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Young people, intergenerationality and the familial reproduction of transnational migrations and im/mobilities

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Abstract

This chapter explores the role of intergenerationality in migration, highlighting the ways in which migrations and im/mobilities unfold and reverberate over generations within families. It presents a discussion of existing literature and findings from qualitative research (including a longitudinal component) with multigenerational transnational Irish families, to develop a conceptualisation of transgenerational reproduction of migration and im/mobilities. The chapter focuses in particular on how young people from migrant backgrounds engage with their familial migration histories and legacies as they forge their own life-paths. It argues that migrant background shapes the structural possibilities and im/mobility dispositions of young people who grow up in migrant/transnational families, through intergenerational relations, legacies and transmission of capital.

Introduction

This chapter explores the role of intergenerationality in migration, with a focus on the ways in which migrations and im/mobilities unfold over multiple generations within families. The central argument is that migrations and mobilities are experienced and reproduced intergenerationally, in ways that connect past, present and future generations within families. The consequences of past migrations reverberate, often in unpredictable ways, across multiple generations. The chapter seeks to go beyond the here-and-now or snapshot-in-time approach to understanding migration and family dynamics and to take a broader temporal perspective on how migration and im/mobilities articulate within families. This perspective can draw our attention to long-term processes of social reproduction and the role of migration and im/mobilities in these processes. The socio-economic, cultural, political, and legal implications of transnational migrations can have long-term consequences within families. It is important to examine the role of intergenerational dynamics in these processes – in other words, how relations within families and between generations shape patterns of

migration, and vice versa, over time. I explore these processes by focusing on the ways in which mobility capital is transferred, and how narratives of migration and identity circulate and shift, across generations within transnational and migrant families. The chapter focuses in particular on how young people from migrant backgrounds engage with their familial migration histories and legacies.

First, I discuss recent developments in migration studies which highlight the relationality and interdependence of migration flows and the relevance of such perspectives for understanding the role of migration in social reproduction. Second, drawing on family studies literature, I explore the role of family in social reproduction and argue for the value of longitudinal, qualitative and narrative-based approaches in researching intergenerational dynamics in families that experience migration. Building on these bodies of literature, the third section explores the potential for transnationalism, diaspora and mobilities perspectives to shed light on intergenerational dynamics in transnational/migrant families. The final section draws on empirical studies and on research with transnational Irish families to discuss how young people from migrant backgrounds relate to their own migration histories, or legacies, and imagine their own futures. A conclusion summarises the main arguments and identifies some implications for understandings of transgenerational migration legacies and reverberations.

2. **Migration as relational, enfolded and linking lives over time**

Recent literature on migration has explored the idea that migrations and mobilities inter-relate with, and enfold through, each other. Williams (2009) refers to 'enfolded mobilities', or, how individual migrations/mobilities are enfolded with the migrations/mobilities of others. In other words, individual migrations often give rise to, or are integrally interwoven with, other migrations, such as when family members migrate to join others who have already migrated, or, a period of study abroad produces opportunities and desires for future long-term migration (Findlay et al 2017; King & Lulle 2015; Weichbrodt 2017). In particular, some literature suggests that transnational migrations experienced early in life can create circumstances that encourage and facilitate future migrations, and children born into migrant families often go on themselves to migrate as adults (Devlin Trew 2009; Veale & Doná 2014). It is now recognised that transnational migration is characterised by complex patterns of step migrations, chain migrations, onward migrations, returns, re-migrations, seasonality and circularity (Amelina et al 2016; Paul & Yeoh 2021). The concept of return mobilities can help to shed further light on the complexities of transnational migration flows, referring to the 'range of return spatialities and temporalities' that connect 'home' and 'host' societies, as migrants and their children migrate, move onwards, return and re-migrate in complex patterns of mobility, settlement and family (re)formation (King & Christou 2011: 454). Individual migrations can also be embedded within wider chains or cultures of mobility. The interconnections that foster these enfolded migrations can be economically-driven, such as, for example, in the case of global care chains (Oso & Ribas-Mateos 2013). They can also be cultural and historical in nature, such as the long-standing diasporic connections that foster ongoing (re-)migrations to and from diaspora destinations.

Migration almost always occurs in the context of family relations of some kind (even if these are relations of inequality or tension), which can in turn give rise to further migrations, such as family reunification, familial chain migration, return migration for family reasons, second-generation re-migration or return (Baldassar et al 2014; Cooke 2008; Jiménez-Alvarez 2017). It is also increasingly recognised that migration is *relational* in the sense that it involves 'linked lives', whereby 'individual' migrant lives connect with, and are interdependent with, the lives of others, over time (Bailey 20009; Holdsworth 2013; Huijsmans 2017). For example, migrants rely on social, family and wider networks for contacts, opportunities and supports, and migrations are structured by (often uneven) family and household relations, and *vice versa* (Findlay et al 2015; Holdsworth 2013; Kraler et al, 2011; Williams 2009). However, the literature on family and migration tends to focus on relations within migrant or transnational families as they are experienced in the here-and-now rather than taking longitudinal and long-term perspectives that could go beyond the individual life-span. This reflects a broader tendency in migration studies to focus on snapshots in time or on individual life-courses. In this context, some have called for more longitudinal migration research (Findlay et al 2015; Ryan & D'Angelo 2018). This resonates with recent calls for greater attention to questions of temporality in migration studies, to recognise migration not as a linear journey but an open-ended process which connects past, present and future (Collins 2018; Griffiths et al 2013; Cheung Judge et al 2020). Thus, a long-term perspective could illuminate how migration in one generation of a family can shape migration/staying trajectories in subsequent generations as well as how members of migrant families engage with their own family migration histories and imagine their futures. In other words, a wider temporal lens opens up questions about how migration and mobility are reproduced through family relations.

In order to understand how mobility is reproduced across multiple generations of migrant families, it is necessary to also examine the role of *im*mobility. Migration can often result in spatial or geographical *im*mobility for migrants, such as in contexts of restrictive immigration regimes or precarity (Brandhorst et al 2020; Menjívar 2006). Mobility and immobility are both intimately bound up with questions of power – both can be manifestations of marginality or of privilege. However, as many have argued (for example, Morokvasic 2004), empowerment and enforcement in migration lie on a spectrum rather than a binary. Thus, mobilities and immobilities are enfolded through the linked lives of the im/mobile, intersecting with the transmission of privilege or marginalisation, and spanning international borders..

3. **Family, intergenerational dynamics and social reproduction**

While a wealth of literature exists that explores intergenerational dynamics in families, much of this is focused on concurrent or contemporaneous relationships between different generations. To explore how intergenerational family dynamics unfold over longer time-periods, life-history scholarship provides useful conceptual tools. Biographical or life-history approaches view family as a site of social change and a lens through which to explore the micro-level articulations of macro-level historical and social processes (Bertaux & Thompson 2009). Longitudinal qualitative research with multiple generations of the same families can illuminate wider processes of social change (Edwards 2008; Gray et al 2016). This type of research can also allow us to explore the role of family in social reproduction and how

narratives and meanings are negotiated and transmitted in families through long-term intergenerationality (between generations), or, *transgenerationality* (across generations).

As illuminated by Thomson & Taylor (2005), a qualitative longitudinal perspective can reveal dynamic intergenerational patterns of continuity and change over time within families and communities. Thus, the ways in which family intersects with, and is embedded in, class, gender, and geographical power relations can be unpacked through exploring individual trajectories and family dynamics over time. Family, from this perspective, plays a key role in social reproduction, understood here as the processes through which social structures (class, gender, race, and so on) are maintained over time (Bertaux & Thompson 2009), as it is through family in particular that resources and capital are exchanged between generations and values and norms are negotiated intergenerationally. There are different ways of conceptualising social reproduction, but Bourdieu's (1986) conceptualisation, oriented around the idea of different types of capital, is particularly helpful when focusing on the family. According to Bourdieu's framework, social reproduction occurs through the intergenerational transmission of economic capital (wealth), social capital (social networks), and cultural capital (cultural competences) (Bourdieu 1986; Edgerton & Roberts 2014). Crucially, these processes of transmission involve tensions, negotiations and ruptures, such that social reproduction is rarely complete or predictable (Guhin et al 2020). Thus, for example, children and young people can actively resist or re-work values, identities and assumptions that are learned, through socialisation, from parents and grandparents (Hutchby & Moran-Elllis 1998). According to James (2013), socialisation is not something that is 'done to' children but is something they actively participate in – children are their own biographical agents, but they form their life-paths within the possibilities afforded by their family and social circumstances. These possibilities are comprised of forms of economic, social and cultural capital, and also, as discussed in Section 4 below, mobility capital.

James (2013) highlights that the emotional and relational aspects of social and cultural capital transmission are particularly important. Socialisation is not a set of rational transactions but is bound up with emotions, identities, values and expectations, the less tangible things that structure and underpin intergenerational relationships and dynamics. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to the stories people tell about their lives, their identities, and their families. Narratives can reveal how people feel, how they relate to each other, how they make sense of the possibilities of their social contexts. Narratives are even central to the constitution of family itself, it is argued by some, pointing to the role of family memories in the development of collective narratives that resonate down through generations and connect present to past, though meanings change or are reworked in different contexts (Smart 2011; Thomson et al 2010). These moments of change and re-working are the outcomes of intergenerational negotiations and tensions, often reflecting wider processes of social change playing out within families.

When family members experience transnational migration, these intergenerational negotiations come into sharp focus. James (2013) points out that while much socialisation involves the absorption of taken-for-granted norms, and thus is largely 'implicit', some socialisation processes are more explicit, such as when children may reject or resist parents' (or familial) cultures/traditions. James (2013) uses the example of ethnic or religious

affiliation, but the point can be applied to the wider context of socialisation in migrant families. Much literature attests to conflicts and tensions that exist between parents and children in migrant families, often characterised as cultural differences (Cook & Waite 2016; Foner 2009; Tyyskä 2009). However, the emphasis on cultural conflict has been critiqued for its reification of cultural boundaries, lack of attention to younger generations' subjectivities and assumptions of progressive linear integration of migrant families with each generation (Mannitz 2005; Olwig 2003). This chapter is not concerned specifically with intergenerational tensions around ethnic identities but with a broader understanding of intergenerational dynamics in migrant families. It is concerned with aspects that tend to receive less attention, such as transmission of capital, negotiation of family narratives of im/mobility and belonging, and the unfolding of migration and im/mobility trajectories over time.

4. **Transgenerational reverberations in migrant and transnational families**

In seeking to develop a conceptualisation of transgenerational migration dynamics in families, this chapter draws inspiration from theorisations of migration as relational, non-linear and enfolded through processes of social reproduction that involve transmission of capital within families and negotiation of family narratives. However, much existing literature on the lives of migrant second- (and subsequent) generations tends to takes a linear and predictive perspective on temporality, which does not adequately recognise the circularity or provisionality of migration, or the incomplete and iterative nature of transmission of capital within families. There is a paucity of research focusing explicitly on micro-level intergenerational reproduction of migration and im/mobility within families which conceptualises migration as relational and nonlinear. Studies often focus on questions of assimilation and social mobility and are framed within a 'settlement' or 'integration' perspective on migrant families (Ní Laoire et al 2011; Olwig 2003; Yeh 2014). This perspective presumes that migration is followed by settlement and an ideal of upward social mobility, in place, of subsequent generations.

However, despite this lack of attention, there is a wealth of empirical research with migrants and transnational families that, in different ways, does illuminate processes of intergenerational reproduction of migration/mobility within families (for example, Chamberlain 2006; Tyrrell 2013; Zontini & Reynolds 2018). This type of empirical research tends to be influenced by theories of transnationalism, diaspora or im/mobilities. In other words, research that pays attention to transnational family linkages, or to complex im/mobilities in migration, frequently unearths valuable insights into processes of intergenerational reproduction of migration and im/mobility. Therefore, it is helpful to explore the insights that can be gleaned from the theoretical currents of transnationalism, diaspora studies and the mobility turn, before going on to a closer examination of some specific studies.

Research influenced by the mobility turn in migration studies has opened up the study of migration to the plurality of transnational mobilities, circulations and relations that frame the worlds of migrants and their families (Hannam, Sheller & Urry 2006; King 2012). Veale and Doná (2014), in their edited collection, point to what they call a *transgenerational* temporal connection in the ongoing cyclical nature of migration, a cycle in which children grow up in

migrant families, go on to become migrants and in turn have children who also grow up in migratory contexts. Veale & Doná's (2014) concept of the transgenerational is valuable for capturing the long-term nature of intergenerational dynamics and the wide temporal arc of the interconnections of individual and collective migrations through family relations, continuities and negotiations that have reverberations far beyond the immediately visible.

Others use the lens of transnationalism to shed light on intergenerational dynamics over time in migrant families. Zontini & Reynolds (2018: 418) propose the concept of transnational family habitus to denote "a structured set of values, ways of thinking and 'being' within the family built up over time through family socialization, practices and cultural traditions that transcend national boundaries". Similarly, Levitt and Waters (2002) argue that second, and subsequent, generations in migrant families are embedded in transnational social fields that have a powerful effect on their identities, belonging and life trajectories, if viewed over long time-periods. In other words, they emphasise the intangible but important ways in which younger generations, gradually over time, learn how to live transnationally from their childhood family contexts.

Scholarship on diaspora, transnational families and return mobilities sheds further light on long-term transgenerational reverberations. The well-established concept of chain migration refers to the phenomenon whereby individual migrations are made possible because of familial or other close contacts in destination societies, which in turn enable other family members to 'follow', in a pattern that can continue over many generations (Johnston et al 2006). This phenomenon produces transnational social and familial networks that are constantly being renewed through ties of kinship, love, obligation, reciprocity and identity. For example, Chamberlain's (2006) multi-generational oral history with African-Caribbean diasporic families in England reveals the strength of intergenerational family ties in the transmission of familial cultural capital and connecting family members across time, generations and geographical locations. Her work also highlights the important role played by narratives in this process, as a means of giving voice to the ways in which individuals make sense of their family customs in diasporic contexts.

Other research on diasporic family narratives foregrounds the role of gender, recognising the expectations placed upon women to reproduce 'home' cultures and maintain families and homes in diaspora, and the pressures placed upon women to uphold hegemonic cultural ideals in diasporic communities (Gray 2003; Zontini 2010). For example, De Tona's (2004) research with women in the Italian diaspora draws attention to the role of narrative in the gendered reproduction of Italian identity in the diaspora. Others taking a gender lens have also pointed to the ways in which second and subsequent generations of migrant families construct narratives that reflect their complex relationships with parental or ancestral cultural heritage (Dwyer 2000; Temple 1999). To understand long-term transgenerational family dynamics in contexts of migration, then, it is important to recognise the role of gendered and other power relations that structure families and kin networks, and to engage with the (gendered) narratives that reproduce, resist and transform them.

These transgenerational dynamics in diasporic and transnational families frame the contexts in which members of such families form identities, develop place attachments and imagine

their futures. These contexts form part of the landscape of identity and belonging in which young people who grow up in transnational or migrant families form feelings about where home is, or might be, where and to whom they have meaningful connections, and where they can envisage their futures unfolding. Such feelings are often ambiguous and complex (Bloch & Hirsch 2018; Ní Laoire et al. 2011). These complexities are particularly evident in research on second-generation or ancestral return migration, where second or subsequent generations in migrant families migrate, or 'return', as adults, to the countries where their parents or ancestors were born (Christou 2006; Hannafin 2016; King & Christou 2011; Reynolds 2010; Tsuda 2009). The phenomenon of second- or subsequent generation return is linked to social, material and emotional ties that connect disparate members of transnational families. Reynolds (2010) and Zontini (2010), for example, highlight the role of transnational family ties and networks as a source of social capital for young people growing up in migrant families.

This type of transnational social capital can be viewed as one aspect of what could be termed mobility capital, that is, the resources and capital that enable cross-border mobility, including accumulation of past experiences of mobility and control over one's im/mobility (Brooks & Waters 2010; Moret 2020). I argue elsewhere that transnational migrant background can be a valuable source of mobility capital, in the form of social capital (transnational family ties), cultural capital (migration competence) and symbolic capital (global 'experience') (Ní Laoire 2020). In other words, migration is enabled by the possession of particular mobility-related knowledge and resources (mobility capital) that can be utilised in planning and undertaking migration journeys, and mobility capital is tied up with accumulated migration experience and history. Thus, mobility capital can be transferred between generations in migrant families. This does not mean that mobility itself is always a privilege – mobility can be a result of marginalisation and can be painful. The value of the concept of mobility capital lies in its recognition of the role of power – that is, the degree of control it allows one over their own mobility or immobility.

To summarise, insights into intergenerationality in migrant families from studies influenced by transnationalism, diaspora studies and the mobilities turn highlight the importance of long-term perspectives on temporality, the role of gender, transnational social fields and mobility capital, the complexities of intergenerational relations and the circulation of narratives of migration, mobility and belonging in families. Taking this approach to the life trajectories of young people growing up in migrant families then, it becomes clear that the destination society is not necessarily an end-point for all family members, and that second and subsequent generations negotiate their own im/mobility life-paths as autonomous adults. In contrast, research that focuses on 'integration' of immigrant youth tends to view children of migrants in quite narrow terms, identified only in terms of their position *in relation to other migrants*, that is, their parents, without considering their own diverse social positions, life-worlds and pathways. As Yeh (2014) highlights, it is important to pay attention to children's own mobilities which often transcend ethnic or familial ties and patterns. Children of migrants develop migration and im/mobility trajectories in their own right and engage in different ways with their family's migration history as they do so.

5. Young people from migrant backgrounds and their transgenerational connections: insights from empirical studies

The analysis above raises two key points that are explored further in this section, focusing on young people from migrant backgrounds and how they relate to their own migration histories and their own futures. First, growing up in migrant family contexts (that are structured by power relations) shapes their life-worlds and possibilities in many ways, through their access to mobility capital, closing off some life possibilities while opening up others. Second, these young people carry their memories and legacies of childhood/family migration with them as they transition to adulthood – shaping dispositions towards migration, place and global/local identities, dispositions that are part and parcel of how they negotiate future im/mobilities and migrations. In this section, I draw on a number of empirical studies to illustrate both of these points.

a. Migrant background and mobility capital

Existing literature sheds some light on the social and material circumstances shaping the childhoods and transitions to adulthood of children and young people who grow up in migrant families, as first, 1.5 or second-generations. Qualitative research conducted with young people from migrant backgrounds, as they are transitioning to adulthood and contemplating their future life plans, can shed light on how they make sense of their own social positions and the possibilities of migration or settlement that are open to them. It can reveal the extent and nature of the social, material and emotional connections that tie these young people to their places of residence as well as to other places elsewhere and the degree of mobility capital they can access. For example, in her research with young teenage 1.5-generation migrants from eastern and central European countries living in Ireland, Tyrrell (2013) found that despite having lived in Ireland for a number of their most formative years, her participants did not express strong feelings of connection to Ireland. They had undertaken a number of residential relocations within Ireland and many had strong family connections to their countries of origin. Their life-worlds were more transnational than local/national and they imagined their futures in an open-ended way, open to prospects of re-migrating transnationally, or staying in Ireland, depending on where the best opportunities lay. As Tyrrell (2013) points out, in this sense, the transitory aspects of their lives continued, with transnational migration viewed as an ongoing process.

An openness to onward migration among the 1.5 generation was also found by Ramos (2018) in her research with Latin American migrant families in Spain. She found that a lack of opportunity in Spain, related to the economic crisis, propelled many young people (who had moved to Spain as children with their parents) to migrate onwards independently as young adults to the UK. Their knowledge of how to navigate immigration systems, together with their ties to family contacts in the UK, often intergenerational, comprised crucial mobility capital that enabled them to make their own migration decisions independently of their parents. These studies (Ramos 2018; Tyrrell 2013) show how young people from migrant backgrounds navigate social and structural circumstances in the countries in which they grow up, relating to, for example, economic crisis, precarity or marginalisation, by drawing on their transnational and mobility capital to forge their own pathways.

Both groups discussed above (young central/eastern European migrants in Ireland, young Latin Americans in Spain) came of age at a time of economic crisis, in countries where they did not have strong ties and as members of immigrant populations that experience labour market marginalisation. It is likely that young migrants in such contexts may not have access to valuable *local* social connections, kinship networks or family property/wealth. Their local place-specific capital may not be deeply-rooted, in ways that could give them added advantages in the labour market or education system. Relatedly, they may also have ambiguous feelings towards the places in which they have grown up (Andall 2002; Ní Laoire et al. 2011; Reynolds 2010; Tyrrell 2013). However, they do possess strong mobility capital and may be positively disposed to transnational migration, as a result of their familial transnational connections and familial migrant histories (Ní Laoire 2020; Ramos 2018). In this sense, migrant (family) background can be viewed as playing a role in the complex intersection of structural processes (intersecting with social class, legal status, ethnicity, race, gender) that shape the possibilities open to young people as they transition to adulthood and navigate their life-paths.

Case-Study (1) – Mobility capital and young people in transnational multigenerational Irish families

To illustrate this further, I draw here on my own research with multigenerational Irish transnational families, conducted over a period of approximately 12 years. Continuous flows of emigration, return and re-migration have maintained an Irish diasporic presence in global destination societies (particularly the UK and the US) and are reflected in the existence of translocal family networks and deep transnational social connections (Hannafin 2016; O'Carroll 2018; Ryan 2004; Walter 2013). I conducted qualitative research with young people who had migrated to Ireland as children with their Irish return-migrant parents during the Celtic Tiger economic boom period (late 1990s to late 2000s). The first phase of the research had sought to explore their experiences, as children, of migration to a place considered 'home' by their parent/s (Ní Laoire et al., 2011). The families had moved to the south-west of Ireland, from a wide range of international locations, with Britain and the US being the two most common countries of origin. The initial set of data was gathered through multi-modal qualitative research with 36 children and teenagers in 16 such families over a period of two years in 2007-09, between one and 12 years since their move to Ireland. Interviews were also conducted with their parents. A follow-up study was conducted between 2014 and 2018, involving return interviews with ten of those young people (seven women and three men), when they were aged between 18 and 31.

For the purposes of this discussion, I focus on four of these families, selecting those families where there were at least three generations of migrants and return migrants. For example, Orla[1] moved to Ireland at the age of eight, from England, with her second-generation Irish parents, during the Celtic Tiger period. Her parents were both born in England, to Irish-born parents (Orla's grandparents) who themselves had migrated to England as part of the large wave of Irish emigration in the mid-20th century. Another family, Ellie's, had some similar characteristics but in this case the transnational extended family was stretched between

[1] Pseudonyms are used throughout and some minor details have been changed to protect anonymity.

Ireland and a US city. Ellie had moved to Ireland from the US at a young age with her parents and brothers. Her parents were born in Ireland and had emigrated to the US as young adults during the 1980s wave of Irish emigration, a move that was enabled by the friendship and family contacts they had in the US. Both of these family histories are stories of transnational migrations, returns and re-migrations, within Irish diasporic networks, encouraged and enabled by the social capital of their transnational family connections, or what could be termed strong mobility capital that is transmitted between generations. They are also stories of how prevailing social and economic climates at particular time periods, such as the ebbs and flows of waves of migration from, and back to Ireland, play out in people's biographies and reverberate through the generations. Their migrations are not once-off migratory events by individuals but form part of a web of transgenerational and transnational migrations and settlements that shape the life-worlds of young people like Orla and Ellie.

Both Orla's and Ellie's immediate families had been affected by the post-2008 economic crash in Ireland. Ellie's father lost his job in the construction sector. He then re-migrated to the US, where job opportunities were more plentiful, and a large network of family and friends could support him to find work and accommodation. One of Ellie's brothers had also returned to the US, to the city where he had lived as a young child, also to work in the construction sector. Similarly, Orla's father had lost his job during the crash and had spent a long time looking for work locally in Ireland, eventually taking up a job in a different part of the country which necessitated long-distance weekly commuting. She commented that his difficulties in finding employment in Ireland were related to his lack of 'connections' (valuable social contacts, or, social capital) there.

While mobility capital enables members of transnational families to migrate or commute in response to crises such as unemployment, one outcome of ongoing, transgenerational migrations and re-migrations in such families can be a certain lack of local place-specific capital. In a similar way, von Houte, Seigel & Davids (2015) find that for some migrants, particularly involuntary migrants, transnational migration actually weakens their already limited ties in both source and destination societies, thus further marginalising them. (On the contrary, for other migrants, who have more control over their migration, it is possible to benefit from establishing ties and investments in more than one place – Waters 2006). Thus, migrant background intersects in complex ways with social class, ways that are not always captured in discussions about linear social mobility in migrant families. For both Orla and Ellie, the possibilities open to them as they transitioned to adulthood were shaped by their access to strong mobility capital, which they were very aware of, along with the fragility of their local place-based ties. For both, this meant that they viewed their life-paths as potentially involving transnational migration or mobility – Orla had moved back to England while Ellie was planning to travel.

The gendered nature of this phenomenon is also notable as gendered norms and structures shape the possibilities open to different family members at times of crisis. In both Ellie's and Orla's families, and a number of other families in my research, mothers continued to hold down local jobs during the crisis, even though they were often low-paid, part-time or seasonal, while travel/migration provided possibilities for well-remunerated full-time employment for fathers and young men (usually in construction or related sectors).

Employment opportunities for women in the diasporic networks were less lucrative. While most of the young people of the next generation that I interviewed were pursuing higher education, it was clear that some of the young women were particularly keen to establish stable and secure professional careers, viewing higher education as the means to do so. This must be viewed in the context of the gendered nature of migration opportunities in the Irish diaspora. Decisions about staying or leaving are shaped by gendered realities which intersect with migrant background in specific ways. The mobility capital that is transmitted intergenerationally in transnational families is not gender-neutral; thus, the legacy of familial migration histories and capitals can be experienced differently by men and women. These intersectional processes permeate the patterns of transgenerational mobilities, migrations and settlements within transnational families.

b. Im/mobility dispositions and narratives

While migrant background plays a structural and intersectional role in processes of social reproduction (involving social class and gender), the examples discussed above also indicate the role of the less tangible meaning-making processes through which family members make sense of their migration histories, mobility capital and social worlds. Social reproduction is never complete or predictable, as values, identities and expectations are constantly becoming and as narratives and dispositions surrounding migration/mobility are negotiated by and between different generations. Thus, focusing on narratives about and dispositions towards migration and mobility among young people from migrant backgrounds can shed further light on intergenerational reproduction.

Thomson and Taylor's (2005) research demonstrates the key role of parental values and influence on young people's dispositions towards mobility or immobility, mediated through social class and gender. Some have pointed to the existence of 'cultures' of migration within certain families and communities, such as Kandel & Massey's (2002) research which demonstrates that particularly pro-migration aspirations exist among young people from families that already have some migratory involvement. Other research shows that young people in transnational families develop transnational ways of being and belonging, as a result of childhoods being permeated by taken-for-granted transnational ties and belongings (Bloch & Hirsch 2018; Levitt & Glick Schiller 2004; Levitt & Waters 2002). For example, in the context of Irish transnational families, Walter (2013) demonstrates the role of memories of childhood visits 'back home' to Ireland in identity constructions among second-generation Irish people in England. Cairns' (2014) research with undergraduate students in Northern Ireland finds that family and personal factors were important in their orientations towards future migration, where strong local family ties could discourage migration, or on the other hand, a 'pro-mobility' habitus may exist in some families. In the context of recent Irish migration, Moriarty et al (2015) highlight the crucial role played by previous mobility experiences and family migration histories in enabling graduate emigration and producing what they term a 'graduate mobility habitus'. My earlier research found that Irish return migrant parents expressed a desire for their own children to experience some transnational mobility in the future, which the parents tended to construct in terms of valuable life experience. Those same children in return migrant families, when they were older, in turn, drew on their family histories of migration as a repository of meaning in relation to their own

(actual or imagined) migrations, referring to relatives' past migrations in constructing transnational migration, or mobility, as a viable option for themselves (Ní Laoire 2020).

Research by Yeh (2014) with young British-Chinese people who had grown up in Britain shows how their parents' transnational migration trajectories had shaped their own childhood experiences in many ways, including growing up with a familiarity with the idea of travelling long distances around the world for reasons of work, study and love. However, as the young people transitioned to adulthood, experiencing racialization and marginalisation in Britain, they forged social worlds that involved virtual mobility and transnational cultural consumption, taking on globalised 'Oriental' youth identities in resistance to the strong 'national' identities associated with their parents (Yeh 2014).

Thus, research shows that young people do not necessarily absorb familial identities or narratives of mobility intact and unchanged. They actively engage with them, being selective, and changing them in the process (Tyrrell et al 2019). For example, in Kelly's (2017) research with Iranian second-generation youth migrating from Sweden to UK, the young people's decisions to migrate are shaped in part by their parents' social aspirations, and enabled by diasporic connections. However, the young people construct their own narratives of migration, which are more nuanced and complex than their parents' aspirational narratives, reflecting gendered and generational differences (Kelly 2017). Thus, exploring how different generations narrate their own migration and mobility trajectories and imaginaries can reveal ruptures, shifts and tensions in intergenerational dynamics, reflecting the particular circumstances in which each generation grows up and how they experience and make sense of it.

Case-Study (2) – Mobility narratives of young people in multigenerational transnational Irish families

Intergenerational dynamics of dis/continuity are evident in the narratives of different generations in my own research. For example, Niamh had moved back to Ireland at the age of four with her parents and siblings. Her own parents were both born in England to Irish-born parents who were part of the mid-20th century wave of Irish migrants who had settled in and around London. Niamh's father, Donal, recalled his childhood growing up in an Irish family in England in the 1970s, participating in Irish diasporic cultural activities and returning to rural Ireland for long summer holidays every year. He also remembered vividly his own parents' ambiguous desire to return to live in Ireland, which they planned incessantly but did not actually fulfill. His own subsequent decision as a young father to move to live in Ireland, a second-generation 'return', must be viewed in the context of his family's strong connections to Ireland, his memory of his parents' unfulfilled dream to return, along with his disillusionment with the lack of opportunity in England, where his employment situation was insecure and they were experiencing financial difficulties. While the move to Ireland did not resolve all of their troubles, Donal's narrative constructed it as the right decision for the family and one they would not change.

Niamh herself grew up from the age of four then in a family that struggled to an extent to establish themselves in Ireland in terms of employment and social acceptability in their local area (as a 'blow-in' family with English accents living in a rural area). Thus, in her teens she

talked nostalgically about England as she struggled to position herself in relation to the binary constructs of Irishness and Englishness shaping her social world. I met Niamh again when she was in her early 20s and still living in Ireland, having spent a year travelling abroad. At this point, for her Ireland was home, and she planned to settle in Ireland, but she had a strong desire to travel, in which a return to live in England was just one option among many, including a variety of possible global destinations. In other words, her identity was bound up with the idea of transnational mobility and cosmopolitanism, an identity she embraced as a form of resistance to a kind of 'small-town' mentality that she associated with people who had never moved, that is, who did not have a migrant background. She also distinguished herself from other migrants, however, constructing her time abroad in terms of travel and life experience rather than migration for work:

> I kind of went over there to work and travel whereas a lot of Irish people go over there to work. I know people who have been over there for 3 years and I saw more of [that country] in 8 months than they did since they've been there (Niamh).

For Niamh, a migrant-background identity was important, and was possible because of her own family history, echoing back to her grandparents' migrations. But it was also a different type of migrant identity to that of either her parents or her grandparents, being much more open-ended, cosmopolitan, and to an extent, located in the past and in the future rather than the present. The migration stories of all three generations are intimately interlinked, but each also reflects the particular historical and biographical circumstances of their own generation, their intergenerational relationships and the ways in which they each make sense of, and continue to make sense of, these stories.

These types of intergenerational continuities and ruptures also reflect wider societal discourses surrounding migration, as these shift and change over time. The young people I interviewed tended to construct their own future possibilities in terms of travel and global mobility as distinct from the 'emigration' of their parents and grandparents, even as they drew on their family histories of migration as valuable cultural capital. (In fact, discursive efforts to replace the term 'emigration' with 'migration' have been a recurring feature of ideological battles over e/migration in Ireland since the late 20th century (Mac Laughlin 1994).

The impact of the legacy of historical narratives of e/migration is particularly poignant in the case of Emer (who had moved back to Ireland as a young child with her second-generation Irish parents). As a young adult, she travelled around the world and was living abroad when I re-interviewed her. By then,, the economic crash had happened in Ireland, and although she was ready to move back to Ireland, there were no job opportunities for her there, and her father had also lost his job, so she could not rely on her parents to support her during a transition back to life in Ireland. As a result of prevailing economic conditions, intersecting with her migrant background, she was unable to return to Ireland, finding herself in effect 'stuck' on the other side of the world.

> I'm really angry that you know in 2007 when I was studying about Irish emigration, I was like […] as if that was another generation, I felt like I was lucky you know reading about people's past experiences, that I would never have to emigrate and I wouldn't

> you know... my generation families wouldn't be torn apart and it just makes me really angry (Emer).

The shock she experienced at finding herself living through an experience (involuntary exile) she had considered to be consigned to history, and to the history of her own family, is palpable in this quote from Emer. Her shock reflects the unexpectedness of the realisation that the linear discourse of progress is just that, a discourse, and her coming to terms with the way in which her own life trajectory carries echoes of the emigrations of previous generations of her family.

To summarise, the narratives of members of multigenerational migrant families reveal something of how intergenerational reproduction of migration and im/mobility is experienced and lived out by different generations. Young people from migrant backgrounds engage with family memories and stories of migration and settlement, and their own memories of being migrant children, as they navigate the social and economic circumstances and prevailing discourses that shape their social worlds. In doing so, they re-produce and re-make family narratives surrounding migration while producing new narratives.

Conclusions

There is a lack of attention given to the role of intergenerational dynamics in the unfolding of migration and im/mobility trajectories over time, a gap that is linked to the tendency to view migration through lenses that emphasise snapshots in time or individual biographies. I argue here that a transgenerational perspective can bring new insights by drawing the gaze to a longer temporal perspective while also grounding analysis in contextualised understandings of the structural and historical circumstances in which each generation experiences childhood/youth and forms attachments, hopes and desires. A key element of these sets of contextualised circumstances is the family context, its history, its present and the intergenerational relationships that constitute it. This chapter has drawn on migration and family studies literature, and specifically on transnationalism, diaspora and mobilities perspectives (for example, Thomson & Taylor 2005; Veale & Doná 2014; Zontini & Reynolds 2018) to propose a framework for understanding transgenerational reproduction of migration and im/mobility. In this way, migration can be reproduced within families and, in some cases, multi-generational migrant families become established through ongoing migrations, returns, re-migrations and mobilities that connect family members across transnational borders and generations (for example, Chamberlain 2006). The concepts of mobility capital (Moret 2020) and place-based capital are useful in illuminating how such families both benefit from, and are disadvantaged by, the nature of their transnational and locally-rooted resources and ties. Thus, intergenerational migration dynamics are intimately bound up with processes of social reproduction, involving social structures such as, for example, social class and gender.

Focusing on the ways in which young people from migrant families make sense of their migrant backgrounds as they develop their own life trajectories and narratives reveals the

very dynamic and iterative nature of intergenerational relations. Processes of social reproduction are bound up with power relations and tensions within families; young people form their own im/mobility dispositions in the context of their family histories, their own histories of child migration and settlement, the transnational social worlds of their families and the local worlds in which they live (Levitt & Waters 2002; Yeh 2014; Ní Laoire 2020). As a result, they may seek to deepen their place-based roots and/or to continue the patterns of migration and mobility. Either way, members of multigenerational transnational families are constantly navigating mobility and settlement imperatives in their lives and in the process reproducing, and reinventing/remaking, migration and mobility. Thus, migration and settlement events can be seen to have effects that reverberate through generations, often manifesting in new migrations, returns and re-migrations, but also in settlement and embedding, as family members navigate their own trajectories against the backdrop of family histories.

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