 2007, p. 83)

[3] Most of the interviews cited in this chapter were undertaken in English, with a small minority undertaken in the interviewees' first language with an interpreter present. For instance, this interview was undertaken in Mandarin Chinese.

By contrast, those whose primary motivation is to earn as much as they could, so that they were in a position to send remittances home, are less inclined to invest in establishing relationships and engaging in activities related to the places they had migrated to (de Lima et al., 2005a). Mobility to another country was seen as an economic necessity, and being in a specific place did not result from a deliberate choice:

> In Poland, there is high unemployment, not enough of jobs for someone with my experience. After my studies, I decided to go exactly the same way as [A], but I did not know where I was going. [The agency] just said they had a job for me. . . . they asked me to call them if I accepted. So I called them and they accepted me and then I checked where [. . .] is, then I looked at the Internet . . . and I thought – Oh! I am going to the middle of nowhere. There were no choices given, it was the first place I had been given . . . I could reject it and wait for another one but I did not want to waste my time. (Male, EU accession state national, cited in de Lima et al., 2005a, p. 84)

These individuals were likely to see the place they migrated to as a temporary abode – 'not a real home' – a place to work and earn as much as possible, in as short a time as possible. They were more likely to spend all their time working to maximise their income. The little spare time they had was used to maintain contact with their family and friends in their countries of origin, rather than investing in establishing relationships with the local communities or learning English if they were unable to communicate.

Chain migration and the role of social networks in transnational migration is another important feature of the ways in which translocal relationships build on previous 'co-present' relations (Mckay, 2007; Vertovec, 2001), which are maintained by those who have migrated and those left behind, acting as a conduit for further migration to a specific locality, an issue hitherto mainly discussed in the context of urban migration. For example, studies of minority ethnic groups in the north of Scotland found that the majority of participants had specifically chosen to come to work in northern Scotland, following visits to the area and based on advice and recommendations from family and friends who were already there (de Lima, 2001; de Lima et al., 2007). Having family and friends provided a sense of security and useful contacts with regard to, for example, finding accommodation, looking for employment and getting information on how to access services:

> It was good because my friends kept me [in their house] for the first few months and told me how to look for a job. I think it would have been more difficult for me without their support. (Female, Lithuanian, cited in de Lima et al., 2007, p. 81)

There was also evidence of employers using migrant employees to recruit further employees – usually other members of their family and friends – from eastern European countries, rather than employing local labour, as well as engaging in recruitment visits abroad (de Lima et al., 2007). In this context, social networks provided an important mechanism for linking the here and the there as mutually reinforcing, bringing the there into the here and vice versa, stretching across national spaces and boundaries. This stretching of relationships is not only evident with regard to minority ethnic groups but also in relation to employers in rural areas

who have actively extended their reach beyond national boundaries in their search for cheap labour; in this sense, the rural is indeed on the ‘move’ and not merely passive.

12.6.2 Negotiating Identity and Belonging in Everyday Life

Given the variety of motivations that have led minority ethnic groups to live and work in rural areas, how do they experience and negotiate issues of identity and belonging?

Identity and belonging amongst minority ethnic groups are interesting areas to explore both in terms of the centrality of place as well as the overlapping nature of places/cultures, which may stretch across national boundaries. There has been a growing body of rural literature that has focused on the role of place (and rural places in particular) in the production of what are described as ‘others’ (Creswell, 2010; Neal & Agyeman, 2006; Philo, 1992), as well as an increasing emphasis on a ‘mobile’ rural as embodying spaces and places that are socially produced and:

> . . . incorporate[s] gendered, raced and ethnicised, sexualised, classed social power and political relationships ; that spaces are never inert and immobile but are constantly subject to social and economic change and processes of reproduction and reinvention and that within these processes, contestations, claims and counter claims will be key drivers and shapers. (Neal & Agyeman, 2006, p. 4)

Research on minority ethnic groups in rural areas, where communities appear to have little or no experience of living with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, have found that issues of identity and belonging tended to be perceived as being negotiated in ‘racialised contexts’, which have attempted to fix people to a place or culture (Scourfield, Evans, Shah, & Beynon, 2005). The particular challenges related to issues of identity and belonging in rural areas and the ‘otherness’ of people based on their minority ethnicities in the English rural context was first highlighted by Agyeman and Spooner:

> For white people, ‘ethnicity’ is seen as being ‘out of place’ in the countryside, reflecting the Otherness of people of colour. In the white imagination people of colour are confined to towns and cities, representing an urban, ‘alien’ environment, and the white landscape of rurality is aligned with ‘nativeness’ and the absence of evil and danger. The ethnic associations of the countryside are naturalised as an absence intruded upon by people of colour. (1997, p. 199)

This conceptualising of rural and urban has served to reinforce the supposedly static and unchanging nature of rural communities counterpoised with the urban as mobile and dynamic.

Maintaining a balance between a sense of cultural identity that may stretch beyond the present location or place across national boundaries whilst also developing a sense of belonging to the here and now can be a challenge for minority ethnic groups in rural areas.

Developing a sense of belonging in a particular place may, in some circumstances, mean taking on the attitudes of the 'other' even if they are negative and result in collusion with the perpetrators of this 'otherness', in order to avoid being the other. For example, Sutherland (2004), growing up in Orkney as a 'black' child vividly describes his ambivalence about growing up on the island and the lengths he went to in order to be accepted by his peers:

> I developed an intense ambivalence about Orkney and its people. On the one hand, I felt very much a native and was treated as such, while on the other, I was denied the possibility of real integration because of my perceived otherness.[. . .] I expended all my energy deflecting attention by telling racist jokes and daring more than even the most deranged head cases. (Sutherland, 2004, p. 5)

There can be intense pressure on migrants and minority ethnic groups to be seen to be 'assimilating' in the public domain in rural communities (Chakraborti & Garland, 2004). For example, parents may choose Anglicised names for their children and young people will often feel embarrassed to speak to their parents in their mother tongue:

> I speak in Swahili, but the children don't reply in Swahili; they reply in English. My son got to the point of asking me not to speak to him in Swahili. (Participant cited in de Lima, 2007, p. 18)

In studies undertaken in rural areas such as the Highlands (see de Lima, 2001, 2007), many participants identified the presence of strong pressures to assimilate to the 'dominant' cultural norms. In addition, the absence of co-ethnic groups within a reasonable spatial distance made it difficult to maintain a sense of belonging that incorporated multiple places and cultures in small rural communities:

> It is difficult to keep your identity and your culture. It is nearly impossible; if you want to be accepted, you feel forced to be like the others in the main culture. You feel so alone: that is one reason why I feel I would like to go somewhere where there are more Asians. Here, in some senses, I feel like a foreigner. I do not feel I fit in. People's society here is so different. I am a Muslim and they do not understand what it is to be a Muslim. (Participant cited in de Lima, 2007, p. 19)

Belonging meant conforming to norms and cultural practices of the dominant majority. In general, participants across the studies consistently identified the fact that being accepted into the local culture was conditional:

> If you can drink, you are accepted more quickly, but if you don't, it isn't so easy. If I can take them as they are, why can't they take me as I am? (Participant cited in de Lima, 2001, p. 33)

Individuals felt frustrated at the stereotypical views expressed by local residents towards people from other cultures, which attempted to 'fix' people culturally:

> People think that all Russians like vodka and Russia is full of Mafia on the street. (Participant cited in de Lima et al., 2005b, p. 92)

The inhabitation of multiple but overlapping spaces, physically in one place while simultaneously drawing on the identities and cultures of the other places they have connections with, was a challenge for minority ethnic groups in the north of

Scotland. This was especially so in a context where the dominant assumption is of mutual exclusivity – i.e. identity as being located in one place/culture. However, despite these challenges, in a study undertaken on young people in the Highlands, the majority of young people chose to identify themselves in 'hyphenated' terms – for example, 'Scottish-Indian' 'Muslim-Scottish' or 'Scottish-Chinese' (de Lima, 2002). These hyphenated identities often reflected broad national categories, a particular geographical location and/or religious identities that spanned national boundaries, as well as in terms of the place they were born or had lived most of their lives or in relation to their parents' origins or their religion:

> Half and half probably, as I have Pakistani parents and that, and they were born in Pakistan. My mum was a child when she moved here. Then I was born here, but I am still half Pakistani and then part Scottish as I've lived in Scotland all my life. (Pakistani young person cited in de Lima, 2002, p. 13)

In general, most participants articulated their hyphenated identities in broad national or cross-national terms rather than in terms that cohere around a specific village or town. The articulation of identities in this way may have been a reflection of the fact that the chances of meeting someone from the same village or town from their country of origin in the north of Scotland were slim, as well as reflecting the importance of taking into account different scalar frames of references when making sense of transnational migration processes (Pries, 2005). However, identity is relational and multilayered and participants expressed frustration at constraints imposed by others as markers of differences (in this case it was colour, but other factors were equally significant, such as accent) and which were frequently foregrounded in interactions:

> I get a lot of people that ask and a lot of times at school they ask 'Where are you from?' And, I say from Inverness and they say, 'Well, how come you are a different colour?' And I say, like, 'Well, my mum and dad were from India. But I am from Scotland and have lived here all my life and my parents happened to have come from India.' People should step back and think about what they are saying rather than stereotype people all the time. (Participant cited in de Lima, 2007, p. 20)

The emphasis on fixity reflected in stereotypes of people from other cultures and what were perceived to be gender-appropriate roles for that culture was also a source of frustration for those who had to navigate their lives in rural communities:

> They always ask me to demonstrate origami, as though that is the only thing that Japanese women do. Not all Japanese women want to do these things. They are not all traditional. Japanese culture is changing. Japanese women are very modern as well, you know. (Japanese participant cited in de Lima, 2008, p. 176)

In addition to the fluidity of identities, the study of belonging within the context of translocalism and also mobilities paradigms has drawn attention to the multiple and overlapping places and spaces within which minority ethnic groups are located, and the ways in which they actively draw on these locations, physically and metaphorically, to create a sense of belonging in a variety of ways. For instance, as highlighted previously, the emphasis on putting up with working long hours and living in overcrowded accommodation in order to send remittances to family and relatives was fairly common in maintaining close connections across national spaces. The use of

the internet was also cited as an important mechanism for maintaining close connections with family and friends stretched across different localities across national boundaries (de Lima, 2002; de Lima et al., 2005a; de Lima et al., 2007). Although travel to the home country was also an important means of maintaining relationships for all participants, facilitated by the development of regional airports in the north of Scotland and cheap air travel, mobility was not necessarily accessible to all equally. For instance, travel for A8 and A2 migrants was much more feasible on a regular basis, both in terms of distance and costs, than those whose connections were further afield, e.g. Asia or Africa.

Minority ethnic individuals and households also engaged in a variety of what may be described as 'home-making activities' (see Gilmartin, 2008), spanning different scalar levels and stretched across cultures. For example, research participants from Muslim backgrounds reported sending their children from Inverness to Glasgow (a round-trip taking eight hours) once a month for mother tongue classes in Urdu, and they organised private lessons in each other's homes to teach their children to recite the Quran (de Lima, 2001, 2002). Polish migrants and others created their own spaces for 'home-making', drawing on what was available in the locality:

> In Morayshire, a pub has come to be known as the 'Polish Pub' and is well known as a place for Poles to meet informally. In some areas (e.g. Morayshire and Ross-shire), the Catholic Church provides social and other types of support. (de Lima et al., 2005a, p. 70)

Whilst others adapted their practices to what was available locally:

> They [referring to the Church] invited me to join them. They encouraged me to attend. The women's Christian group is a good meeting place where we talk about the Bible and things like that. I am from the Pentecostal Church, but there isn't the possibility of getting involved in it here. So the family attend the Church of Scotland instead. (Participant cited in de Lima, 2008, p. 156)

Home is both here and there. For example , some participants, as reflected in the following dialogue with young people of Indian origin, incorporated multiple cultural/religious practices. Their practices reflected a blurring of boundaries between practices from their parents' countries of origins and from their home in rural Scotland where they are present now:

> Participant 1: Yeah, we celebrate all religious festivals, you know.
> Participant 2: Yes, you know, like Christmas, and we have nothing against that at all.
> Researcher: So you celebrate other festivals?
> Participant 1: Yeah, and when my friends ask me, 'So do you celebrate Easter or something 'cos I was wondering if I should give you Easter eggs?' I mean, I am like, 'Yeah, why not?' (Participants cited in de Lima, 2008, p. 178)

There has also been a growth in a number of associations, e.g. the Highland Indian Association, the Polish Association, the Scottish Highland and Islands Moray Chinese Association, and so on, spanning different spatial levels in the north of Scotland, and they attract a wide variety of members. These associations provide a focus for a variety of activities, including: the celebration of cultural/religious festivals; the organisation of mother tongue language classes to enable the children growing up in the north of Scotland to maintain their

language; and social activities acting as a bridge across communities, such as international ceildihs, which combine Scottish and other cultural – e.g. Indian or Polish – activities. The appropriation of the term 'ceildih' – a Scottish and Irish term derived from Gaelic, to denote an informal social gathering at which there is a combination of music, singing and folk dancing – by minority ethnic groups, is in itself an interesting reflection of how a particular cultural activity in one specific context might be added to by minority ethnic groups in a way that reflects the overlapping, fluid and mobile nature of what belonging means (Hannam, Sheller, & Urry, 2006). These are all examples of minority ethnic communities' home-making, which are simultaneously boundary spanning, and multi-located.

12.7 Conclusion

Concepts such as 'translocalism' and 'mobilities' (as well as transnationalism, though the role of place at times can appear muted within these discourses) provide a useful lens to explore the plurality of rural spaces and voices within a dynamic and stretched context. As reflected in the experiences of minority ethnic groups in the north of Scotland, these concepts help to challenge the hegemonic and often static ideas embodied in notions such as the 'rural idyll' and in discourses about belonging and identity, by recognising the centrality of place-based relationships as multiply located and stretched beyond the local. While the role of the nation-state is important in establishing the macro-legal framework with regard to who belongs and who does not belong, through notions of citizenship, rights and entitlements, making sense of the experiences of minority ethnic groups is also contingent on the 'locality', that is, their situatedness in a particular place, in this case the north of Scotland. Studies of minority ethnic groups in the north of Scotland suggest that motivations for migration and issues related to belonging and identity encompass complex and dynamic social processes embodying many different affiliations and multiple and intersecting identities stretched across spaces and places. In this context, 'translocalism' as a concept provides a useful lens to explore the plurality of spaces, which are dynamic and are stretched and within which minority ethnic groups navigate and negotiate their lives and identities.

Whilst research undertaken in the north of Scotland has helped to develop some insights into the translocal dimension of minority ethnic lives, there is as yet little or no understanding of the ways in which minority ethnic groups might be transforming the majority communities and cultures, or indeed how the lives and identities of the majority communities might be transformed through the very presence of minority ethnic groups. Belonging and identity are also forged out of interactions between people (from both majority and minority communities) across different spaces, so understanding translocality from the perspectives of both minority ethnic and the majority communities in the north of Scotland seems essential if the notion of rural (people, spaces and places) as active, mobile and multiply located is to be sustained.

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C. Hedberg, R.M. do Carmo (eds.), *Translocal Ruralism*,
The GeoJournal Library 103, DOI 10.1007/978-94-007-2315-3,

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