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"Just tensions left, right and centre"

Assessing the social impact of international migration on deindustrialised locale

Anthony Lloyd - Anthony.Lloyd@tees.ac.uk - Orcid: 0000-0002-7017-8125 @lloyd_a1

School of Social Sciences, Humanities & Law, Teesside University

Carol Devanney – C.Devanney@tees.ac.uk – Orcid: 0000-0002-0861-5988

School of Social Sciences, Humanities & Law, Teesside University

Louise Wattis – L.Wattis@tees.ac.uk – Orcid: 0000-0002-8413-9442 @lu72

School of Social Sciences, Humanities & Law, Teesside University

Victoria Bell – Victoria.Bell@tees.ac.uk – Orcid: 0000-0001-7574-431X

Abstract

Deindustrialisation wrought socio-economic and cultural change throughout the UK, Western Europe and the USA. Within some deindustrialised zones, multiple indices of deprivation rise significantly which presents complex and interrelated social problems including poverty, unemployment, poor quality private rented housing, complex physical and mental health problems, and crime. The austerity agenda further exacerbates these problems, cuts local support services, and further entrenches the myriad issues embedded in post-industrial communities. This paper draws on a funded research project in a deindustrialised town in the North East of England designed to measure the impact of migration on the settled community. The project found advantages to inward migration alongside increased community tension where poor neighbourhoods yet to recover from long-term deindustrialisation saw a rapid increase of international migrants. These tensions represent competition for scarce resources amongst the fragmented multi-ethnic working class trying to get by in areas of 'permanent recession'.

Introduction

For four decades, deindustrialisation has featured heavily within academic and political research and discourse (see Strangleman and Rhodes, 2014 for overview). The long-term trend across Western Europe and the United States away from a manufacturing and industrial economy and towards a post-industrial configuration is clearly delineated (Linkon and Russo, 2002; Mah, 2013; Warren, 2018). Regional variation inevitably exists as each unique place contends with socio-economic change according to its own past, tradition and local characteristics yet it is received wisdom to suggest that a widespread process of deindustrialisation has altered the landscape of many parts of the West. According to Mah (2013) and Warren (2018), some deindustrialised locale transitioned successfully and now thrive as post-industrial spaces with vibrant labour markets whilst others continue to struggle with their new reality. Myriad social problems exist in such spaces, including multiple indices of deprivation, depressed and narrow labour markets, crime, anti-social behaviour and falling levels of physical and mental health and well-being. The original contribution of this paper is to consider the impact of rapid international migration into areas that continue to suffer the ill-effects of sustained deindustrialisation. Drawing on a mixed methods project that mapped the impact of recent international migration on the settled community of a post-industrial town in the North East of England, the paper will outline a number of tensions present within an area multiply deprived socio-economically and in transition culturally.

First, the paper will outline the existing literature on both deindustrialisation and international migration. While both literatures are firmly established, there is a paucity of literature that draws both areas together. Second, the methodology section will explore the funded research project at the centre of this paper. Third, the findings section will consider issues regarding the definition of 'settled community'; recent academic and popular discourse identifies the 'white working class' backlash against international migration for a number of diverse reasons (Bhambra, 2017; Dawson, 2018; Khalili, 2017) yet our study uncovered tensions across both white and Asian settled communities, often directed at recently arrived Eastern European migrants, and within recently arrived communities. This section will also

consider housing and jobs within deindustrialised spaces; low-cost housing is attractive to economic migrants and Home Office determinations regarding asylum seeker dispersal whilst straitened labour markets maintain economic marginality. Community tensions within the various settled and recently arrived communities is framed against the context of austerity policies and the local authority's ability to support all communities. This complex range of factors relate to the socio-economic and cultural conditions in which settled communities exist and international migrants arrive.

Deindustrialisation and Migration

Deindustrialisation has long been a topic of academic inquiry (see Strangleman and Rhodes, 2014). At its most basic level, deindustrialisation refers to the macro-economic shift in Europe and North America from large-scale industrial and manufacturing economies towards knowledge, information or service economies (High, 2003; Mah, 2013; Warren, 2018). Whilst some argue that globalisation became a runaway force that left nation states impotent and unable to constrain its seismic transformations (Giddens, 2002), others contend that deindustrialisation was not inevitable and instead reflects shifts in political economy (Harvey, 2005). The political economic upheavals of the 1970s, best represented by stagflation and the emerging limits of Keynesian polity, engendered an ideological and policy-orientated shift towards greater flexibility for market forces, wider economic competition and a return to growth and profitability (Slobodian, 2018; Harvey, 2005). The ascendency of neoliberal political economy unleashed market competition on a global level and simultaneously insulated markets from national-level intervention (Mitchell and Fazi, 2017). As the US pivoted towards importing goods and exporting capital, European nations, particularly, the UK, attempted to keep pace by opening nationalised industries to market competition (Warren, 2018). This set in motion over four decades of labour market reconfiguration.

The deindustrialisation literature covers a range of issues that incorporates macro, meso and micro-level factors. A key theme considers the impact of deindustrialisation on communities uprooted by the disappearance of not just secure forms of employment but the raison d'etre and way of life organised and co-ordinated in relation to the industries that sustained local economies (Linkon and Russo, 2002; High, 2003; Walley, 2013; Warren, 2018). In studies that span the industrial north east and mid-west of the United States to the north of England, the

role of individual and collective memory (Linkon and Russo, 2002) and the tangible sense of loss felt by communities surrounded by fragments of a bygone era and foreclosed future (Mah, 2013) demonstrates the real impact of labour market reconfiguration on distinct locale. As Mah (2013) notes, some areas responded to deindustrialisation with vibrant new labour markets that allowed the transition to information, knowledge or service economies. Others remained locked in the multiple social problems associated with rapid and prolonged deindustrialisation (Warren, 2018; also Hall, Winlow and Ancrum, 2008).

A significant strand of this literature takes the deindustrialised locale as a starting point from which to investigate an array of social problems (see Wilson, 1987; MacDonald and Marsh, 2005; Hall et al, 2008; Lloyd, 2013; Wattis, 2019). The rapid disappearance of large numbers of industrial and manufacturing jobs in local labour markets without the diversification to absorb the growing numbers of unemployed (see Beynon, Hudson and Sadler, 1994) created multiple social problems that continue to blight parts of the UK and USA today. The recent English Indices of Deprivation (2019) highlight the towns and cities suffering multiple social problems including unemployment, poor standards of physical and mental health, crime, drug addiction, and inadequate housing. The most deprived locale in this data represent areas that continue to struggle with long-term effects of industrial decline, further exacerbated by a decade of deficit reduction measures (Lloyd, 2018) and increasingly become locked into what Hall et al (2008: 28) call 'permanent recession'. Within these spaces, 'post-social' arrangements begin to emerge (Winlow and Hall, 2013); the bonds of mutuality or 'structure of feeling' that characterise culture and community are largely absent, replaced by pragmatic or surface level indicators of sociality. Moreover, as capital moves spatially (Harvey, 2005), the impact of deindustrialisation, austerity and attempts at regeneration are also felt and experienced differently according to locale. As such, the social problems which occur in the wake of economic decline, such as unemployment, poverty, crime, inadequate public services, drug addiction, and health inequalities are concentrated at the local level (Bambra, 2016; Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009; Dorling, 2004; 2015).

Although often not directly addressed in this literature, it is possible to position patterns of migration within this context. Park and Burgess (2019 [1925]) posited a fluid urban ecology where inward and outward migration generated points of tension and relief within relatively

unchanging concentric zones. Wilson (1987) suggested that the 'truly disadvantaged' were those left behind as 'white flight' and those economically able to leave the ghetto did so. Areas of deindustrialisation that have regenerated or gentrified, such as parts of London or New York, see the outward movement of those unable to afford to stay and the inward migration of Florida's (2002) 'creative classes' (Atkinson, 2015).

However, the wider literature on international migration is extensive and highlights a number of factors, including the push and pull factors of migration for work, study, fear of persecution and, increasingly, environmental and climate change (Botterill, 2014; Gorinas and Pytliková, 2017; Parenti, 2011; Vargas-Silva, Markaki and Sumption, 2016) as well as the challenges of integration or assimilation (Klarenbeek, 2019; Beluschi-Fabeni, Leggio and Matros, 2019; Kesler and Safi, 2018). Furthermore, theories of 'migration networks' describe specific forms of social capital that migrants can draw upon to gain access to resources (Massey et al, 1998). Interpersonal ties connect migrants in both origin and destination through bonds of family, friendship and shared background. Networks are useful in understanding *how* migrants end up in specific locale; following a 'beaten path' trodden by those who came before them (Böcker, 1994; Epstein, 2008). While it is true to say that migration has always led to more migration, de Haas (2010) points out that 'migration network' theories can ignore the changing context of both origin and destination countries.

Historically, international migration into the UK has occurred for centuries. In the recent past, since the end of the Second World War, migrants from the former British colonies, exemplified by the 'Windrush generation' heeded the call to emigrate to the UK to fill labour shortages. The 'settled community' of the UK is inevitably multi-ethnic although this itself is spatially organised and distributed. More recently, international economic migration within the European Union has been the focus of intense debate (Jones, 2017; Streeck, 2016; Lomax, Wohland, Rees and Norman, 2020) and the migrant crisis originating in the Middle East and North Africa raises questions about the capacity and responsibility of other nations to accommodate refugees.

The European Union identified four freedoms in the 1992 Maastricht Treaty that included the free movement of people within the Eurozone (Lapavitsas, 2019). The movement of economic

migrants around the EU was seen as part of the further integration of the continent but the expansion of the EU in the first decade of the 21st century to include the 'A10' countries in 2004 (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia) and the 2007 accession of Bulgaria and Romania generated backlash at the expected influx of Eastern European economic migrants into the West, particularly once UK restrictions eased in 2014. In the UK, Tony Blair's New Labour government lifted restrictions on arrivals from EU accession countries with the result being a significant increase in economic migrants, particularly from Poland and, later, Romania (although not in the numbers predicted by some commentators) (Winlow, Hall and Treadwell, 2017; Briggs and Dobre, 2016). Understanding the 'push factors' that propel migrants from the 'peripheral' zones of the EU towards the economic centre (UK, France, Germany and Scandinavia) is vital but often absent from discussions about the free movement of labour (Briggs and Dobre, 2016; Streeck, 2016; Lapavitsas, 2019).

In the same time period, extended conflict in the Middle East and North Africa, namely in Libya, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Afghanistan, has created a humanitarian and migrant crisis as large numbers of displaced families seek refuge in Europe (Žižek, 2016). The 'migrant crisis' has raised questions about western intervention in the Middle East, the role of EU member states in offering refuge and support (DeBono, 2019), the spectre of Islamic terrorism in European cities (Nail, 2016), and concerns about European cultural diffusion and decline (Murray, 2018). Borders are increasingly contested spaces (Jones, 2017; Canning, 2018; DeBono, 2019) as access and entry for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is politically volatile (Mayblin, 2019). While much literature focuses on the media framing and narratives of international migration, refugee crisis and borders (Silber-Mohamed and Faris, 2020; Chouliaraki and Stolic, 2017; Dines, Montagna and Vachelli, 2018), it is imperative to understand the reality of migration and place.

Some literature focuses on the context in which international migrants arrive and considers the relationship between poverty, place and migration. Migration appears to decrease wages in low-paid jobs within certain labour market sectors (Vargas-Silva et al, 2016). Clark et al (2019) show that labour market participation and wage rates vary according to country of origin, length of residence in the UK and multiple deprivation at local authority level. While

Rhodes and Brown (2019) outline the changing geographic imaginary of the racialised 'inner city', this shifting landscape does include settled international migrant communities, recently arrived Eastern European communities, and 'marginal' forms of whiteness which effectively represents the discarded remnants of the formerly industrial working class (Winlow et al, 2017). Space and the 'inner city' are both crucial in the formation of race and ethnicity (Rhodes and Brown, 2019), and an essential element in understanding class as an economic position. Marginalised, deindustrialised and deprived locales are often destinations for international economic migrants and their families, as well as dispersed asylum seekers and refugees and it is important to understand the dynamics of these spaces.

A body of work has made attempts to consider the dynamics of class, poverty, race and migration in the North East of England. Vickers et al (2016) surveyed and interviewed migrants across the region and found 54% were unable to secure any form of paid employment. Migrants were disproportionately concentrated in lower skilled roles, primarily catering, hospitality and social care, and their work was characterised as low-paid. Some migrants identified in-work discrimination, from employers, co-workers and the general public whilst barriers and constraints included confidence, mental health and the absence of social networks. Crucially, over 50% of respondents were unaware of organisations that could provide support. This links to Nayak's (2012) work on multiculturalism in the North East. Nayak (2012) identified competition for resources amongst community groups as a factor in the creation of tension over privilege, rights and perceptions of advantage, something we will return to below. For instance, the way in which funding allocations for BAME voluntary and community groups both created tension and reinforced boundaries and segregation. Meanwhile, Garner (2009) suggests that housing policy in the UK has 'racialised' social housing through the creation of competition for scarce subsidised housing stock; discontent with 'doing the right things and getting nowhere' was turned towards minorities and 'problem families on benefits' within the white working class and their perceived unfair advantage.

In their long-term study of social exclusion on Teesside, Shildrick, MacDonald and colleagues (2005, 2012, 2013) demonstrated a 'low-pay, no-pay' cycle within deprived communities. Furthermore, they debunked the 'cultures of worklessness' myth prevalent within media and government narratives (MacDonald et al, 2014). Importantly, their studies focused on the

7

'white working class' and concentrated on wards that were overwhelmingly White British; the sample wards in our study were more ethnically diverse. Whilst not necessarily criticising MacDonald and colleagues, the focus on 'white working class' within popular narratives and sociological research risks transforming class from an economic relation into an ethnic and cultural relation (Bottero, 2009). Nayak (2019) recently suggested that the 'stigma' attached to deprived areas such as Teesside was reinterpreted and overturned by residents who choose to see beauty and resilience in the challenges they face. Essentially, this argument reasserts agency within maligned neighbourhoods and foregrounds 'daily struggle and haptic resistance' (p.933) to media narratives. However, Telford and Lloyd (2020) situate similar neighbourhoods within a political economic context to demonstrate the realities of sustained damage and harm inflicted by processes of deindustrialisation on communities and individuals. The remainder of this paper considers the dynamics of migration, deprivation and poverty within a specific North East site, following a methodological note on the empirical data presented below.

Methodology

Data comes from a Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) study commissioned by a local authority in the North East of England. Demographically, the local authority area covers a population of around 140,000 with the population level sustained by inflow of international migrants offsetting a net internal migration deficit (ONS, 2020a). As an urban locale, it represents one of the most densely populated areas in the North East with a median age profile in the mid-30s, significantly lower than most parts of the region but indicative of a large working age population. According to the English Indices of Deprivation (2019), over 50% of the wards in this local authority area fall into the 20% most deprived wards in the UK and it has, historically, featured as one of the most deprived parts of the UK. In terms of employment, approximately 10% of the local population claimed Universal Credit in August 2020 (ONS, 2020b) while the unemployment rate in mid-2020 hovered around 7%, almost double the national unemployment rate (ONS, 2020c). Accurate data on demographics and patterns of migration is problematic (see Devanney et al, 2020; Anderson and Blinder, 2017) but our project demonstrated that around 10% of the population were born outside the UK, from around 50 different countries but that the longer-term migration from parts of Asia and the Middle East has been accompanied in recent years by Eastern European arrivals, predominantly Poland

and Romania. Furthermore, international migration was clustered in three wards predominantly in the centre of the local authority area; the 2011 census reports between 25-30% of residents as non-UK born, which creates unique conditions within those spaces.

The research team was invited to investigate the impact of migration on the settled communities of this locale (anonymised here and elsewhere). The research comprised several key objectives, including mapping recent demographic change, considering the impact of recent international migration on community cohesion, investigating the impact of migration on local services, as well as identifying issues related to crime. Anecdotal evidence pointed to a rapid increase in Eastern European arrivals, spatialized reports of community tension, increased pressure on certain services, and concern about human trafficking. The project aimed to provide an evidential baseline for intervention in areas where issues arose. Project stakeholders included the regional police force and the Police & Crime Commissioner's Office, local Public Health England representatives, and the Regional Migration Partnership. The project phase under consideration here ran from late 2017 until early 2019.

The project utilised a mixed methods approach, divided into three key phases. First, a baseline of publicly available data, starting with the 2011 census, provided an indication of demographic patterns, socio-economic and cultural trends but generated a range of questions as gaps were evident and data increasingly out of date. Second, private data sets held by local authorities and other local service providers, as well as the Home Office, were requested to fill out some of the identified gaps. Working closely with local level partners facilitated further exploration of statistics in local contexts. Third, gaps and questions generated in the statistical analysis informed a qualitative strand comprised of semi-structured interviews and focus groups with local stakeholders, public sector employees, third-sector workers, representatives from BAME and refugee support groups, community residents and others. The project team conducted interviews or focus groups with 62 participants and attended almost 100 meetings with professionals from a range of public and voluntary services. Finally, three sample wards (anonymised here) were identified based on the public data analysis. Two, "North End" and "Low Gate" were chosen for their concentration of recently arrived and settled migrant communities with a third, "Riverside", chosen for contrast due to a distinct lack of migrant population. Ward observations, informal

discussions and interviews with residents and business owners, and attendance at community meetings generated insight into local level experience of migration and to explore any impact or tension. All three wards are characterised as 'deprived' and are within walking distance from each other. However, Riverside is significantly different to Low Gate and North End and the data presented here comes from the latter wards. Ethical clearance was gained from the host institution and all interviews and focus groups utilised consent forms and information sheets.

While not part of the project's methodology, this paper utilises an ultra-realist analytical framework (see Hall and Winlow, 2015 for a full outline). Essentially, ultra-realism builds on the critical realist insight that we must look beyond empirical observation or social construction to consider the dynamic forces, structures and processes that are often unseen but shape the events and experiences we observe (Hall and Winlow, 2015). Ultra-realist criminology considers the ways in which people negotiate marginal social spaces but then contextualises those experiences and events with analytical knowledge of wider social forces and 'depth structures' such as political economy and ideology (Lloyd, 2018; Winlow and Hall, 2016). In the context of this paper, the wider social forces of deindustrialisation and neoliberalism act as the dynamic forces that shape the spaces in which people navigate and experience daily life in marginalised communities.

Like all research, this project has limitations. First, long-term immersion with communities would have deepened understanding of a range of issues but, as with most research, issues of time and resource limited the extent of qualitative investigation. Second, securing data sets from a range of local services proved time consuming and problematic, particularly where follow up questions went unanswered. Finally, the town in question has a unique set of historical socio-economic and cultural circumstances which could raise questions about generalisability, particularly in light of discussion about broader sociological issues such as deindustrialisation. However, the project generated a toolkit of resources now available to local authorities who wish to replicate this study in their own locale; findings will differ due to spatial context but analytical generalisability allows us to consider the impact of historical and socio-economic trends such as deindustrialisation and migration without losing sight of spatial specificity.

Findings

The project generated a range of significant and interesting findings across all identified objectives. Some local services experienced increased demand due to international new arrivals, primarily *some* GP practices and both primary and secondary education (see Devanney et al, 2020). Refugee and asylum seeker communities represented low numbers in comparison with the town's overall population but presented specific problems with service provision, particularly around support for mental health. The economic impact of international migration, in terms of local authority tax returns and the wider economy, was positive. Spatial concentration of migrants within specific wards already suffering multiple indices of deprivation saw the emergence of community tension linked to pre-existing conditions but exacerbated by differing cultural practices. However, there was recognition by local services and community members that international migration had positive aspects.

The town continues to bear the scars of long-term deindustrialisation. The local labour market was traditionally narrow, focused on heavy industry and manufacturing and unable to withstand processes of deindustrialisation. Currently, the locale has higher than average levels of unemployment and whilst some specialised manufacturing work exists, the local labour market is characterised by service sector employment and increasingly straitened public sector work. North End and Low Gate are unambiguously deprived. According to the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) both wards feature in the top 10% most deprived wards in the United Kingdom and have done so for decades; deprivation is a visible and prevalent feature of daily life in these locales across a number of domains including income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education, skills and training, crime, living environment and housing. Secondary data and qualitative interviews with stakeholders, professionals and residents confirmed concerns with anti-social behaviour, drug dealing and addiction, and significant problems with littering. Demographically, this locale is undergoing significant change and the two wards at the centre of this research are most visibly different. Most migrants arriving in this Local Authority area are young, male and have migrated for work and study. Diversity is concentrated in North End and Low Gate and often related to housing availability and existing cultural networks. Proxy measures for migration allow further analysis; recent electoral register data shows Pakistani, Polish, Romanian, Irish, Czech and

Indian as the highest non-UK nationalities, whilst recent National Insurance Number (NINo) data shows Romanian migrants far exceed all other nationalities with migrants from India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Poland, Italy, Sudan, Afghanistan and others all registering to work in this locale. The social reality of life in these wards is complex, problematic and entrenched. This is the space into which international migrants arrive and, over the last decade, increasingly from Eastern European countries.

According to a ward councillor for Low Gate,

"As a way of background of ward, I think it's definitely in the top 10 most deprived wards in the country. It has a number of issues in terms of low value housing stock being the foundation for many issues, and private landlords and a very mixed residency of often older long term residents who have been there for 50/60 years, there are some people who I deal with who were born, raised and lived here all their life, and then people who have very complex challenging social needs that can include drugs, alcohol, mental health issues, all sorts of things, who move in and out of the area quite quickly at a quite frequent rate in different private housing."

Both Low Gate and North End wards were demographically diverse with a combination of settled White British families, settled and recently arrived Asian communities, recently arrived Eastern European economic migrants and dispersed asylum seekers. A BAME community group resident in Low Gate further demonstrated the significant changes within his immediate locale,

"We lived in Low Gate all my life, where there was no, there was only two Asian families, no Black families, no other BMEs. And now, it used to be an affluent area, now you look at it you're scared to walk down the road. A lot of asylum seekers there, a lot of refugees, a lot of recovering alcoholics, ex-cons, everyone's just been dumped at Low Gate."

International migration is set against the backdrop of a range of social problems that have beset deprived communities within this deindustrialised locale. According to MacDonald and Marsh (2005) addiction problems relate to poverty and deprivation. Further problems with transience, private landlords, fear of crime, residents with complex mental health needs, and

criminality demonstrate communities that have undergone significant change and disruption. In the 1970s, this locale was relatively prosperous, measured by GDP, with almost full employment and the stable rhythms of social life that accompanied industrial modernity (see Beynon, Hudson and Sadler, 1994). In the wake of deindustrialisation and structural change, followed by a decade of austerity and public sector cuts, communities such as these exist in conditions of 'permanent recession' (Hall et al, 2008). This is also indicative of post-social relations (Winlow and Hall, 2013) whereby many often reside in these locales not out of deeply held affection for the neighbourhood and its community but according to relational or instrumental factors; the neighbourhood is better than somewhere else, they have been moved there by authorities, they can afford to live and work here. Pragmatic indicators of sociality replace commitment or genuine affection for place.

Respondents presented a complex picture whereby the positive elements of international migration, and not just heightened community tension and cultural differences, was visible. According to a police officer,

"But for example, in North End, you mentioned, is a real mish mash of different cultures now, that is probably actually, when you say what have I seen in the past 17 years change, North End is the place that has single handedly changed the most, in the past predominantly white 15 years ago now, white people are probably in the minority there. Again, down to cheap housing costs, but the actual hate crimes in North End is very low. So that's a good example of community living together, people are very tolerant of each other."

Pressed further to explain why this community appears integrated and culturally diverse, the officer suggested,

"I think it is actually, and it's probably down to the communities themselves, because I know there's a lot of good work goes on there, they've got some, they've done a lot of work to improve the community, working from within rather than the council or us doing that. You've got some interesting people in the community."

Work within the community, from the residents themselves, appears to have succeeded in terms of tolerance, acceptance and integration. According to a stakeholder from a refugee

support service, the settled community was regarded as 'more accommodating' than other parts of the North East. Furthermore, the cultural diversity brought by a wide range of nationalities and backgrounds was regarded as a positive contribution to the town. New shops and restaurants were identified as beneficial to a ward and town centre that had previously suffered the double blow of deindustrialisation and austerity which had left many premises derelict or unused. International migrants had filled this space and opened a range of shops, businesses and restaurants that cater to the wide variety of communities and cultures. International inward migration stabilised a local population that would fall without new arrivals; from a fiscal perspective, maintaining a council tax base was important to a locale already deprived of resources through austerity and the continued failure to recover from deindustrialisation.

Vertovec (2007) describes the 'super-diversity' of immigrant backgrounds within specific geographic space and the impact this diversification has on a place. The challenge of making common life with such diverse populations is noted within literature (Oosterlynck, Verschraegen and Kempen, 2019); Low Gate and North End perhaps reflect the 'super-diversity' thesis but most of the local authority area does not. The cultural, linguistic, religious and experiential diversity visible within these wards actually sits on a relatively homogenous socio-economic base; the residents of both deprived communities, for all their differences, represent the increasingly fragmented multi-ethnic working class (Winlow et al, 2017). However, multiculturalism is a fragile peace maintained by the injunction to respect 'difference'. A 'common culture' wide enough to encourage membership from all members of the community is absent and this fragile peace is vulnerable to tension from a range of sources. Despite some data that appeared to show community integration, tolerance and vibrancy, the next section indicates that community tension was a daily reality.

Community Tension
A criminal justice professional explained that tension could spring from community change with the established indigenous community feeling 'pushed out',

> "The local British communities who have settled here probably for generations and they have seen changes happening, they've seen a shop coming, they've seen the high street change, they've seen, they feel maybe because if they don't have that link or that

conversation with the other they think well what about me, probably because they don't have visible cultural identity like a mosque, like a dress code, like the other is so visible because of those features, because that is where we work with those people. With people being told go back to your country, you know, you don't belong here."

This respondent analysed this feeling on a cultural level, noting the visible changes associated with distinctive cultural and religious identity. There is a deeper socio-economic level missing from this analysis which does appear in other data. Much of the community tension reported in the most deprived wards often revolved around recently arrived Eastern European economic migrants who had arrived in large numbers over a short period of time and predominantly concentrated in North End and Low Gate. ONS Annual Population Survey estimates suggested that the Romanian population had grown from 50 in 2011 to 2,000 in 2018 and although the confidence intervals prevent confirmation of this increase, the anecdotal and qualitative accounts bear out the increase in Eastern European migrants and their concentration, particularly in North End. This field note was representative of numerous conversations with local residents and business owners,

I head over to the lady, a friendly-looking white working-class woman in her fifties, and explain why I'm there. She says she has run the shop for 34 years but is trying to sell. She doesn't want to be there anymore. When I ask how long she's felt like that, she says that the last four years have been horrible. 'I've been here for years but a lot of my old customers won't come out here anymore'. She's trying to sell but the only interest comes from the migrant business owners who currently compete with her, 'because they're the ones with the money'. As she continues, she reveals that 'all of the English [business owners] want to get out'.

I ask her why and she explains that the influx of new arrivals into the area in the last four years have proven problematic. There are cultural differences between the new arrivals and the British community and the new arrivals don't want to change. Men standing in the street block the way for her customers; 'oh, when you tell them they apologise but they make fun of you'. The intimidation felt by herself and her customers is proving difficult for business. She's also concerned about the children belonging to the

migrant families who are allowed to run wild. When I ask if there's any specific group or if it's all migrants she's very clear; 'it's your gypsy Roma families that are difficult'. She makes it clear; 'it's not about being racist. I mean, obviously for some people it is, but that's not what I'm talking about.' There's a failure to 'mix' although she adds that some individuals are lovely but as a group they're not interested in mixing. She also wants to sell because drugs are a problem. When I ask how bad the drug problem is on the street she's clear; 'oh really bad, it's obvious'. She notes that the alleys are full of rubbish, despite the council's best efforts. Every other house is now populated by Roma families who do things differently to 'us'. She knows the area where she wants to relocate her business but also knows that she can't currently afford it.

This account demonstrates several key points at the heart of this paper. This business owner points to a range of issues that affect her livelihood and quality of life of which rapid international migration is only one part. North End is blighted by drugs and anti-social behaviour, quality of life is affected by the persistent appearance of litter and rubbish in alleys, and recently arrived Gypsy Roma families have moved into the area in large numbers which has highlighted cultural differences that lead to anxiety, fear and tension. Evidence suggested that international migrants moved into the area due to low-cost housing. Gorinas and Pytliková (2017) suggested that international migrants with large ethnic networks were less sensitive to natives' hostility. The perception from the settled community was that new arrivals gravitated towards the ethnic network developing in North End which may have generated a supportive community for new arrivals but created the sense of invasion from both the settled community and other recently established migrant communities, as noted by a member of a refugee support group,

> "When I moved in three, four years before, there was no Eastern European at all, three years yeah. And one family came in to the next door of mine, as soon as they come into a street, I don't know within weeks you see so many families in the same street. I don't know how do they get these messages around? All of the houses. Every single house that comes to rent I see Eastern Europeans packed in."

While the Eastern European arrivals may feel a sense of support and belonging within this emerging enclave, the cultural difference between this community and the existing

communities within the ward generated further tension, anxiety and fear. This often revolved around the use of public space. Eastern European groups, particularly young men, exist within public space in a way that settled White and Asian communities found problematic. While stakeholder interviews with police officers indicated that regular complaints were made about gathering on street corners, from a policing perspective these young men were not doing anything illegal. The seeming failure of police to intervene further exacerbated tension. Returning to the store owner above, her customers and staff felt intimidation and fear when faced with large groups of men blocking doorways and pavements. The cultural and language differences and an apparent failure to integrate create tension which is both cultural and economic; migrant businesses in this locale are an increasingly visible presence which creates competition for scarce resources. A poor community with a changing demographic creates problems for business owners where clientele refuse to patronise due to fear and anxiety about safety in an increasingly unrecognisable community.

While the recently arrived and rapidly expanding Eastern European community proved to be a significant factor related to community tension, data suggested that the picture was much more complex than a settled White community fearful and antagonistic towards a culturally different Other. Tensions existed across and within all settled and emerging communities. According to one educational professional,

> "There are tensions between the settled white community and our new and emerging community, particularly our Eastern European community. There are tensions between the settled Pakistani community and the Eastern European community. But, just tensions left, right and centre really. There are tensions *within* the Eastern European community."

A BAME community focus group participant suggested that identifying the root of anti-immigrant sentiment was complex,

> "You know, what you expect from an indigenous English person, they say "oh they've come to take our jobs. They've come to take our houses". This is even coming from our fellow Asians and Eastern Europeans."

The BAME community added further layers of complexity by pointing out pre-existing

tensions that follow migrants from their country or continent of origin,

> "It's just because people don't get along with each other. As he said there are barriers like 'I got shops', 'I got business, you got no nothing', 'you're an asylum seeker', 'you're a refugee', within ourselves, it's not only white people or the migration people telling us, it's all our own people, creating tensions as well. So, it's not always about the neighbours it's about within us as well."

> "Another thing like in Uganda there are different political dimensions and some people in a different party won't be able to talk to me because I support a different party to them."

These tensions have manifested in racist incidents and abuse, but the picture is incredibly multifaceted. Participants from BAME and refugee support groups acknowledged their victimisation by perpetrators from the settled White British community, the settled Asian/Pakistani community *and* other recently arrived economic migrant groups. Similarly, racist comments were directed at settled Asian community members by recently arrived economic migrants from Eastern Europe, as well as established White British communities. Respondents suggested that Islamophobia was present within the town but others, including representatives of BAME communities, argued that 'casual racism' could (and often was) successfully challenged by focusing on the underlying issues, often perceived to be education, upbringing or fear of the unknown. Group hostilities represent a battle for safety, significance and prosperity. Furthermore, markers of inclusion and exclusion *within* communities that may appear as homogenous from the outside (Hall, 2014) demonstrate the social fragmentation associated with increased post-social relations; the social conditions and cultural expressions of populations are not autonomous from the logic of neoliberal capitalism and its ideology of competition, individualism, status and display (Winlow and Hall, 2013).

A representative from a refugee support group acknowledged,

> "I've lived there for over five years now, almost six years. And it's such a welcoming community, you know, we have a very good relationship with our neighbours, especially the indigenous white community. You know, we're like, my brother here mentioned earlier surprisingly it's only foreigners like us that tend to be racist, you understand,

which is funny enough. We've got Asian neighbours, we've got like Eastern European neighbours who are just angry with us for being around."

A criminal justice professional also evidenced racist abuse towards the growing Czech Roma community from the settled Asian community,

RES: I've heard racist language used about Czech Romas from people in North End which…

INT: This is from the Asian community?

RES: Yeah, yeah. Which I don't think is acceptable.

Two multiply deprived wards evidently face several issues relating to tension across *all* communities. A settled White British community, a settled Asian community, newly arrived Eastern European communities, a refugee and asylum seeker community and recently arrived Kurdish and Middle Eastern communities appear to engage in a Hobbesian war of all against all. On one level, this plays out on the field of culture; normative and practical differences around behaviour and conduct, language, use of public space, attitude towards children and education. Much of our data indicates significant cultural differences between recently arrived Eastern European communities and various settled communities. In the current political climate, concern around cultural practice invites the cry of racism but it is imperative to consider the circumstances and reality of life within communities and neighbourhoods. If women are fearful of large groups of Eastern European men congregating on the street, in a neighbourhood made up almost entirely of street housing, is it racist to identify the object of their fear? Based on our research and analysis in these areas, we would suggest it is grounded in an understanding of the reality of deprived and a subjectively-felt insecurity and fear, rather than racism.

As areas of permanent recession undergo further change due to the extended retrenchment of deficit reduction measures and austerity (Streeck, 2016), public resources and services fail to adequately support already impoverished communities. The socio-economic foundation upon which people attempt to build a stable and secure life (Lloyd, 2018) is largely absent in multiply deprived urban neighbourhoods such as this (Hall et al, 2008; Kotzé, 2019). The associated problems of crime, drugs, anti-social behaviour, poverty and unemployment make

the negotiation of daily life complex and difficult. This is the post-social space into which rapid international migration takes place which generates both socio-economic competition for resource *and* cultural difference. A neoliberal culture of individualism, entrepreneurialism and status propels some into competition against each other for space, legitimacy and precious resources. This competition even extends to community organisations and activists (Harries et al, 2020; Nayak, 2012). Winlow et al (2017) suggested that their white working-class respondents misidentified the true cause of their anxiety in their assertion that immigrants were the problem. In this study, community tension across all ethnic groups and communities appears to indicate that identification of difference according to ethnicity, length of residency in the UK and legitimate right to public space and local resources also *misidentifies* the true cause of anxiety and socio-economic status. These communities represent the fragmented and increasingly atomised multi-ethnic working class who perhaps, under alternative ideological arrangements and political economic conditions, would have regarded each other as a source of support or solidarity, but instead increasingly regard each other in terms of hostility, difference and competition.

Conclusion

The debate around international migration to the UK is complicated, politically motivated and unlikely to end soon. International migration to the UK for the purposes of work has been essential for the already underfunded and crisis-ridden health sector. The current discussions regarding post-Brexit immigration include tariff-based entry suggestions to maintain the flow of skilled workers and to exclude others. The liberal dream of freedom of movement is under threat but within communities such as those represented here, settled communities will not mourn its passing (see Winlow et al, 2017). Some argue this represents the re-emergence of racism within UK society (Khalili, 2017) and while this study clearly found both statistical and qualitative evidence of hate crime, racism and Islamophobia, it is imperative that researchers offer dispassionate analysis and understand the context within which community tension exists. The unique characteristics of this locale – rapid industrialisation, rapid deindustrialisation, long-term deprivation – create specific conditions in which international migrants arrive and settle.

For all the cultural diversity and difference at the heart of the data presented above, the geographic space in which it exists is crucial to a realist analysis of the evidence. The multi-ethnic working class is fragmented and now populations and micro-communities compete for scarce resources (Winlow et al, 2017). Deindustrialisation has hollowed out wards, estates and neighbourhoods across the UK and elsewhere (Telford and Wistow, 2019); a range of socio-economic problems flooded into the gap created by industrial retrenchment and the absence of stable and secure employment (MacDonald and Marsh, 2005; Lloyd, 2018); austerity measures further eroded the support mechanisms available to deprived communities. Communities such as these already exhibit a wide range of structural deficiencies and problematic subjectivities (Hall et al, 2008) and are the spaces into which international migrants arrive and settle. Community tension may appear to represent the cultural domain of norms, values and difference but it rests upon a political-economic domain whereby the fragmented, multi-ethnic working class compete for limited resources. Different modes of racism and community tension exist in close proximity and require careful study and analysis. Deprived and impoverished neighbourhoods undergoing significant demographic and cultural change require further research and investigation on several analytical levels if we are to determine the level of intervention necessary to truly tackle the problems and tensions we have uncovered.

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