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Migranti in preobrazba sosesk: raziskava družbenogospodarske preobrazbe sydneyjskega predmestja Lidcombe

Eden od glavnih razlogov za negativen odnos do migrantov je dejstvo, da obremenijo objekte in infrastrukturo gostiteljske skupnosti, sami pa veliko ne prispevajo h gospodarstvu in družbi države gostiteljice. Ta negativni odnos je močen zlasti v mestih, kjer je pritisk na javne dobrine zgoščen in opaznejši. Zato so migrantske soseske še posebej zaničevane. S tem stereotipnim pogledom se ne ujemajo izkušnje z migranti v okolici pokopališča Rookwood Cemetery v Sydneyju, ki velja za »največjo nekropolo na južni polobli«. V tej migrantski soseski potekajo živahne in raznovrstne dejavnosti (zlasti korejskih) migrantov, ki so za to območje, znano pod imenom Lidcombe, nekaj popolnoma novega. Na podlagi različnih virov, analiziranih z zgodovinsko-strukturnega vidika migracijskih študij, vključno z arhivskimi raziskavami v lokalnih knjižnicah, pogovori z dolgoletnimi prebivalci tega območja in vidno etnografijo, so v članku predstavljeni zgodovina Lidcomba in njegove izkušnje z migranti v 21. stoletju.

Pri tem avtorja na podlagi demografskih, družbenih in geografskih sprememb poudarjata prispevek migrantov k prenovi »mrtvega mesta« in izpodbijata podedovane stereotipe, ki pogosto vodijo k rasistični obravnavi migrantov kot »grešnih kozlov« ter na podlagi katerih se migranti prikazujejo kot »paraziti« in »kriminalci«, ki »izčrpavajo« gospodarstvo države gostiteljice. Predstavljena študija primera kaže, da lahko migranti prostore, v katerih živijo, pogosto preoblikujejo tako, da pozitivno in dolgotrajno prispevajo h gospodarstvu in družbi države gostiteljice. Ta primer bi morale kot pomembno lekcijo upoštevati tako evropske države, ki se soočajo z »migrantsko krizo«, kot tudi politiki po svetu, ki želijo gostiteljska gospodarstva in družbe pred migranti zaščititi z zidovi.

Ključne besede: mestno pokopališče, migracije, migranti, lokalni gospodarski razvoj

1 Uvod

Kako migranti oblikujejo prostore, v katerih živijo, ter prispevajo h gospodarstvu in družbi države gostiteljice? Dolgoletne raziskave migracij po vsem svetu so pokazale, da kadar v družbi prevlada mnenje, da migranti obremenjujejo objekte in infrastrukturo gostiteljske skupnosti, so ti brezposelni in malo ali sploh ne prispevajo h gospodarstvu in družbi države gostiteljice. Ker to mnenje pogosto prevlada, se negativen odnos do migrantov močno okrepi in včasih doseže vrelišče (Markaki in Longhi, 2013). Trenutna »migrantska kriza« v Evropi, Severni in Južni Ameriki ter drugod po svetu dobro ponazarja to stališče in kaže, da so migranti med ljudmi običajno nezaželeni. Iz diskurza »usmiljenja«, ki ga uporabljajo redke države, ki sprejemajo ukrepe za to, da bi migrante lepo sprejele, je razvidno, da ljudje migrante dojemajo kot parazite oziroma izkoriščevalce družbenogospodarskih ugodnosti ter razdiralce varnosti in političnega miru. Tak negativen odnos je močen zlasti v mestih, kjer je pritisk na javne dobrine zgoščen in opaznejši. Zaradi tega se migrantske soseske po svetu pogosto opisujejo kot prostori, v katerih živijo kriminalci ter prevladujejo nezakonite in nepošteno dejavnosti, stanovanja slabe kakovosti, slabe bivalne razmere, kriminal, umazanija in nizka stopnja varnosti (glej Collins, 2008 in 2013, Tsenkova, 2014; Opoko idr., 2015). Tem predstavam nasprotujejo nekatere raziskave (na primer Stilwell, 2003, ter Obeng-Odoom, 2012a in 2014), ki kažejo, da so izkušnje migrantskih naselij kompleksnejše. Novejša priljubljena knjiga Douga Saundersa (2012) z naslovom *Arrival City* prikazuje, kako so lahko migranti uspešni v procesu migracije, vendar gre v tem primeru za poljudnoznanstveno delo, ki se metodološko bolj posveča posameznikom kot njihovim družbenim odnosom ali migrantskim soseskam na splošno (Davidson in Gleeson, 2013). Izsledki raziskav tradicionalne migracije s podeželja v mesta (za pregled glej Acharya in Codina, 2012), zlasti tistih s področja osrednje ekonomije, prav tako niso v veliko pomoč, saj običajno preučujejo migracije na podlagi dejanj posameznikov in gospodinjestev znotraj nacionalnih meja, pri čemer se več kot očitno ne zmenijo za transnacionalne in medcelinske migracije niti za to, da jih določajo strukturni ter institucionalni dejavniki in procesi (Adogame in Lawrence, 2013; Ozkul in Obeng-Odoom, 2013, ter Portes in Yiu, 2013). Sistematične raziskave transnacionalnih migracij so se veliko manj osredotočale na migrantske soseske, ki so tudi v literaturi zelo redko obravnavane, če pa so, se navezujejo na begunce in njihove enklave oziroma naselja (na primer Stilwell, 2003). Metem ko so nas migracijske študije veliko naučile o značilnostih migrantov kot delovni sili, se osredotočajo bolj na dinamiko posameznikov. V raziskavah migracij in gospodarstva se pridevnik »gospodarski« običajno nanaša samo na rast, produktivnost in trge dela. Poleg tega se veliko raziskav osredotoča na razmere v Veliki Britaniji in

ZDA (glej na primer Riley in Weale, 2006), zato bosta analiza vloge migrantov pri preobrazbi celotnih sosesk (drugačen pogled) in preusmeritev pozornosti na Avstralijo (drugačno visoko razvito kapitalistično državo) pomagala poglobiti naše razumevanje »gospodarnosti migracij«. Članek dopolnjuje in močno razširja obstoječa prizadevanja za boljše razumevanje migrantskih naselij ter tako osvetljuje vlogo migracij pri družbenogospodarski preobrazbi migrantskih prostorov ter gospodarstev in družb držav gostiteljic.

Empirični del raziskave se osredotoča na migrantsko sosesko Lidcombe v Sydneyju. Nahaja se »v občini Auburn na tradicionalnem ozemlju plemena Darug ter obdaja železniško postajo in majhen nakupovalni center. Na severu sega do ulice Parramatta Road, na vzhodu pa do pokopališča Rookwood Cemetery. Na zahodu in jugu se združuje s predmestjema Auburn in Berala. Pokrajina je precej ravna in se večinoma spušča proti reki Parramatta« (Kass, 2008, brez navedbe strani). To je pomembno zaradi treh stvari. Prvič, raziskava se razlikuje od drugih raziskav v okviru avstralskih migracijskih študij, ki se večinoma osredotočajo na trgovine oziroma podjetja v lasti migrantov (na primer Collins idr., 2011), delavske razmere začasnih in stalnih migrantov (na primer Hugo, 2008, ter McGrath-Champ idr., 2011) ter pozitivne učinke denarnih nakazil migrantov v domovino (Obeng-Odoom, 2010), ne pa na njihov prispevek k preobrazbi avstralskih sosesk – razen nekaterih pomembnih izjem (glej na primer Stilwell, 2003). Drugič, gre za prvo znanstveno študijo Lidcoma kot migrantske soseske. V časopisu *Sydney Journal* so bile dokumentirane izkušnje drugih sydneyjskih predmestij, kot sta Berala (Gordon, 2008) in Croyden (Johnson, 2009), pri čemer pa migracije niso bile glavna tema, soseska Lidcombe, ki je v tem pogledu izjemno pomembna, pa je bila v celoti izpuščena. Še na slavno publikacijo *Liberty Plains: A History of Auburn, NSW* so letele kritike, ker je bila soseska Lidcombe v izdajah iz let 1983 in 1986 izpuščena. Na podlagi teh kritik je bila nato leta 1992 pripravljena popravljena izdaja (glej Hedges, 1992), v kateri pa je bil izpuščen vidik migracij; kot v prejšnjih izdajah je bil glavni poudarek na zgodovini soseske. Tretjič, raziskava opozarja na procese, politiko in smernice, ki pogosto manjkajo v rastočem številu publikacij o mestih in migracijah, kot sta *Triumph of the City* (Glaeser, 2012) in *Arrival City* (Saunders, 2012), zaradi česar številni kritični urbanisti (glej na primer Davidson in Gleeson, 2013, in Obeng-Odoom, 2013) zahtevajo nadaljnje in širše raziskave pojava migracij v mestih. V publikaciji avstralske vlade z naslovom *State of Australian Cities Report 2013* (Department of Infrastructure and Transport, 2013) avtorji obžalujejo slabo razumevanje dinamike migrantskih sosesk v Avstraliji, medtem ko Pau Serra (2012) v prispevku v tej publikaciji poudarja, da je v Severni Ameriki veliko migrantov, zelo malo pa je raziskav tega, kako migranti preoblikujejo urbane in regionalne prostore.

Avtorja sta podatke za analizo pridobila na podlagi: 1. več pogovorov z ljudmi, ki na obravnavanem območju živijo zadnjih 10–30 let, vključno z železniškimi delavci, zaposlenimi v knjižnici, lastniki trgovin, stanovalci in poštnimi delavci; 2. preučevanja arhivskega materiala v knjižnicah v Lidcombu in Auburnu, in sicer zlasti preteklih izdaj lokalnega časopisa *Auburn Review*; 3. poizvedb v nepremičninskih agencijah v Lidcombu in sosednjih predmestnih soseskah; 4. terenskih ogledov preučevanega območja v kombinaciji z vidno etnografijo z namenom fotografiranja informacij na spominskih ploščah na zgodovinskih stavbah; 5. cerkvenih pridig; 6. statističnih informacij v biltenih avstralskega statističnega urada in 7. različnih publikacij lokalnega sveta v Auburnu.

Analitični okvir raziskave temelji na zgodovinsko-strukturni paradigmi analize migracij. V nasprotju z neoklasično ekonomijo, ki poudarja posamezne racionalne dejavnike kot gonila migracij znotraj ahistorične pripovedi o maksimiranju dobička, poudarja zgodovinsko-strukturna paradigma migracijske procese kot del strukturnih sprememb v družbi. Ta pristop upošteva posamezne razloge za migracijo, vendar večinoma v dialektičnem odnosu s skupinskimi motivi za notranje ali zunanje selitve, in je usmerjen v induktivno sklepanje (Abreu, 2012). Različico tega pristopa je uspešno uporabil že Frank Stilwell (2003), ko je preučeval migracije afganistanskih beguncev ter njihove posledice za lokalni in regionalni gospodarski razvoj v sydneyjski soseski Young. Od takrat je bilo opravljenih še vsaj 19 podobnih raziskav, ki so bile enako uspešne in so temeljile na omenjenem delu^[1]. Čeprav ta pristop ne omogoča oblikovanja jasnih modelov s kvantitativnimi in kategoričnimi odgovori, zaradi česar je po mnenju nekaterih gospodarstvenikov, usmerjenih v ekonometrične analize, prešibek (glej na primer Molho, 2013), ima pomembne prednosti. Je preglednejši, lažje ga je postaviti pod drobnogled javnosti in je bolj realističen, saj upošteva raznolikost, negotovost in kompleksnost dejavnikov, ki so v restriktivnih modelih neoklasične ekonomije pogosto spregledani. Ti modeli namreč temeljijo na spornih domnevah *homo economicusa*, prizadevanju za razmere, ki bi bile najboljše za vse, in na popolnih informacijah (Stilwell, 2003). Vse to pa za obravnavano raziskavo ni uporabno.

Življenje v Lidcombu se močno razlikuje od tega stereotipnega pogleda. Soseska se razteza znotraj največjega pokopališča na južni polobli, čezeni ali prek njega. V skladu z evidenco pokopališča in nagrobnimi napismi, zabeleženimi med novjšimi prečnimi terenskimi ogledi območja, je tam pokopanih več kot 800.000 ljudi. V 21. stoletju so migracije to sosesko, ki je bila prej znana predvsem kot pokopališče za lokalne prebivalce, spremenile v živahno in razvejano lokalno gospodarstvo z nizko stopnjo kriminala in umazanije. Je primer pozitivne družbenogospodarske preobrazbe, ki so jo sprožili migranti. Lidcombe je danes znan kot »prizorišče olimpijskih iger

leta 2000«, »sedež korejskih cerkva« in »kraj, na katerem se počutiš kot doma«. Pokopališče in velik pogrebni zavod sta še vedno tam, vendar nista več temelj lokalnega gospodarstva, ki je trenutno izjemno razvejano in vključuje najrazličnejše dejavnosti, kot so gostinstvo, trgovina, frizerstvo, farmacija, poslovanje z nepremičninami in razvedrilne dejavnosti. V nasprotju z letom 1904, ko je v Lidcombu živelo 4.500 belopolnih Avstralcev in Britancev (Hedges, 1992), danes tam živi več kot 15.000 ljudi iz več kot 30 držav, lokalno gospodarstvo pa temelji na migrantskih podjetjih. Pri tej uspešni preobrazbi ni šlo za preprost primer vzroka in posledice. Migranti so prispevali k preobrazbi, vendar so jih k temu pritegnili drugi dejavniki. Kljub vsemu je preobrazba hkrati Ahilova peta soseske: cene nepremičnin so se močno povečale in tako Lidcombe ni več cenovno ugodna soseska, ki je pred desetletjem sprejemala migrante in jim pomagala uresničiti »avstralske sanje«.

Članek je razdeljen na tri dele. V prvem delu je predstavljena družbenogospodarska zgodovina Lidcomba, pri čemer je glavni poudarek na obdobju pred prihodom migrantov. V drugem delu avtorja preučujeta razmere od »migracijske dobe« naprej, pri čemer se osredotočata na značilnosti, dejavnosti in prispevek migrantov, v zadnjem delu pa razmišljata o posledicah preobrazbe za migrante, ki na tem območju živijo, in druge potencialne migrante.

2 Lidcombe: zgodnje obdobje

Družbeno zgodovino Lidcomba lahko razdelimo na tri teme oziroma obdobja: obdobje nepomembnosti, obdobje gospodarskega razcveta in obdobje gospodarskih težav. Vsako posebej je obravnavano v nadaljevanju.

2.1 Temelji soseske in obdobje nepomembnosti

Lidcombe leži v zahodnem delu Sydneyja. Prvotno naselje se je razvilo na zemljišču ob potoku, ki je bil leta 1804 last Samuela Haslama. Območje je dobilo ime Haslam's Creek (slo. *Haslamov potok*), na njem pa so živeli večinoma ljudje, ki so se tja priselili iz Velike Britanije. Potok so uporabljali pri gospodinj-skih opravilih in se sproščali na njegovih bregovih (Hedges, 1992). Med začetkom 20. let in začetkom 30. let 19. stoletja so bili lastniki zemljišč na tem območju še sir Thomas Brisbane, George Tuckwell in George Sunderland. Po navedbah Johna Mitchella (2008) pa je bil oče John Joseph Therry tisti, čigar dejavnosti so najbolj spremenile potek razvoja tega območja. Po rodu je bil Irec in eden od dveh katoliških duhovnikov, ki so ju v kolonialnem obdobju poslali v Novi Južni Wales opravljat pastoralno delo, hkrati je bil eden od prvih posameznikov, ki so kupili parcele na območju, danes znanem kot Lidcombe. Zemljišča je kupil kot naložbo in ne toliko zaradi

osebnega dobička; želel je razširiti svoje pastoralno delo, še zlasti zato, ker je padel v nemilost pri cerkvi in ni več prejemal letne plače v višini 100 GBP. Njegova poslovna strategija je bila zelo preprosta: kupuj po čim nižji ceni in prodajaj po čim višji. Tako je leta 1831 cerkvi za 60 akrov veliko parcelo plačal 15 GBP, leta 1843 pa je od Sunderlanda kupil 160 akrov zemlje za 40 GBP.

Izjemna priložnost se mu je pokazala leta 1855, ko so mu odvetniki sydneyjskih železnic predlagali, da bi od njega kupili 10 akrov zemljišč za izgradnjo železniške proge med Paramatto in Sydneyjem. Oče Therry je ponudbo sprejel in za zemljišča prejel 100 GBP, kar je bila dobra kupčija glede na to, koliko je sam plačal zanje. Drugi lastniki zemljišč na tem območju so ugotovili, da bi izgradnja železniške postaje v Haslam's Creeku oživila lokalno gospodarstvo in povečala vrednost nepremičnin, zato so očeta Therryja prepričali, naj še dodatno podpre naložbe v to območje. Oče Therry se je s tem strinjal, in zamisel so potrdili tudi pri sydneyjskih železnicah. Edini problem je bil v tem, da so morali predlagatelji plačati stroške izgradnje železniške postaje, ki so znašali 700 GBP. Therry je prispeval 100 GBP, ki jih je prejel od prodaje svoje zemlje, preostala sredstva pa so prispevali drugi (Mitchell, 2008). Oče Therry tako ni bil samo nekdo, ki je svojo zemljo prodal, da bi omogočil razvoj železniškega prometa v Lidcombu, ampak je vlagal tudi v razvoj območja. Postaja v Haslam's Creeku je bila odprta leta 1859 (Pollen, 1988).

Kmalu je začelo na tem območju nastajati predmestje. Po navedbah Stanleyja L. Hedgesa (1992) »je izgradnja železniške proge močno spremenila status okrožja«. Zgrajene so bile ceste, s katerimi je to območje postalo neodvisno; prva je bila leta 1862 zgrajena ulica John Street na severu Lidcomba, ki so jo poimenovali po očetu Therryju. Poleg tega je bila zgrajena še ena cesta in stanovanjska soseska »Town of St. Joseph«, ki je naznanila širitev naselja (Hedges, 1992). Železniška postaja je bila glavno gonilo (urbanega) razvoja Lidcomba.

Leta 1862 je vlada Novega Južnega Walesa kupila 200 akrov zemlje za izgradnjo »največjega pokopališča na južni polobli« (Emerson, 2001: 24). Pokopališče je bilo dokončano leta 1867 in poimenovali so ga Haslam's Creek Cemetery. Domačini so močno protestirali proti temu, da bi se ime njihovega naselja povezovalo s pokopališčem. Stigmatizacija je bila več kot očitna, kar dokazujejo tudi ti komentariji: »vse, kar moraš narediti, je, da greš tja in padeš notri ... '«; »večina ljudi pravi, če ne prej, boš to sosesko obiskal, ko boš umrl'«; »naselje vodijo ljudje, ki izdelujejo nagrobnike, in grobarji« (opazke o Lidcombu iz leta 1904, navedeno v Hedges, 1992: 232 in 233).

Vse to je vplivalo tudi na to, kako so oglaševali zemljo na tem območju. Pogosto so na prodaj ponujali zemljo v »Town of

St. Joseph ob železniški postaji Haslam's Creek« (Hedges, 1992: 224) – brez omenjanja pokopališča. Oblasti so se na proteste odzvale tako, da so leta 1878 naselje preimenovali v Rookwood po tem, ko so se odločale med več imeni. Nekateri pravijo, da je na njihovo končno izbiro vplival naslov knjige Williama Harrisona, objavljene okrog leta 1838 (Pollen, 1988, in Emerson, 2001), po poročanju enega od časopisov pa so to ime izbrali zato, ker je na tem območju živelo veliko poljskih vran (ang. *rooks*)^[2], zaradi česar naj bi bilo primernejše kot imeni Fitzroy in Norwood, ki sta bili prav tako predlagani (Hedges, 1992).

Občina Rookwood je bila ustanovljena čez več let (leta 1891). Sedem let po ustanovitvi so se začeli prebivalci spet pritoževati nad isto stvarjo: s povezovanjem pokopališča Rookwood Cemetery s sosesko Rookwood. Na tem območju pa so bili še drugi objekti, ki so vzbujali negativne asociacije. Leta 1879 so na primer v Lidcombu kupili 1.340 akrov zemlje za izgradnjo popravne doma za mladoletne prestopnike. Ta je bil leta 1893 preurejen v azil za revne, starejše in slabotne, katerih življenjske razmere so povzročile ali poslabšale vse večje gospodarske težave (to piše na plošči, ki jo je dal izdelati urad za obeležje dvestoletnice Avstralije in je nameščena na vhodu današnje vratarnice). Očitno pa je največ preglastic še vedno povzročalo ime območja. Leta 1914 je bilo zato naselje spet preimenoвано, tokrat v Lidcombe. To ime je bilo izpeljano iz priimkov dveh nekdanjih županov (Lidbury in Larcombe; Pollen, 1988, in Emerson, 2001) in se je obdržalo do danes.

Svetovna gospodarska kriza v 30. letih 20. stoletja je naselje močno prizadela. V rubriki »Leta svetovne gospodarske krize« je mestni svetnik Stanley L. Hedges (1992) navedel, da so se takrat v gospodarstvu Lidcomba ponovile razmere iz 90. let 19. stoletja. Večini revnih ljudi v Lidcombu v drugi polovici 20. let prejšnjega stoletja je bil pojem gospodarske krize najverjetneje čuden, saj so bili prej vedno odvisni od državne podpore (nadomestil za brezposelne ter tudi od nederarne pomoči, kot so bili odeje in vojaška oblačila) in pomoči dobrodelnega društva v Lidcombu. Gospodarska kriza je kljub temu prinesla velike izzive. Občinski svet je začel uvajati obsežne varčevalne ukrepe in zmanjšal plače osebju, ki je še ostalo. To je še bolj obremenilo lokalno gospodarstvo, ki mu že tako ni kazalo dobro. Terry Kass (2008) navaja, da je bilo med gospodarsko krizo brez dela približno 23 % prebivalcev Lidcomba, kar je občinski svet prisililo k temu, da je sprejel vladni program, v okviru katerega so ljudje prejeli državno podporo kot plačilo za opravljeno delo. Kljub temu je bilo še vedno veliko ljudi brezposelnih – med letoma 1931 in 1932 so morali urediti celo »taborišče za brezposelne«. Zaposlitvene možnosti so bile tako slabe, da je moral občinski svet v določenem trenutku z »žrebanjem« določiti, kdo bo dobil tistih nekaj služb, ki so bile na voljo. Število brezposelnih je bilo že tako

veliko, da so lahko ustanovili sindikat brezposelnih delavcev v Lidcombu (Hedges, 1992), poleg tega so bile organizirane tudi ljudske kuhinje za otroke in brezposelne (Kass, 2008).

2.2 Obdobje gospodarskega razcveta

Štirideseta leta 20. stoletja so bila za Lidcombe zlata doba. Po besedah dolgoletnega prebivalca je bil Lidcombe »živahno in podjetno predmestje, ki je imelo svoj mestni svet in tesno povezano skupnost« (Auburn Review, 1988, brez navedbe strani). Ustanovljena je bila gradbena zadruga, ki naj bi spodbudila izvajanje obsežnega programa stanovanjske gradnje in tako številnim prebivalcem omogočila, da pridejo do svoje hiše (Hedges, 1992). Lidcombe je cvetel, saj je bilo lokalno gospodarstvo v razmahu, in njegovi prebivalci so bili zaposleni v naselju ali zunaj njega. Tam so bile pekarnice in mlekarnice, dostavne službe in tovarna letalskih motorjev. Mestni svet je sprejel ambiciozen program za dvig kakovosti in števila stanovanj, ki je dopolnjeval »obsežni program za izboljšanje ulic v Lidcombu z urejanjem pločnikov, odtočnih kanalov in asfaltiranjem cest«, ki so ga začeli izvajati leta 1929 in je trajal vse do leta 1937 (Hedges, 1992: 285) oziroma še dalj. Po navedbah domačinov je v nekem trenutku v naselju delovalo šest bank. Trgovine s sadjem, čevlji in žensko modo so cvetele, prav tako trgovine z živili. V določenem trenutku je bilo v Lidcombu kar pet pekarn. Prebivalci so delali pri železnici, v bolnišnici, na pokopališču in v veliki klavnici, ki je stala na območju sedanjega olimpijskega parka (glej sliko 1). Državna klavnica je zaposlovala 1.600 ljudi, od teh jih je veliko prihajalo iz Lidcomba (Hedges, 1992). Drugi so delali v večjih tovarnah in poslovnih enotah v Lidcombu ali njegovi okolici. Šlo je za tovarne Ford, Australian Forge, Dahaviland, Janson's, Bradford Insulation in Australian Electrical Industries. Drugi so delali v podjetjih Dairy Farmers, Barcock & Wilcox, Egg Board, Tooyer's Brewery in Coats Printing. Lokalna skupnost je bila majhna, ampak zelo povezana in tovariška, zaradi česar je bila stopnja kriminala zelo nizka.

Gospodarsko rast Lidcomba so spremljala prizadevanja za ohranjanje povezanosti skupnosti. V ta namen so ustanovili plesne klube in organizirali športne dejavnosti. Doma in v službi so dosledno učili »spoštovanje, odgovornost in disciplino«, čemur so sledili tako mladi in stari. To sta poudarila dolgoletna prebivalca Lidcomba. Leta 1949 je mestna uprava zaradi učinkovitejšega upravljanja Lidcombe združila z Auburnom v občino Auburn (Emerson, 2001). Odločitev je bila sporna, saj so nekateri prebivalci in celo mestni svetniki menili, da združitve ne bi bila pametna, med drugim tudi zato, ker bi moral Lidcombe prevzeti dolgove, ki si jih ni sam nakopal (Hedges, 1992). Kljub temu je do združitve prišlo in vsaj takrat se je zdelo, da ta ni ovirala razvoja – ne doma ne v službi ne na ravni mestne uprave.

Lidcombovo obdobje gospodarskega razcveta je bilo organsko povezano z razmahom, ki ga je takrat doživljalo vse avstralsko gospodarstvo. Ta povojni razmah med letoma 1945 in 1975 ni bil povezan z gospodarsko arhitekturo britanskega imperija, čeprav je Velika Britanija kot kolonialna gospodarica ustanovila avstralsko kolonijo ter ji od leta 1788 do 90. let 19. stoletja pošiljala delovno silo in kapital. Med letoma 1946 in 1948 ter 1966 in 1968 se je izvoz v Veliko Britanijo zmanjšal za 65 %, uvoz iz Velike Britanije pa za 56 % (Broomhill, 2008). Avstralija se je na področju trgovine in tudi kulturne izmenjave vse bolj obračala k novi svetovni velesili – ZDA – in svoji sosedji – Aziji. Vse več tujih podjetij je odpiralo svoje podružnice v Avstraliji in tako sodelovalo v gospodarskem razcvetu oziroma prispevalo k njemu (Broomhill, 2008). V skladu s prevladujočo miselnostjo tistega časa je avstralska vlada podprla keynesianstvo ter z uporabo javnih sredstev zagotovila subvencije za stanovanja, zdravstvo, izobraževanje in prehrano (Broomhill, 2008). Gospodarski razcvet je ustvaril potrebo po migrantski delovni sili. Tako je avstralska vlada po letu 1947 začela uvajati aktivno politiko privabljanja migrantov. Priseljenci so takrat predstavljali približno polovico rasti avstralskega prebivalstva. Med migranti, ki so se odzvali na to politično pobudo, so prevladovali Evropejci, zlasti Britanci, in prebivalci Oceanije (zlasti Novozelanci; Collins, 2008). Konec tega razcveta in začetek drugega cikla gospodarskega upada v Avstraliji – to obdobje je politični gospodarstvenik, ki je bil dobro seznanjen s takratnimi razmerami, poimenoval »kriza 70. in 80. let 20. stoletja« (Broomhill, 2008: 21) – so občutili tudi v Lidcombu.

2.3 »Postavimo Lidcombe spet na noge«

Leta 1988 je bil v časopisu *Auburn Review* objavljen članek z naslovom *Postavimo Lidcombe spet na noge!*, v katerem je zajeto splošno vzdušje tistega časa. Šlo je za intervju s Keithom Huteaujem, uradnikom za stike z mediji pri združenju za izboljšanje skupnosti v Lidcombu in nekdanjim mestnim svetnikom. Huteau je spregovoril o smrti gospodarske zbornice v Lidcombu in o svoji želji, da bi jo oživili. Njegova ocena težav je še zgovornejša: »Rekel je, da je Lidcombu začel zvoniti mrtvaški zvon z izgradnjo nove hitre ceste, ki naj bi po njegovem mnenju preusmerila glavni tok kupcev proč od nakupovalnega središča v Lidcombu.« Dolgoletna prebivalca Lidcomba, s katerima smo se pogovarjali o Huteaujevi oceni, sta se z njim strinjala, zadevo pa sta še dodatno pojasnila. Zaradi hitre ceste so bili porušeni lokali, trgovine in nekatere hiše, zaradi česar soseska ni izgubila samo posla, ampak tudi občutek družabnih »dobrih starih dni«.

Prebivalci so navedli še druge vzroke za gospodarsko nazadovanje. Po mnenju nekaterih je Lidcombe s tem, ko je izgubil status upravnega središča, izgubil tudi nekaj svojega sijaja, vse-

kakor pa so se s tem končale dejavnosti v mestni hiši. Ker pa se je to zgodilo že leta 1949, je trajalo kar nekaj časa, preden so se posledice dejansko občutile. Na nacionalni in svetovni ravni so podjetja, ki so do takrat zaposlovala prebivalce Lidcomba, zapirala svoje tovarne ali jih selila drugam, da bi zmanjšala stroške ter se ob tem izognila zahtevam delavskih sindikatov za boljše in višje plače. Po svetu so se zaradi povečanja cen nafte in napredka v proizvodni tehnologiji povečali proizvodni stroški, hkrati pa se je zmanjšal uvoz iz Avstralije, ki je vključeval precejšnje količine kmetijskih proizvodov ali surovin (Stilwell, 1998, in Boomhill, 2008). Med prej omenjenimi podjetji sta se do danes obdržali samo Tooyer's Brewery in Coats Printing. Druga podjetja imajo v Lidcombu še vedno svoje podružnice, vendar so mirujoča ali pa že opuščena. To velja tudi za bazo avstralskih kraljevih zračnih sil. Ne glede na pravi vzrok so družbenogospodarske dejavnosti v Lidcombu do leta 1988 močno upadle, in ta trend se je nadaljeval do konca 90. let. Banke so zapustile območje in z njimi so odšla tudi delovna mesta. Ceste so bile v slabem stanju in vladne posege je začela nadomeščati nevidna roka trga. Javne stavbe v bližini ulice George's Avenue so prodali, kar se je skladalo s stališčem, da je »vitko« upravljanje najboljšo, kar so avstralski gospodarstveniki imenovali tudi paradigma »ekonomskega racionalizma« (Stilwell, 1979, 1998).

V primerjavi z drugimi obdobji se takrat v Avstralijo ni priseljevalo veliko ljudi (Collins, 2008). Politično zanimanje za globalizacijo je vodilo v nasprotujoče si rezultate, še zlasti zato, ker se je bogastvo kopičilo v rokah peščice, večini ljudi pa se je položaj poslabšal. Predmestja, še zlasti tista v zahodnem delu Sydneyja (vključno z Lidcombom), niso uspevala, in zdelo se je, da nosijo glavno breme globalizacije, ki je v sodobni Avstraliji postajala vse pomembnejša. Hkrati so podjetja podpirala »uvoz« migrantskih delavcev, ki naj bi zapolnili primanjkljaj delovne sile (Stilwell, 1998). Na prelomu tisočletja (to je leta 2000) pa so se ljudje spet začeli množično priseljevati v Avstralijo (Collins, 2008), po navedbah domačinov tudi v Lidcombe. Lokalni dejavniki, zlasti olimpijske igre, so bili močan magnet, toda na priseljevanje so vplivali tudi drugi dejavniki – azijska kriza med letoma 1997 in 1999 je na primer povzročila močno priseljevanje iz Azije (Castles, 2008). Ne glede na vse pa je bilo za življenje v Lidcombu prelomno leto 2000.

3 Priseljevanje v »mrtvo mesto«: Lidcombe po letu 2000

Olimpijske igre leta 2000 so spremenile podobo Sydneyja in njegovega predmestja. Eden od raziskovalcev je vzdušje po razglasitvi, da bodo olimpijske igre leta 2000 potekale v Sydneyju, opisal z besedo »zmagoslavno« (Handmer, 1995: 355). Olimpijske igre so pospešile razvoj vse občine Auburn in za



Slika 1: Lidcombe in olimpijske igre leta 2000 (foto: Hae Seong Jang)



Slika 2: Sodobni železniški sistem v Lidcombu (foto: Hae Seong Jang)



Slika 3: Zemljevid Lidcomba (vir: Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2013)

seboj pustile urbanistične projekte, ki so mestnim oblastem ustvarjali dohodke. Od štirih današnjih hotelov v Lidcombu sta bila vsaj dva zgrajena v fazi priprav na olimpijado, ki je tako postala zaščitni znak naselja (glej sliko 1).

Zgrajeni so bili nove hiše, olimpijski peron, dvigala in hitra cesta (Olympic Drive), ki naj bi privlačili obiskovalce in vsaj nekatere med njimi spodbudili k temu, da bi se preselili na to območje. Prodaja vstopnic se je povečala, obiskovalci so najemali stanovanja v Lidcombu, ter kar je najpomembnejše, soseska je bila deležna precejšnje pozornosti na lokalni in državni ravni. Odprta je bila olimpijska železniška proga in promet v Lidcombu se je povečal. Lidcombe je postal pomembno železniško vozlišče ter postopoma so ga začeli svetu in drugim migrantom v Sydneyju, ki prej niso živeli v Lidcombu, prikazovati kot cvetočo sosesko, ki je dobro povezana z drugimi predeli mesta. Sodobni železniški sistem (glej sliko 2) ostaja pomemben vidik življenja v soseski tudi po letu 2000.

Pred letom 2000 je v Lidcombu seveda živelo le malo nebritanskih priseljencev. Prvi priseljenci na tem območju, ki niso govorili angleško, so bili Rusi, Hrvati, Ukrajinci in Poljaki (Ashton, 2008). Med prvimi, ki so prišli v to sosesko, so bili tudi Italijani, ki so ob prihodu odprli tovarno mesnih izdelkov na ulici Joseph Street. V soseski je živelo dovolj Ukrajincev, da so lahko leta 1958 na ulici Church Street ustanovili veliko ukrajinsko cerkev, poleg tega so na isti ulici ustanovili še mladinski dom in srednjo šolo na ulici Joseph Street. Prvi večji val priseljencev je v Sydney najbrž prišel v 60. letih 20. stoletja po dolgem

obdobju razcveta avstralskega gospodarstva po drugi svetovni vojni (Ashton, 2008). Migranti so torej Lidcombe odkrili že pred letom 2000. Migrantski val v 21. stoletju je bil z vidika števila in raznovrstnosti priseljencev pravzaprav nekoliko poseben. Trenutno migranti (to je ljudje, ki so se rodili na območjih, kjer angleščina ni prvi jezik) predstavljajo 59 % prebivalstva v Lidcombu (Auburn City Council, 2013b), ki je del večje občine Auburn. Ta je sestavljena iz več predmestij, med katerimi so najpomembnejša Auburn, Berala, Homebush Bay, Regents Park in Silverwater (Auburn City Council, 2013b).

Večina trenutnih prebivalcev Lidcomba je priseljena iz neangleško govorečih držav. Čeprav velik delež migrantov predstavljajo Azijci, migranti na splošno prihajajo iz več kot 30 držav po svetu (preglednica 1). Struktura migrantov se torej razlikuje od značilne strukture migrantov v Avstraliji, pri kateri prevladujejo priseljenci iz Velike Britanije in Nove Zelandije (Collins, 2013).

Kot je razvidno iz preglednice 1, se je struktura prebivalstva v Lidcombu z leti precej spremenila. Zlasti je očiten upad števila prebivalcev iz Libanona, Turčije, Hrvaške in Velike Britanije, kar zahteva nekoliko podrobnejšo analizo. Po navedbah domačinov naj bi bilo Libanoncev v preteklosti več kot zdaj, vendar so jih iz Lidcomba izrinili kitajski migranti, ki v Sydneyju in Avstraliji živijo že veliko dalj časa kot drugi priseljenci ter so v Lidcombu začeli kupovati zemljišča in stanovanja kot naložbe (po navedbah nepremičninskih agentov). Kitajci so rušili propadajoče stavbe, na njihovem mestu gradili nove in jih prodajali z dobičkom. S tem so cene nepremičnin začele rasti hitreje, kot so si to lahko privoščili prebivalci Lidcomba, toda še vedno počasneje kot v drugih predelih Sydneyja, na primer v Auburnu. Proces se je začel sredi oziroma konec 90. let 20. stoletja z najavo, načrti in izvedbo obsežnega gradbenega projekta, povezanega s sydneyjsko olimpijado leta 2000 (Randolph idr., 2005).

V Urbanem izzivu je bilo objavljenih že veliko člankov o gentrifikaciji (na primer Kotze, 2013; Gunter, 2014; Monare idr., 2014, Marais idr., 2014, in Tsenkova, 2014), izkušnja v Lidcombu pa zahteva prav posebno pozornost. Proces tamkajšnje gentrifikacije je zelo podoben preobrazbi urbanih in predmestnih naselij v Sydneyju v smislu, da je z območij v bližini olimpijskega prizorišča izrinil revnejše ljudi in nanje pritegnil bogatejše (Stilwell, 1998). Hkrati gre za nekoliko poseben primer v smislu, da so denar in migranti skupaj ustvarili posebno urbano obliko, in sicer tako, da so z območja izrinili prejšnje prebivalce in poselili nekoč redko poseljeno predmestje.

S procesom migrantske gentrifikacije pa ne moremo pojasniti nenavadnega primera libanonskih in turških migrantov. Raziškave (Burnley, 2006, in Mourad, 2009) kažejo, da je izgradnja

mošeje Auburn-Gallipoli leta 1999 turške migrante (vključno z nekaterimi, ki so živeli v Lidcombu) spodbudila k temu, da so se preselili v Auburn. Velik del finančnih sredstev za izgradnjo tega velikega verskega zbirališča za muslimane iz Libanona, Turčije ali od drugod je prispevala turška vlada ob podpori lokalnih muslimanskih priseljencev. Nekatere turške in libanonske priseljence v Lidcombu je spodbudila k temu, da so se preselili v Auburn – ne samo zato, ker so nekateri od njih lahko dobili stanovanje v stavbah v lasti uprave mošeje, ampak tudi zato, ker v Auburnu živi več libanonskih in turških muslimanov, ki ustvarjajo občutek »drugega doma« ter so močen magnet za muslimanske migrante iz Turčije, Libanona in od drugod, ki se v tej soseski zbirajo v vse večjem številu.

»Verski dejavnik« pa ne more pojasniti upada hrvaškega prebivalstva v Lidcombu med letoma 2001 in 2008. Kot kažete raziskavi Val Čolić-Peisker (2004) in Walterja Lalicha (2004), objavljeni v reviji *Croatian Studies Review*, ter navedbe domačinov in analiza v knjigi Ilije Šutala z naslovom *Croatians in Australia: Pioneers, settlers and their descendants* (2004), je pravi vzrok za to najverjetneje spreminjajoča se narava hrvaških migrantov. V nasprotju z zgodnjimi hrvaškimi migranti, med katerimi so prevladovali delavci, ki so se v predmestjih in tamkajšnjih poceni hišah z vrtovi počutili udobno, zato so tam ostajali dalj časa, so mlajše in novejšje skupine migrantov, ki bolje govorijo angleško, so bolj izobražene in imajo s tem večje možnosti za izboljšanje svojih prihodkov, v predmestjih ostajale samo kratek čas in se nato preselile na boljše lokacije. Migranti iz delavskega razreda so se še naprej priseljevali v Avstralijo, toda Lidcombe zanje ni bil več privlačen, saj se vse večje število tamkajšnjih stanovanjskih zgradb Hrvatom ni zdelo najprimernejše za družinsko življenje. Poleg tega so Hrvati v Sydneyju veliko vlagali v skupnostne objekte zunaj Lidcomba (verske, izobraževalne ustanove, objekte za razvedrilne dejavnosti), zaradi česar je ta zanje postal manj privlačen.

Z nekoliko spremenjeno različico hipoteze »izrinjanja« lahko pojasnimo občuten upad deleža priseljencev iz Velike Britanije, ki živijo v Lidcombu. Od tam se je izselilo veliko belopoltnih Avstralcev, vendar ne samo zato, ker so jih izrinili bogatejši priseljenci. Nekateri belopoltni prebivalci so se namreč odselili zato, ker se niso želeli mešati s prihajajočimi skupinami migrantov. Po nekaterih drugih navedbah trgovine belopoltnih Avstralcev s prihodom migrantov niso več uspevale, ker so ti raje nakupovali v trgovinah v lasti migrantov, zato so se avstralski lastniki trgovin preselili. Prepričanje, da je Lidcombe naselje za migrante, bi bilo lahko še dodaten razlog za odvrčanje belopoltega prebivalstva. Tudi postopno zmanjševanje števila belega prebivalstva je gotovo eden od razlogov, saj so dolgoletni prebivalci umrli, njihovi otroci pa so se odselili. Posledično pomanjkanje zanimanja za predmestje, v katerem so prevladovali migranti in ki je bilo znano kot soseska zanje, je še eden od razlogov. Poleg

Preglednica 1: Demografska struktura Lidcomba v obdobju 2001–2011 (v deležih)

Država rojstva	2001	2006	2011
Kitajska	9,5	10,5	11,3
Južna Koreja	3,2	3,5	10,5
Vietnam	7,9	6,9	6,2
Indija	2,2	2,0	3,0
Filipini	2,9	2,8	2,9
Šrilanka	2,9	3,3	2,7
Libanon	4,6	4,0	2,7
Turčija	2,7	2,5	1,9
Nepal	0,1	0,6	1,7
Hongkong	1,3	1,3	1,6
Nova Zelandija	1,6	1,5	1,2
Malezija	0,7	0,7	1,1
Burma	1,4	0,9	1,1
Pakistan	0,5	0,6	0,9
Indonezija	0,4	0,5	0,9
Afganistan	0,2	0,6	0,8
Bangladeš	0,2	0,4	0,6
Hrvaška	1,2	0,7	0,6
Velika Britanija	1,1	0,7	0,6
Fidži	0,9	0,6	0,6
Kambodža	0,4	0,4	0,5
Irak	0,6	0,9	0,5
Tonga	1,1	0,9	0,4
Singapur	0,1	0,4	0,4
Tajvan	0,4	0,2	0,4
Tajska	0,3	0,3	0,4
Južnoafriška republika	0,1	0,2	0,3
Egipt	0,2	0,3	0,3
ZDA	0,1	0,1	0,3
Iran	0,3	0,3	0,3
Italija	1,0	0,6	0,3
Irska	0,3	0,2	0,3

Vir: Auburn City Council (2015a)

tega je treba upoštevati, da je Lidcombe vedno nosil stigma »mesta mrtvih«, zato med belopoltnimi Avstralski nikoli ni bil priljubljena lokacija. Kot je bilo že omenjeno, je večina angleških priseljencev, ki so se tja priselili v času nastajanja naselja, delala na pokopališču (Hedges, 1992), pri železnici (Mitchell, 2008), v klavnicah ali tovarnah v Lidcombu ali njegovi okolici. Nekateri belopoltni prebivalci so se odselili tudi zato, ker so svoje nepremičnine ugodno prodali migrantom, drugi so svojim otrokom želeli zagotoviti boljše šolanje ali so odšli po tem, ko so njihovi otroci dokončali šolanje v tej soseski, nekaj pa jih je



Slika 4: Gradnja nepremičnin v Lidcombu (foto: Hae Seong Jang)

Preglednica 2: Demografski in migracijski trend v Lidcombu v obdobju 2001–2011

leto	2001	2006	2011
število prebivalstva	13.454	14.148	16.403
ženske (%)	49,5	49,7	49,1

Vir: Auburn City Council (2015b)

preprosto želelo živeti drugje. Na upad belopoltega prebivalstva v Lidcombu je tako vplival preplet različnih okoliščin in ne samo en odločilni dejavnik. Kot opozarja Burnley (2006), je velika koncentracija bogatih belskih sosesk v Sydneyju vedno zagotavljala močno podporo stališču, da poselitvene vzorce v mestu določata rasa in družbeni razred.

Iz preglednice 1 je prav tako razvidno, da v Lidcombu narašča delež nekaterih narodnosti, čeprav ima še vedno zelo raznoliko prebivalstveno strukturo. Najbolj narašča število korejskega prebivalstva. Glavni vzrok za to je, da so se cene nepremičnin v sosednji soseski Strathfield, v kateri prevladujejo Korejci, močno povišale. Lidcombe je tako ponudil zasilni izhod z vse bolj vročega nepremičninskega trga v Strathfieldu. Vse večji korejski vpliv v Lidcombu seveda v sosesko privlači še druge Korejce. Lidcombe ima tako narodnostno zelo pestro prebivalstvo in družbeno kulturo, pri čemer na tem območju sobivajo različne

cerkve (slika 5). Raznovrstnost pride najbolj do izraza v spornem parku Lidcombe Remembrance Park (glej sliko 6), kjer se zbirajo ljudje najrazličnejših narodnosti in se udeležujejo družabnih dejavnosti, se sproščajo ali pa izvajajo različne vrste lahke vadbe. Vzdušje najbolje povzame priljubljena pesem javne šole v Lidcombu:

Prihajamo iz šole v Lidcombu (plosk, plosk, plosk!) ... učenje v sožitju nam gre najbolje od rok! Naši učenci prihajajo iz številnih različnih dežel. Želimo ostati združeni na avstralski zemlji. Spoštujemo drug drugega in vsakogar, ki ga srečamo. Učenje v sožitju izpopolnjuje naše življenje.

Glede na to, da lahko otroci v Avstraliji obiskujejo samo javne šole na območju svoje upravne enote, besedilo te pesmi dopolnjuje statistične podatke o raznovrstnosti območja. V nasprotju z redko poseljenostjo v preteklosti danes Lidcombe kipi od človeške dejavnosti, njegovo prebivalstvo pa se stalno povečuje (glej preglednico 2).

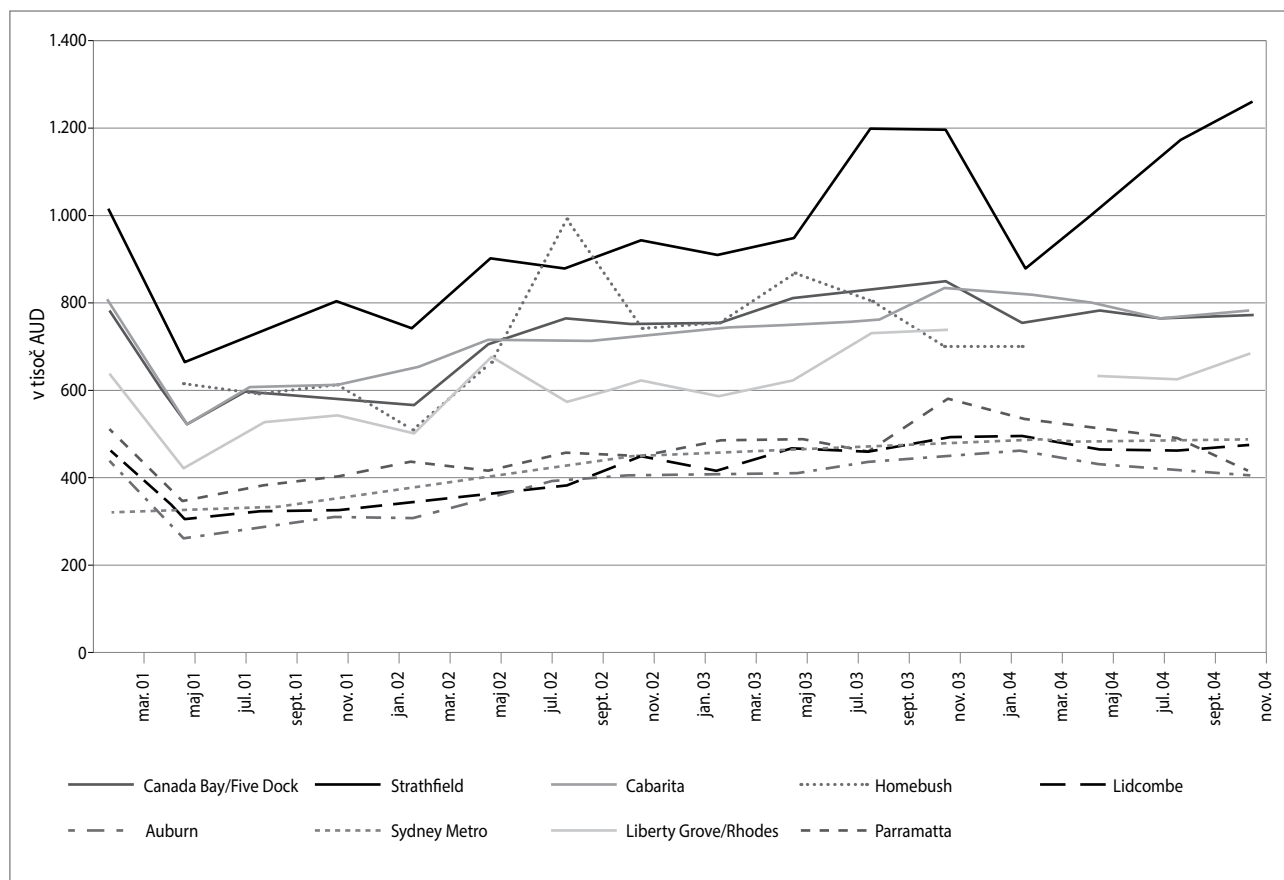
Podatki ne vključujejo precejšnjega števila turistov, ki prihajajo v Lidcombe. Na podlagi pripovedovanja domačinov in sistematičnih urbanističnih raziskav (Stilwell, 1998) na rast prebivalstva v Sydneyju in njegovem predmestju najbolj vpliva prise-



Slika 5: Različne cerkve v Lidcombu (foto: Hae Seong Jang)



Slika 6: Spominski park v Lidcombu (foto: Hae Seong Jang)



Slika 7: Povprečne prodajne cene nepremičnin v okoliških predmestjih Sydneyja v obdobju 2001–2004 (vir: Randolph idr., 2005)

ljevanje; število in delež prvotnih belih prebivalcev Lidcomba se tako znižujeta. Po navedbah nekaterih migrantov, s katerimi smo govorili, so pogost razlog za povečevanje števila priseljenecv v Lidcombu razmeroma poceni stanovanja in lahek dostop do drugih delov Sydneyja zaradi železniške postaje. Večanje števila pripadnikov posameznih prebivalstvenih skupin spodbudi novo priseljevanje, saj lokacija ljudi privlači zaradi najrazličnejših razlogov, vključno z mikavnimi informacijami, lokalno skupnostjo in drugimi oblikami družbene podpore. Nekateri so se v Lidcombe priselili tudi zaradi višjih cen nepremičnin v drugih predelih mesta, še zlasti v sosednjem Strathfieldu (glej sliko 1; Han in Han, 2010). Še vedno pa se največ ljudi tja priseli iz drugih držav. Stanovanja v Lidcombu so v primerjavi z drugimi predmestji razmeroma poceni (glej sliko 7).

Poleg tega nudi lahek dostop do poslovnega središča mesta in drugih območij, v katerih migranti delajo, nakupujejo in se družijo. Tretjič, gre za migrantsko soseseo. Ta razlog se morda zdi samoumeven, toda migranti običajno gravitirajo k območjem, ki so znana po tem, da nudijo družbeno, versko in gospodarsko podporo, kar je v nasprotju z neoklasičnimi ekonomskimi teorijami, po katerih naj bi bila migracija racionalna zadeva posameznika (Molho, 2013). Te razloge so običajno navajali nepremičninski agenti, upravniki trgovin ter

železniški in poštni delavci. Pastor neke korejske cerkve, ki jo obiskujejo večinoma Korejci, je 12. januarja 2014 celo pridigal o tej temi, pri čemer je potrdil tri zgoraj opisane razloge in dodal še četrtega: bog je pripeljal migrante v Lidcombe, da bi ga preoblikovali.

Dejavniki, ki so vplivali na to, da so se ljudje priselili v Lidcombe, se razlikujejo glede na izvorno državo. Na prebivalce več kot 30 različnih narodnosti, ki danes živijo v Lidcombu, so vplivali različni, včasih pa tudi podobni dejavniki (glej na primer Han in Han, 2010, za korejske priseljenke v Sydneyju in Moustafine, 2011, za ruske priseljenke). Če vzamemo za primer Korejo, je večje izseljevanje omogočila ukinitvev prepovedi preseljevanja konec 90. let 20. stoletja.

Običajno so se migranti na to območje priselili skupaj s svojimi družinami, čeprav je prišlo tudi veliko samskih ljudi. Po podatkih o velikosti lokalnih gospodinjstev (Auburn City Council, 2013b) je trenutno samo 15 % gospodinjstev enočlanskih. Dvočlanskih gospodinjstev je 26 %, tričlanskih 2 %, štiričlanskih 21 %, petčlanskih 9 % in šestčlanskih ali več 7 %. Ti podatki grobo veljajo tudi za Lidcombe. Tovrstno skupinsko priseljevanje nasprotuje razlagam, ki temeljijo na posamezniku, ter njihovim dominantam in učinkom domin ali različicam

Preglednica 3: Zaposlitvena statistika Lidcomba (južni del oziroma sosek Rookwood) v obdobju 2001–2011

zaposlitveni status	2001	2006	2011
zaposleni	2.288 (90,5 %)	2.326 (91,9 %)	3.421 (90,4 %)
zaposleni s polnim delovnim časom	1.549	1.619	2.175
zaposleni s krajšim delovnim časom	615	613	1.084
število opravljenih delovnih ur ni navedeno	124	94	162
brezposelni	239	204	361
iskalci zaposlitve s polnim delovnim časom	151	139	186
skupaj delovna sila	2.527	2.530	3.783

Vir: Auburn City Council (2015c)

v neoklasični ekonomiji (Collins, 2013). Dejstvo, da je samo ena zaposlitvena agencija, Max Employment, registrirala 1.400 iskalcev zaposlitve (*Auburn Review*, 2014), kaže na to, da migranti ne čakajo le na državno podporo. Njihov prispevek k lokalnemu, občinskemu in mestnemu gospodarskemu razvoju je precejšen in se ne ujema s trditvami, da samo obremenjujejo avstralsko gospodarstvo.

4 Lokalno, občinsko in mestno gospodarstvo

Stopnja brezposelnosti v celotni upravni enoti Auburn znaša 5,6 % (*Auburn Review*, 2014) in je veliko nižja od državnega povprečja, ki znaša 6,0/6,1 %. Pomembno pa je, da si poglobljeno ogledamo naselje Lidcombe. Če se osredotočimo na njegov južni del, ki je bil vedno veliko manj razvit in zaželen kot severni del, lahko vidimo, da je večina njegovih prebivalcev zaposlena s polnim ali krajšim delovnim časom in dela v Lidcombu ali zunaj njega (preglednica 3). V preglednici 3 so prikazani statistični podatki o zaposlitvenem statusu prebivalstva.

Leta 2011 je 63 % prebivalcev Rockwooda in Lidcomba na splošno spadalo v starostno skupino od 20 do 59 let, se pravi med delovno sposobno prebivalstvo. Demografski podatki so za obe območji zelo podobni in kažejo, da migranti pretirano ne obremenjujejo javne blagajne v smislu javnih izdatkov za upokojece in starejše migrante. Prebivalci opravljajo najrazličnejša dela, in fizično delo (stereotipno delo migrantov) je samo eno od teh. Delajo kot strokovnjaki in menedžerji, tehniki in obrtniki, delavci v proizvodnji, pisarniški delavci in prodajalci. Deleži posameznih poklicev so predstavljeni v preglednici 4.

Kako živahno je lokalno gospodarstvo, pa ne moremo ugotoviti samo na podlagi teh podatkov. Vsi zaposleni namreč ne delajo v Lidcombu; to značilnost sta predmestju sistematično določila mestna uprava in značaj njegove skupnosti (Auburn City Council, 2013b). Več podatkov lahko dobimo, če pogledamo obsežen tok ljudi, ki se med prometno konico na železniški postaji Lidcombe vkrca na vlak in zapusti sosek. Podobno vsakodnevni nenadni pritok ljudi med 6. in 7. uro zjutraj z

Preglednica 4: Poklicna struktura v Lidcombu (v deležih)*

poklic	2006	2011
menedžerji	8,4	8,2
strokovnjaki	17,8	23,1
tehniki in obrtniki	14,2	14,4
skupnostni delavci in zaposleni v storitvenem sektorju	7,5	8,3
pisarniški delavci	15,8	14,5
prodajalci	9,2	8,4
upravljalci težkih strojev	9,3	6,7
fizični delavci	14,7	12,4
pomanjkljivi podatki	3,3	3,8

Opomba: * Podatki se nanašajo samo na južni del Lidcomba.

Vir: Auburn City Council (2015d)

območij zunaj Lidcomba potrjuje, da v sosekki ne delajo samo tisti, ki tam živijo. Posledica gibanja v Lidcombe in iz njega je to, da izdatki nekaterih migrantov (na primer za nakupovanje in malico med službo) vplivajo na lokalna gospodarstva zunaj Lidcomba, vključno s tistim v širši občini Auburn.

Podatki o kvantitativnem prispevku Lidcomba niso na voljo, saj avstralski statistični urad, pri katerem podatke dobiva tudi mestni svet, očitno ne ponuja tovrstnih podrobnejših informacij. S kvalitativnega vidika pa vemo, da se prebivalci Lidcomba ukvarjajo z najrazličnejšimi dejavnostmi, pri čemer najbolj izstopa prodaja, ki najbolj dejavno zadovoljuje potrebe lokalnega prebivalstva in ljudi, ki prihajajo od drugod. S tem izdatki migrantov bolj neposredno vplivajo na lokalno gospodarstvo. Trgovsko oziroma poslovno središče mesta je ulica Joseph Street, na kateri lahko najdemo trgovine z živili, pekarno, frizerske salone, restavracije, bare in lekarno. Poleg tega so tam poslovni subjekti, kot so zdravstvena ambulanta, davčna agencija, pravne pisarne in gostinski lokali. Na tej ulici je tudi restavracija s hitro hrano McDonalds. Na ulici Victoria Street East najdemo manjšo industrijsko cono s skromnim poslovnim centrom in nekaj manjšimi obrati, kot je selitveno podjetje. V severnem delu Lidcomba je še ena dolga in živahna poslovna ulica, John Street, na kateri najdemo prastaro pivovarno Tooheys, hotele in bare.



Slika 8: Večje trgovsko območje v Lidcombu (foto: Hae Seong Jang)

Preglednica 5: Kvartili dohodkov gospodinjstev v Lidcombu v obdobju 2001–2011

Lidcombe	2001	srednji razred	2006	srednji razred	2011	srednji razred
kvartilna skupina	%		%		%	
najnižja	23,0		25,2		23,2	
srednje nizka	26,9	54,4	26,9	53,8	26,9	54
srednje visoka	27,5		26,9		27,1	
najvišja	22,5		21		22,9	

Vir: povzeto po podatkih mestnega sveta v Auburnu (ang. Auburn City Council, 2015e)

Preglednica 6: Ključ za razlago kvartilov dohodkov gospodinjstev v obdobju 2001–2011

višina dohodkov (v AUD)	2001	2006	2011
najnižja skupina	0–418	0–530	0–614
srednje nizka skupina	419–828	531–1.034	615–1.233
srednje visoka skupina	829–1.462	1.035–1.788	1.234–2.272
najvišja skupina	več kot 1.463	več kot 1.789	več kot 2.273

Vir: Auburn City Council (2015f)

Lokalno gospodarstvo je v konjunkturi, vsaj glede na visoko stopnjo novih poslovnih dejavnosti. V zadnjih treh mesecih so se odprle še tri nove korejske restavracije. Ta trend je očiten zlasti na ulici Joseph Street, vendar tudi drugod. Poleg tega se v soseski odpira vse več nepremičninskih agencij. Samo na trgovskem območju na ulici Joseph Street so se v zadnjem letu odprle kar tri. Pri eni gre pravzaprav za »razširitev« prejšnje draguljarne in trgovine z živili, drugi dve pa sta bili ustanovljeni popolnoma na novo. Nimamo natančnih podatkov o njihovi donosnosti, saj te informacije niso na voljo. Kljub temu pa lahko ugotovimo, da je Lidcombe zdaj soseska, v kateri prevladujejo prebivalci srednjega razreda, in nič več delavsko predmestje, kot je to veljalo v preteklosti; to je razvidno tudi iz preglednice 5.

Na podlagi pogovorov, ki smo jih v zadnjih dveh letih opravili z dolgoletnimi prebivalci te soseske, smo ugotovili, da veliko delovnega prebivalstva živi v Lidcombu, vendar pa ne vsi. Ključno pri vsem tem je dejstvo, da so tudi območja, najbližja pokopališču, zdaj gospodarsko precej živahna. Pogrebna dejavnost je seveda še naprej dejavna. Na območju deluje podjetje, ki izdeluje nagrobnike in napise zanje in zaposluje lokalne kamnoseke. Ob podjetju, prikazanem na sliki 9, deluje na tem območju še eno, ki ga upravlja sklad, ki je upravitelj pokopališča, dejavno pa je vsaj še eno, ki je v zasebni lasti.

Pogrebni zavod Guardian Funeral Home poleg tega po naročilu načrtuje in pripravlja pogrebne slovesnosti. Podjetja, ki se ukvarjajo s to dejavnostjo, aktivno oglašujejo svoje storitve, med drugim tudi v lokalnem časopisu *Auburn Review*, o dejavnosti nekaterih podjetij pa smo se prepričali tudi z obiskom njihovih poslovalnic. Kljub temu pa je lokalno gospodarstvo zdaj veliko bolj razvejano kot včasih.

Prihodkovni razredi so se z leti spremenili, zato je podatke v preglednici 6 treba brati skupaj s tistimi na sliki 7. Če jih beremo skupaj, ugotovimo, da v naselju vlada precejšnje blagostanje in da družbeno pomanjkanje močno upada, dohodki pa so enakomerno porazdeljeni. Migranti pošiljajo denar in darila svojim sorodnikom v domovini, v katero tudi vlagajo. Zanimivo bi bilo preučiti, ali obstajajo razlike med tem procesom in tem, kako Afričani v Sydneyju pošiljajo denar v Afriko (Obeng-Odoom, 2010).

5 Sklep

Na tem mestu se spleča ponoviti vprašanje, zastavljeno na začetku članka: Kako migranti oblikujejo lokalne prostore in prispevajo k gospodarstvu in družbi države gostiteljice? Čeprav prevladuje mnenje, da so vplivi migrantov negativni, naša študija primera kaže, da je zamisel o »migracijskem vplivu« ali



Slika 9: Pogrebna dejavnost (foto: Hae Seong Jang)



Slika 10: Podjetje v Lidcombu, ki izdeluje nagrobnike in spomenike (foto: Franklin Obeng-Odoom)

»vplivih migracij« nekoliko preveč poenostavljena. Pri problematiki migracij gre za empirično vprašanje. Lidcombe je ena večjih migrantskih sosesk v Avstraliji, ki jo ljudje močno povezujejo s smrtjo in mrtvimi, hkrati pa je v njej močno razvita gospodarska dejavnost. Južni del Lidcomba, ki je bil prej znan predvsem kot domovanje mrtvih, je na novo oživel s prihodom migrantov, ki so dejavni v lokalnem gospodarstvu in zunaj nje, hkrati pa tudi njegov severni del ostaja še naprej živahen in dobro poseljen. Dnevne življenjske potrebe migrantov so na državo gostiteljico pozitivno vplivale, saj je tako razširila svoje gospodarske dejavnosti prek različnih kanalov, kot sta gradbeništvo in bančništvo, ter povečala družbeno in moralno raznovrstnost. Hkrati se zdi, da migranti od avstralske javnosti ne zahtevajo nešteto stvari ali storitev, ki si jih ne bi zaslužili

ali potrebovali. Kot aktivni zaposleni migranti prispevajo k splošni avstralski blaginji in bodo tako upravičeni do svojega deleža, še zlasti, ker ni dokazov o porabi javnih sredstev za vzdrževanje miru in varnosti, saj se je stopnja kriminala v zadnjih letih močno znižala (Auburn City Council, 2013a). Migranti so prinesli novo življenje v Avstralijo, hkrati pa izboljšujejo tudi življenje svojih sorodnikov v domovini. Pošiljajo jim denar in jih obiskujejo, kar pomaga izboljšati družbene razmere v teh tujih državah, prav tako kot v primeru Lidcomba tuja delovna sila pomaga državi gostiteljici preoblikovati mrtvo mesto. Pogrebna dejavnost seveda ostaja, vendar je lokalno gospodarstvo v Lidcombu danes veliko bolj razvejano, in vse kaže, da se bo njegov družbenogospodarski napredek v prihodnosti še nadaljeval.

Opisane ugotovitve pomembno prispevajo k obstoječi literaturi o migrantih, v kateri se predvideva, da so ti del diaspore in da zaradi svoje »navazanosti na domovino« ne vlagajo v države gostiteljice (Min in Park, 2014). V primeru Lidcomba se navezanost na »dom« izraža v »domači kulturi«, ki so jo migranti prinesli s seboj v Avstralijo (na primer pogosto jedo zunaj, kar za to območje prej ni bilo značilno), hkrati pa so preoblikovali staro in izumirajoče naselje. V nasprotju s samo eno enklavo v mestu, kot to kažejo druge raziskave (Kim, 2014), ali samo eno regionalno skupino migrantov, ki vlaga v nepremičninski trg, kot je to pokazala predhodna študija Franklina Obeng-Odooma (2012b) o afriških migrantih v Sydneyju, v tej soseski živijo ter jo preoblikujejo migranti različnih ras, narodnosti in veroizpovedi. V tem pogledu raziskava prispeva k literaturi o migrantski preobrazbi mest, ki se je osredotočala na begunce in posamične narodnosti ali etnične enklave (na primer Stilwell, 2003). Belopolti Avstralsci so se izselili, vendar še zdaleč niso bili »izrinjeni« niti prisiljeni v to, da se preselijo na manj primerna območja. V nasprotju z avstralskimi belci, ki so temnopolte domorodce pregnali na slabša in odročna območja (Jang, 2015), so se beli prebivalci Lidcomba preselili na »boljša območja«, pri čemer se jim je gospodarski položaj z odhodom izboljšal. V primeru Lidcomba torej ne gre samo za razselitev belega prebivalstva niti preprosto za to, da so posamezni migranti postali uspešni, kot to nakazujejo nekatere raziskave (Saunders, 2012).

S tem vprašanjem so povezani pomembni problemi, na primer vse večji stanovanjski stroški, slabšanje dostopa do najosnovnejših storitev, nezadostno mešanje prebivalstva in morebitna radioaktivnost. Te težave so za migracijo v Avstraliji nekaj običajnega, poleg tega pa lahko pomanjkanje kohezije vodi v morebitne politične posege, ki lahko spodbudijo večje mešanje prebivalstva. Z razširjanjem raziskovalnih ugotovitev v lokalnem časopisu *Auburn Review* ter obveščanjem prek audio-, pisnih in vidnih sredstev lahko izboljšamo ozaveščenost ljudi o tej problematiki. Raziskava, ki jo je o migrantih v ZDA

izvedel Jerry Park (2013), je pokazala, da verska pripadnost pogosto ustvarja ločenost in s tem poskrbi za ohranjanje narodne identitete, vendar lahko hkrati ponuja priložnost za spremembe v procesu integracije, še zlasti če se določena verska skupnost odloči spremeniti svojo organizacijo, kar lahko na primer omogoči medrasne poroke kot eno od mogočih oblik integracije. Mestni svet je prebivalcem zagotovil brezplačne ali subvencionirane tečaje angleškega jezika, ki so vključevali teme o različnih kulturah in rasah. Zlasti zaskrbljujoče so cene nepremičnin, ki se pogosto povečajo z višanjem ponudb, kar lahko vodi v prenapihnenost cen in s tem v slabšo cenovno dostopnost nepremičnin v lokalnem gospodarstvu. Eden od načinov, na katerega lahko ustavimo to očitno neskladje med ponudbo in povpraševanjem ter s tem potrebo po konkurenčnih ponudbah, je vzpostavitev programa obdavčenja zemlje po načelih ekonomske filozofije, ki jo je podpiral ameriški politični gospodarstvenik Henry George. S takim programom lahko ublažimo potrebo po špekuliranju v rastočem lokalnem gospodarstvu. Poleg tega se lahko uvedejo programi družbenih stanovanj, ki bi razširili ponudbo na stanovanjskem trgu, ne da bi pri tem podražili najemnine. Uvajanje tovrstnih stanovanjskih reform za migrante bo samo po sebi kontroverzno, vendar jih mestna uprava lahko izpelje, če se tako odloči, še zlasti zdaj, ko ima mestni svet v migrantih močno volilno zaledje. Iz istega razloga bi se lahko okrepila prizadevanja za preprečitev uresničitve načrtov, po katerih naj bi se Lidcombe spremenil v odlagališče radioaktivnih odpadkov. Natančnejša analiza narave politike sprememb in tega, kako se lahko različne interesne skupine uprejo spremembam ali kako jih je mogoče prepričati, da podprejo spremembe, pa bo morala še malo počakati.

Za zdaj bo dovolj, če poudarimo, da so migranti v avstralsko mrtvo mesto prinesli novo življenje, hkrati pa so to omogočili tudi samim sebi in svojim sorodnikom v domovini – ne da bi pri tem pretirano obremenjevali avstralsko gospodarstvo. Ker imajo vzorci priseljevanja (priseljevanje v skupinah) ter procesi sprememb in stalnosti v Lidcombu strukturno in zgodovinsko podlago in dinamiko, se zgodba te soseske ne ujema z domnevami o priseljevanju posameznikov, na katerih temelji veliko ekonomskih teorij. Avstralska migracijska politika (politika dodeljevanja vizumov migrantom) bi tako morala bolj ustrezati »zgodovinsko-strukturni« paradigmi migracij kot splošnejši neoklasični »ekonomiji migracij«. Migranti so glavna gonilna sila velike preobrazbe v Lidcombu in lahko nudijo močno oporo novim migrantom, pri čemer ne potrebujejo pomoči oblikovalcev politike ne drugih, katerih odgovor se kar naprej glasi »samo prek mojega trupla«.

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Zahvala

Zahvaljujeva se Davidu in Noli Basford, ki že dolgo živita v Lidcombu in ga izjemno dobro poznata, za vse informacije in arhivsko gradivo o tej soseski. Poleg tega se zahvaljujeva nepremičninskim agentom in drugim (železniškim delavcem, zaposlenim v verskih organizacijah, lastnikom trgovin, prodajalcem in zaposlenim v knjižnici), ki so z nama delili svoja mnenja o preobrazbi Lidcomba. Posebna zahvala gre prof. Franku Stilwellu, vodilnemu avstralskemu urbanističnemu političnemu ekonomistu, za pomoč pri razlagi širšega konteksta urbanega razvoja Avstralije v začetnih fazah oblikovanja raziskave. Pri izboljšavi članka so nama bili v veliko pomoč predlogi zunanjega ocenjevalca revije *Urbani izziv* in podpora njenega glavnega urednika dr. Boštjana Kerblerja. Nobena od omenjenih oseb ni odgovorna za kateri koli vidik predstavljene analize, zanjo prevzemava popolno odgovornost.

Opombe

^[1] Podatki so bili pridobljeni 11. januarja 2014. z uporabo iskalnika *Google Scholar* (uporabljene ključne besede: Frank Stilwell, Afghans).

^[2] Časopisi so prav tako navajali, da so bile na območju črne vrane (ang. *crows*) in ne sive (ang. *rooks*). Kakorkoli že, ker gre v obeh primerih za vrsto vrane, je ime »Rook« v redu (odlomek na strani 234, Hedges, 1992).

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Migrants and the transformation of local neighbourhoods: A study of the socioeconomic transformation of Lidcombe, Australia

A major contributor to negative attitudes towards migrants is that they exert pressure on the facilities of the host communities without making any (substantial) contribution to the host economy and society. This negative sentiment is particularly acute in cities, where pressure on amenities is concentrated and more visible. In turn, migrant neighbourhoods are particularly despised. Migration experiences in the Rookwood Cemetery area of Sydney, Australia, widely regarded as the “largest necropolis in the southern hemisphere”, however, challenge this stereotypical view. This migrant neighbourhood is the site of vibrant and diverse migration and migrant (especially Korean) activities never before seen in the history of the area, which is now called Lidcombe. Drawing on multiple sources of evidence, including archival research at local libraries, discussion with long-time residents of the neighbourhood and visual ethnography (analysed from the historical-structural perspective in migration studies),

this study offers a history of Lidcombe and appraises its twenty-first-century migration experiences. By doing so, it highlights the demographic, social and economic changes to emphasise the contribution of migrants to the regeneration of a “dead city” and also to contest inherited stereotypes of migrants that often lead to racial scapegoating and misrepresentation as “parasites”, “criminals” and a “drain” on the host economy. Overall, this case study suggests that migrants can and often do transform the spaces they occupy in ways that make a positive and lasting contribution to the host economy and society more generally. This is an important lesson for European countries facing the “migrant crisis” to consider, as it also is for politicians around the world seeking to wall out migrants to protect host economies and societies.

Keywords: urban necropolis, migration, migrants, local economic development

1 Introduction

In what ways do migrants shape their local spaces and contribute to the host economy and society? Years of global migration studies have established that when migrants are deemed to exert pressure on the facilities of the host communities, are unemployed, and make little or no contribution to the host economy and society – and they often are so deemed – negative attitudes towards migrants are considerably heightened, sometimes reaching feverish conditions (Markaki & Longhi, 2013). The current “migrant crisis” in Europe, the Americas and elsewhere in the world exemplifies this view, highlighting how migrants are generally perceived: as unwanted. Evident in the discourse of “compassion” used by those few countries that are taking steps to welcome migrants is a testament that migrants are perceived to be parasitic or, in other words, recipients of socioeconomic benefits and underminers of security and political tranquillity. This negative sentiment is particularly acute in cities, where pressure on amenities is concentrated and more visible. In turn, migrant neighbourhoods around the world are commonly described as spaces for criminals, illegal and dishonest activities, poor housing, blighted conditions, crime, grime and insecurity (see Collins, 2008, 2013; Tsenkova, 2014; Opoko et al., 2015). Much of this perception is, however, negated by a few studies (e.g., Stilwell, 2003; Obeng-Odoom, 2012a, 2014) that show that the experiences of migrant neighbourhoods are more complex. The recent popular book *Arrival City* by Doug Saunders (2012) paints a picture of how migrants successfully go through the migration process – but this is popular writing and is methodologically committed more to individuals than to their social relations or migrant neighbourhoods generally (Davidson & Gleeson, 2013). Insights from traditional rural-urban migration research (for a review, see Acharya & Codina, 2012), especially those from mainstream economics, do not help because they tend to consider migration from the actions of individuals and households within national borders – clearly ignoring transnational migration, let alone transcontinental migration, and how this is mediated by structural and institutional factors and processes (Adogame & Lawrence, 2013; Ozkul & Obeng-Odoom, 2013; Portes & Yiu, 2013). Where systematic transnational migration research has been conducted, it has focused much less on migrant neighbourhoods, on which the literature has been sparse and even then limited to refugees and their enclaves or townships (e.g., Stilwell, 2003). Although migration studies have revealed much about the characteristics of migrants in the labour force, they focus more on individual dynamics. Research on migration and the economy limits the economic perspective to growth, productivity and labour markets. Moreover, much of the research focuses on the situation in the UK and US (see, e.g., Riley & Weale, 2006),

and so analysing the role of migrants in transforming entire neighbourhoods (a different focus) and shifting the attention to Australia (a different advanced capitalist country) will help strengthen the understanding of the “economics of migration”. This paper complements and significantly extends existing efforts to better understand migrant neighbourhoods and, in turn, sheds light on the role of migration in the socioeconomic transformation of migrant spaces and host economies and societies.

The empirical referent of the study is Lidcombe, a migrant neighbourhood in Sydney, Australia. The neighbourhood is located “in Auburn municipality and on the traditional lands of the Darug people, centres upon the railway station and a small shopping centre. It extends north to Parramatta Road and east to Rookwood Cemetery. On the western and southern boundaries it merges into Auburn and Berala. The land is fairly flat, but generally slopes down towards the Parramatta River” (Kass, 2008, no pagination). This focus is important in three ways. First, the study contrasts with the focus of research in Australian migration studies, which have tended to be centred mainly on migrant businesses (e.g., Collins et al., 1995), important labour conditions of temporary and permanent migrants (e.g., Hugo, 2008; McGrath-Champ et al., 2011) and the positive effects of remittances from migrants to their home countries (Obeng-Odoom, 2010), not their contribution to the transformation of neighbourhoods in Australia – except for a few notable exceptions (see, e.g., Stilwell, 2003). Second, it is the first to provide a scholarly study of Lidcombe as a migrant neighbourhood. The *Sydney Journal* has documented the experiences of other suburbs such as Berala (Gordon, 2008) and Croyden (Johnson, 2009), but even then not primarily from a migration perspective and definitely not the highly important neighbourhood of Lidcombe. Even the well-known *Liberty Plains: A History of Auburn, NSW* was criticised for overlooking Lidcombe in its 1983 and 1986 editions, prompting a revised edition in 1992 (see Hedges, 1992). That revision, however, missed the migration angle. As with the earlier editions, it is concerned more with the history of Lidcombe. Finally and more broadly, this study draws attention to processes, politics and policies that are often missing in the growing literature on cities and migration such as *Triumph of the City* (Glaeser, 2012) and *Arrival City* (Saunders, 2012), which has prompted many critical urbanists (see, e.g., Davidson & Gleeson, 2013; Obeng-Odoom, 2013) to call for further and wider studies of the migration phenomenon in cities. The *State of Australian Cities Report 2013* (Department of Infrastructure and Transport, 2013) bemoans the lack of understanding of the dynamics of migrant neighbourhoods in Australia, and Pau Serra’s (2012) contribution to this journal stresses that much of North America has many migrants but research on

how migrants transform urban and regional spaces is sparse or insubstantial.

The data informing this analysis are derived from 1) repeated discussion and conversation with people that have lived in the area over the last ten to thirty years, including railway workers, library staff, shopkeepers, residents and post office workers; 2) archival research at the Lidcombe and Auburn libraries to search for and examine past issues of the *Auburn Review*, which is the community newspaper for the area; 3) enquiries at real-estate agencies in Lidcombe and nearby suburbs; 4) transect walks in the case-study area interspersed with visual ethnography to capture photographic information from plaques on historical or historic buildings; 5) church sermons; 6) statistical information taken from the Australian Bureau of Statistics bulletins and 7) various publications by the Auburn Council, the local authority of the neighbourhood.

The analytical framework is the historical-structural paradigm in migration analysis. In contrast to the neoclassical economics emphasis on individual rational factors as drivers of migration within an ahistorical profit-maximising narrative, the historical-structural paradigm emphasises migratory processes as part of structural change in society. The approach considers individual reasons for migration, but mainly as a dialectical relationship with group motives for movement, internally and externally, and is oriented towards inductive reasoning (Abreu, 2012). A version of this approach was successfully used by Frank Stilwell (2003) when studying the migration of Afghan refugees and its ramifications for local and regional economic development in the neighbourhood of Young in Sydney. Since then, at least nineteen other studies have followed with equal success or drawn on the work.^[1] Although this approach does not result in definite models with quantitative and categorical answers, and some economists oriented toward econometric analysis may thus regard it as weak (see, e.g., Molho, 2013), it has important strengths. It is more transparent and amenable to public scrutiny, and it is more “real world”-based because it embraces the diversity, uncertainty and complexity of factors often overlooked in restrictive neoclassical economics models based on contentious assumptions of *homo economicus*, win-win equilibrating conditions and perfect information (Stilwell, 2003) – all of which are inapplicable to the present study.

It was found that life in Lidcombe is substantially different from this stereotypical view. Lidcombe is located within, over, or across the largest necropolis in the southern hemisphere. According to cemetery records and inscriptions recorded during recent transect walks in the cemetery, over 800,000 people have been buried in the cemetery. Twenty-first century migration has transformed this neighbourhood – previously mainly regarded as a burial site for locals – into a vibrant and

diversified local economy, with little crime and grime. Here is a story of an overall positive socioeconomic transformation driven by migrants. Lidcombe is now seen as the “home of the 2000 Olympics”, the “headquarters of Korean churches” and a “home away from home”. The cemetery still exists, as does a major funeral home, but they no longer constitute the mainstay of the local economy, which is currently highly diversified with economic activities such as food, retail, hairdressing, pharmaceuticals, real estate and entertainment activities gracing the streets. Unlike in 1904, when Lidcombe’s population of 4,500 people were either White Australians or White people from the UK (Hedges, 1992), today the neighbourhood has over 15,000 people from over thirty countries and the local economy is powered by migrant enterprises. This successful transformation is not one of simple cause and effect. Migrants have contributed to the transformation, but they were drawn by other factors. Regardless, the transformation is simultaneously the neighbourhood’s Achilles’ heel: property prices have increased substantially and hence Lidcombe is no longer the affordable neighbourhood that welcomed migrants and assisted them in achieving their “Australian dream” a decade earlier.

The rest of this paper is divided into three sections. The following section is a socioeconomic history of Lidcombe, focusing on the period before the arrival of migrants. The second section examines the situation since the “migration age”, looking at characteristics, activities and contributions of migrants, and the final section reflects on the implications of the transformation for resident migrants and other potential migrants.

2 Lidcombe: The early days

The social history of Lidcombe can be discussed around three themes and times; namely, the era of obscurity, the period of economic prosperity and the age of economic difficulty. Each of these is discussed in turn.

2.1 The foundations of the neighbourhood and the era of obscurity

Lidcombe is located in the western part of Sydney, Australia. The original land which it formed around was close to a creek, which belonged to a certain Samuel Haslam in 1804. Haslam’s Creek, as the area came to be called, was mainly inhabited by local Australians that had immigrated from the UK. They used the creek for domestic work and relaxed along its banks (Hedges, 1992). Sir Thomas Brisbane, George Tuckwell and George Sunderland were other landowners in the area between the early 1820s and early 1830s. As the account of John Mitchell (2008) shows, Father John Joseph Therry was, however, the landowner whose activities would change the course

of Lidcombe. An Irishman and one of two Catholic priests appointed to do pastoral work in New South Wales during the colonial days, he was one of the first to purchase lots in the area now called Lidcombe. He did so for investment purposes – not so much for personal profit, but for the extension of his pastoral work, particularly because he had fallen out of favour with the Church and was no longer paid his GBP 100 annual salary. His business strategy was simple: buy low, sell high. Thus, he paid GBP 15 to Kirk in 1831 for a sixty-acre lot and GBP 40 to Sunderland in 1834 for a 160-acre lot.

An investment opportunity arose when lawyers for the Sydney Railway Company offered to buy ten acres of land from Therry for the construction of the proposed railway line from Parramatta to Sydney in 1855. Therry took the offer and was paid GBP 100, a good price considering how much he had paid for the land. Other landowners in the area, determining that a railway station at Haslam's Creek would revive the local economy and push up property values, persuaded Therry to give further support to investment in the area. Therry was in favour of the idea and so was the railway authority, but the proposers had to bear the GBP 700 cost of establishing a train station. Therry contributed the GBP 100 he had obtained from selling his land to make the establishment of the station possible, and the others might have contributed the rest of the funds needed (Mitchell, 2008). Thus, Therry was not only someone that sold land for railway transport to start in Lidcombe but he also invested in its development. Haslam's Creek Station eventually opened in 1859 (Pollen, 1988).

The establishment of a suburb promptly began. According to the account by Stanley L. Hedges (1992), "completion of the railway radically changed the status of the district". Roads to make this district an independent suburb were constructed, the first being John Street in Lidcombe North, named after Therry in 1862. Another road was built and a subdivision, the "Town of St. Joseph", was announced, commencing the journey of settlement expansion (Hedges, 1992). The railway station was a major driver in propelling the (urban) development of Lidcombe.

In 1862, the New South Wales government purchased two hundred acres of land to establish what has been referred to as the "largest cemetery in the southern hemisphere" (Emerson, 2001: 24). The necropolis was completed in 1867 and was named Haslam's Creek Cemetery. Residents of the area fiercely protested linking their township's name and hence town to the burial grounds. The stigma was real. Typical comments included: "All you have to do 'is to walk over and drop in"; "The majority of people say, 'it will be time enough to go to that suburb when life is over"; "The town is run by tombstone

men and gravediggers" (1904 observations about Lidcombe, quoted in Hedges, 1992: 232, 233).

It would seem that this discomfort may have informed how land in the area was marketed. It was quite common to offer land for sale in the "Town of St. Joseph surrounding Haslam's Creek Railway Station" (Hedges, 1992: 224) without making reference to the cemetery. The authorities responded to the protests by changing the name to Rookwood in 1878, after considering other names. Some say that the choice reflected the title of a book by William Harrison published around 1838 (Pollen, 1988; Emerson, 2001), but one newspaper account suggested that the name was chosen to reflect the abundance of a bird, the rook (which is similar to a crow)^[2] in the area, and was thus more appropriate than other names suggested, such as Fitzroy and Norwood (Hedges, 1992).

The Municipality of Rookwood was incorporated several years later, in 1891. Seven years after incorporation, residents began another wave of protests for the same reason: the link between the cemetery and the suburb, Rookwood Cemetery and the town or municipality of Rookwood. There were other negative markers of this area. For instance, in 1879, 1,340 acres of land were obtained in Lidcombe for a planned reform school. In 1893, it was converted into the Rookwood Asylum for the poor, elderly and feeble, whose conditions had been caused or aggravated by worsening economic problems, according to a plaque provided by the Australian Bicentennial Authority at the entrance of the gate house. However, it seems the major concern was with the name of the area. Accordingly, in 1914, the town was renamed Lidcombe as an amalgamation of the names of two former mayors, Lidbury and Larcombe (Pollen, 1988; Emerson, 2001). This name has remained.

The Great Depression of the 1930s took a massive toll on the town. Summed up under the caption "Depression Years", Alderman Stanley L. Hedges (1992) noted that those years repeated the nature of the Lidcombe economy in the 1890s. For the large number of poor people in Lidcombe in the mid- to late 1920s, the notion of a "depression" may have been strange because they had always been dependent on state support (unemployment benefits, but also non-monetary supplies such as blankets and military clothing) and the help of the Lidcombe Benevolent Society. Yet, the depression brought distinctive challenges. The council embarked on massive retrenchment and the wages of the remaining staff were reduced, adding to the challenges of a gloomy local economy. Terry Kass (2008) shows that some 23% of the residents of Lidcombe were out of work during the depression, forcing the Lidcombe Council to accept the government's "dole for work" programme by which people received welfare payments for work performed. Even

then, many people remained unemployed and a “camp for the unemployed” had to be maintained between 1931 and 1932. So limited were employment opportunities that at one point the council had to use “draws” to allocate the few jobs available and there were enough unemployed people to form the Lidcombe Unemployed Workers’ Union (Hedges, 1992). As noted by Kass (2008), soup kitchens were organised for children and those out of work.

2.2 The era of prosperity

The 1940s were a golden era for Lidcombe. In the words of one long-time resident, Lidcombe was “a bustling enterprising suburb, that had its [sic] own council and a close knit community spirit” (*Auburn Review*, 1988, no pagination). A cooperative Building Society was established to kick-start a massive housing programme, making it possible for many residents to become homeowners (Hedges, 1992). Lidcombe was prosperous in the sense that the local economy was booming and the residents were employed either in or outside the town. The town had its own bakeries and dairy farms, delivery services and an aircraft engine factory. The town council had an ambitious programme to improve the quality and quantity of housing – a complement to “an extensive programme to improve the streets of Lidcombe by Kerbing, Guttering and Asphalted Footpaths” commenced in 1929 and sustained even until 1937 (Hedges, 1992: 285) and beyond. According to local accounts, at one point, there were six banks in the town. Fruit stands, shoe stores and women’s clothing stores boomed, as did groceries. At one point there were five bakeries in Lidcombe alone. The residents worked for the railways, the hospital and the cemetery – all in Lidcombe – and at a major slaughterhouse in what is now Olympic Park (Figure 1). The state slaughterhouse generated employment for 1,600 people, including substantial numbers from Lidcombe (Hedges, 1992). Others were employed in major industries and business units in or around Lidcombe. Examples of such companies were Ford, Australian Forge, Dahaviland, Janson’s, Bradford Insulation, Australian Electrical Industries, Dairy Farmers, Barbrock & Wilcox, Egg Board, Tooyer’s Brewery and Coats Printing. Socially, the population was small but cohesive and enjoyed camaraderie, which, in turn, made crime rare.

The economic expansion in Lidcombe was accompanied by efforts to ensure continuing community connectedness. In turn, dance clubs were formed and sports activities were organised. At home and at work, the trilogy of “respect, responsibility and discipline” was strictly taught and upheld by both young and the old, a point emphasised by two long-time residents. At the town governance level, a decision was made to enhance efficient management by merging Lidcombe with Auburn in 1949 to form the Auburn Municipality (Emerson, 2001).

This was a controversial decision because some residents and even councillors considered the merger unwise – among other reasons, because Lidcombe would have to shoulder debts it had not incurred (Hedges, 1992). Nevertheless, the merger went on and, at the time, did not seem to constitute a break in progress at home, at work or at the level of town administration.

Lidcombe’s era of prosperity was organically linked to the boom that the Australian economy as a whole was enjoying during the period. This post-Second World War boom (1945–1975) was not linked with imperial Britain’s economic architecture, although Britain, the colonial landlord of Australia, founded the Australia settler colony and supplied it with labour and capital from 1788 to the 1890s. Between 1946 and 1948 and between 1966 and 1968, there was a 65% decline in the share of Australia’s exports to the UK and a 56% fall in imports from the UK (Broomhill, 2008). Australia looked to the US, the new global power, and to Asia, its neighbour, for trade and even cultural exchange. Increasingly, foreign companies opened branches in Australia not only to partake in the boom but also to contribute to it (Broomhill, 2008). Consistent with the prevailing view at the time, the Australian government embraced Keynesianism and expanded the arm of the public sector in providing housing and health, education and food subsidies to Australians (Broomhill, 2008). The boom created a need for migrant labour. Thus, after 1947, the Australian government embarked on an active policy to recruit settler migrants. Immigration then accounted for roughly half of the population growth in Australia. Europeans, particularly British, and Oceanians, especially New Zealanders, were the most visible in the stream of migrants that responded to this policy initiative (Collins, 2008). The end of the boom and the commencement of Australia’s second cycle of decline, which one informed political economist (Broomhill, 2008: 21) calls “the crisis of the 1970s and 1980s”, were also felt in Lidcombe.

2.3 “Let Lidcombe live again”

The *Auburn Review* of 1988 carried a story captioned “Let Lidcombe live again!” that captured the mood of that era. The person interviewed for the story was the publicity officer of the Lidcombe Community Improvement Association and former alderman, Keith Huteau. He talked of the death of the Lidcombe Chamber of Commerce and his desire to see its revival. His diagnosis of the problem is even more telling. According to the paper, “He said the death knell of Lidcombe was the introduction of the new expressway, which he said had taken the main stream of customers away from Lidcombe shopping centre”. Two long-term local residents with whom Huteau’s diagnosis was discussed for this paper agreed, but offered a further explanation. The expressway had been responsible for the demolition of businesses and some houses, and hence took

away not only business but also some of the social “good old days” feeling from the neighbourhood.

There are other reasons that have been put forward to explain the decline. Some residents suggest that the removal of the centre of administration from Lidcombe also took away some of the shine from the suburb. It definitely did lead to the demise of town hall activities, but because this happened in 1949 its effects may have taken time to be felt. At the more national and global levels, factories that hitherto employed Lidcombe residents were shutting down or moving to other locations to save costs, including trade union demands for better and higher wages. Internationally, oil price increases and advances in production techniques increased production costs and diminished the volume of purchases from Australia, exports from which had included substantial amounts of primary agricultural or raw materials (Stilwell, 1998; Boomhill, 2008). Among the businesses mentioned above, only Tooyer’s Brewery and Coats Printing have remained. Others, like the Royal Australian Airforce, continue to have a presence in Lidcombe, but they are dormant. Regardless of the precise cause, by 1988 and through the 1990s, socioeconomic activities in Lidcombe were down. The banks left and, with them, jobs. The roads were in poor condition and the government was beginning to withdraw its hand to be replaced by the invisible hand of the market. Public houses near George’s Avenue were sold off – consistent with the view that a “slim” government was best – or what the Australian authorities called an “economic rationalism” paradigm (Stilwell, 1979, 1998).

Relative to other years, migration to Australia was generally on the low side around this time (Collins, 2008). The political interest in globalisation was producing contradictory outcomes, especially in terms of concentrating wealth in the hands of a few people and making the majority of people worse off. The suburbs, especially those in the western part of Sydney (including Lidcombe), were not prospering and in fact seemed to be bearing the brunt of the forces of globalisation beginning to gain prominence in modern Australia. Business entities favoured the “importation” of migrant workers to fill shortages at the same time (Stilwell, 1998). Starting in 2000, however, there was a boom in migration to Australia (Collins, 2008) and, according to local accounts, to Lidcombe as well. Local Australian factors, especially the Olympics, were powerful magnets but there were strong push factors too. The 1997–1999 Asian crisis, for instance, led to considerable emigration from Asia (Castles, 2008). However, whether push or pull, 2000 was a watershed in the life of Lidcombe.



Figure 1: Lidcombe and the 2000 Olympics (photo: Hae Seong Jang).



Figure 2: Modern railway in Lidcombe (photo: Hae Seong Jang).

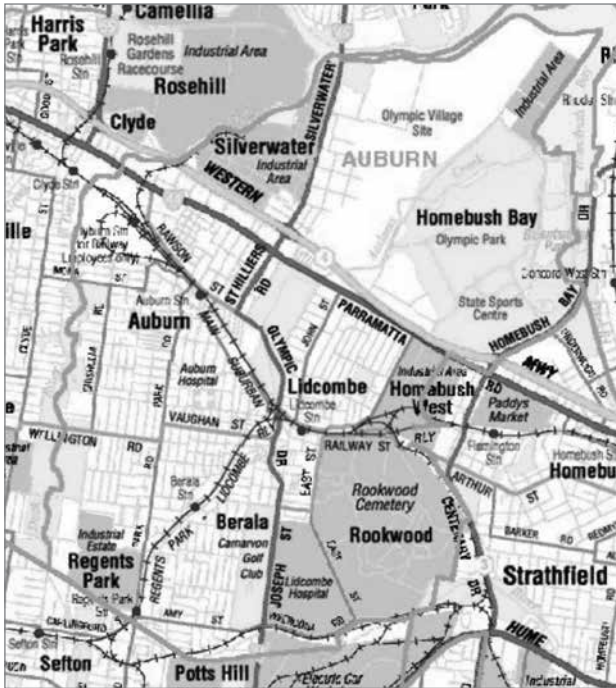


Figure 3: Map of Lidcombe (source: Division of Local Government, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2013).

3 Moving into a “dead city”: Lidcombe after 2000

The 2000 Sydney Olympics changed the face of Sydney and its suburbs. One researcher described the mood after the announcement that Sydney would be the site for the 2000 Olympics as “jubilant” (Handmer, 1995: 355). The Olympics propelled the Auburn Municipality as a whole, leaving in its wake urban projects that would generate income for the city authorities. Of the four hotels in Lidcombe now, at least two were built in the lead-up to the Olympics, making the Olympics a symbol of the neighbourhood (see Figure 1).

Houses were constructed and an Olympics platform, lifts and a major highway (Olympic Drive) were developed to welcome visitors and entice some of them, at least, to consider taking up residence in the neighbourhood. Sales of tickets went up, visitors rented places in Lidcombe and, importantly, Lidcombe received considerable attention both locally and nationally. The Olympic railway line was opened and traffic in Lidcombe increased. Being a junction station, Lidcombe was gradually showcased to the world and to other migrants in Sydney previously not living in Lidcombe as a prosperous neighbourhood connected to other parts of Sydney. A modern railway system (see Figure 2), the Lidcombe Railways, has continued to be an important aspect of life in Lidcombe after 2000.

A few non-UK migrants had lived in Lidcombe before 2000, of course. The first non-English-speaking migrants to Lidcombe

were Russians, Croatians, Ukrainians and Poles (Ashton, 2008). Italians were also among the first to come, establishing a meat factory on Joseph Street when they arrived. There were enough Ukrainians to warrant the establishment of a large Ukrainian Church on Church Street in 1958, as well as a Youth Centre on Church Street and a High School on Joseph Street. The first major wave of migrants in Sydney as a whole must have been in the 1960s following the long post-World War Two boom in the Australian economy (Ashton, 2008). The point is that Lidcombe was not first discovered by migrants in the post-2000 era. Rather, the twenty-first-century wave of migration in Lidcombe was distinct in terms of numbers and diversity. Currently, migrants – people born in areas where English is not the first language – constitute 59% of the population of Lidcombe (Auburn City Council, 2013b), which is part of the broader Auburn Municipality made up of other suburbs, prominent among which are Auburn, Berala, Homebush Bay, Regents Park and Silverwater (Auburn City Council, 2013b).

Currently, much of the population of Lidcombe has immigrated from non-English-speaking countries. Although a substantial share of the migrant population is Asian, migrants come from more than thirty countries from around the world (Table 1). Thus, it is different from the typical Australian migration flow dominated by the UK and New Zealand (Collins, 2013).

As shown in Table 1, there have been notable shifts in the population mix in Lidcombe. The decline in the share of population from Lebanon, Turkey, Croatia and the UK is particularly substantial and hence requires some analysis. Local accounts say that the Lebanese numbered more than they do at present, but as Chinese migrants, with a longer history in Sydney and Australia than other migrants, started purchasing land and housing in Lidcombe for investment purposes, they were pushed out according to real-estate agents. The Chinese would knock down run-down buildings, redevelop and sell them for profit. In turn, prices of real estate started soaring faster than others living in Lidcombe could afford but slower than what was happening in other parts of Sydney; for example, in Auburn. This process commenced in the mid- to late 1990s with the announcement of plans for and execution of massive development related to the Sydney Olympics of 2000 (Randolph et al., 2005).

Much has been written about gentrification in this journal (e.g., Kotze, 2013; Gunter, 2014; Monare et al., 2014; Marais, et al., 2014; Tsenkova, 2014), but the experience of Lidcombe warrants careful attention. Its process of gentrification is quite similar to the transformation of urban and suburban development in Sydney in the sense that it pushed

out poorer people in areas adjoining the Olympics site and drew in richer people (Stilwell, 1998), although it is peculiar in the sense that money and migrants mingled to produce a distinct urban form, not only by pushing people out but also by populating a sparsely populated suburb.

The process of migrant gentrification cannot explain the special case of Lebanese and Turkish migrants. For them, research (Burnley, 2006; Mourad, 2009) suggests that the completion of the Auburn-Gallipoli Mosque in 1999 pulled Turkish migrants, including some of those in Lidcombe, to move to Auburn. The mosque, which is a major religious meeting point for Muslims in the area from Lebanon, Turkey or elsewhere, was substantially financed by the government of Turkey with support by local Muslim migrants. It attracted some Turkish and Lebanese migrants in Lidcombe to move to Auburn not only because some could find accommodation in residential facilities also owned by the mosque administration but also because a larger population of Muslims, Lebanese and Turkish live in Auburn, creating a “home away from home” and setting in motion a powerful magnet for increasingly more Muslim migrants from Turkey, Lebanon and elsewhere to congregate.

The “religious factor”, however, is a poor explanation for the decline of the Croatian population in Lidcombe between 2001 and 2008. Rather, as shown by research by Val Čolić-Peisker (2004) and Walter Lalich (2004) published in the *Croatian Studies Review* together with local accounts and the analysis by Ilija Šutalo (2004) in his book *Croatians in Australia: Pioneers, settlers and their descendants*, the changing nature of migrants from Croatia is a better explanation. Unlike the earlier Croatian migrants, who were mainly working class and found the suburb and its cheap housing with gardens comforting, and hence stayed in the suburbs for a longer time, the younger and newer groups of migrants with better English skills, better professional qualifications and better potential to increase their incomes stayed in the suburbs for only a while and then moved to better localities. Working-class migrants continued to migrate to Australia, but Lidcombe was no longer attractive, given its growing apartment housing, which the Croats did not find ideal for family life. Moreover, Croats in Sydney had invested heavily in providing community facilities outside of Lidcombe, including religious, educational and entertainment facilities, all of which contributed to making Lidcombe a less ideal place.

A modified version of the “push out” hypothesis can be offered to explain the substantial decline in the share of migrants from the UK that reside in Lidcombe. Although substantial numbers of White Australians in Lidcombe moved out in this process, they were not simply pushed out by richer migrants. For some migrants, the White residents moved out because they

Table 1: Demographic profile of Lidcombe, 2001–2011 (%).

Birthplace	2001	2006	2011
China	9.5	10.5	11.3
South Korea	3.2	3.5	10.5
Vietnam	7.9	6.9	6.2
India	2.2	2.0	3.0
Philippines	2.9	2.8	2.9
Sri Lanka	2.9	3.3	2.7
Lebanon	4.6	4.0	2.7
Turkey	2.7	2.5	1.9
Nepal	0.1	0.6	1.7
Hong Kong	1.3	1.3	1.6
New Zealand	1.6	1.5	1.2
Malaysia	0.7	0.7	1.1
Burma	1.4	0.9	1.1
Pakistan	0.5	0.6	0.9
Indonesia	0.4	0.5	0.9
Afghanistan	0.2	0.6	0.8
Bangladesh	0.2	0.4	0.6
Croatia	1.2	0.7	0.6
United Kingdom	1.1	0.7	0.6
Fiji	0.9	0.6	0.6
Cambodia	0.4	0.4	0.5
Iraq	0.6	0.9	0.5
Tonga	1.1	0.9	0.4
Singapore	0.1	0.4	0.4
Taiwan	0.4	0.2	0.4
Thailand	0.3	0.3	0.4
South Africa	0.1	0.2	0.3
Egypt	0.2	0.3	0.3
United States	0.1	0.1	0.3
Iran	0.3	0.3	0.3
Italy	1.0	0.6	0.3
Ireland	0.3	0.2	0.3

Source: Auburn City Council (2015a).

were not willing to mix with the incoming migrant groups. Others contend that the shops for White Australians were not doing well with the arrival of migrants that typically shopped at migrant outlets instead of Australian stores, and so Australian shopkeepers relocated – shops and all. A perception that Lidcombe is for migrants may be another reason dissuading the White population. Attrition is certainly one of the many reasons, as old-time residents passed away and their children moved out. The subsequent lack of interest in a suburb predominantly filled by and regarded as being for migrants is yet one more reason. Recall, however, that Lidcombe had always



Figure 4: Property and apartment development in Lidcombe (photo: Hae Seong Jang).

Table 2: Lidcombe: Population and migration trends, 2001–2011.

Year	2001	2006	2011
Population	13,454	14,148	16,403
Female (%)	49.5	49.7	49.1

Source: Auburn City Council (2015b).

had a stigma of being a “City of the Dead”, so it has never been a location of choice for White Australians. As noted earlier, the Anglo population that moved in during the formative years of the city primarily worked in the cemetery (Hedges, 1992) or for the railways (Mitchell, 2008), the slaughterhouses or the factories that abutted or existed within Lidcombe. Some of the White population left because they sold their properties to migrants for a profit. Others may have moved out to enable their children to attend better schools, or no longer had any children to attend local schools, and a few may have chosen to live elsewhere. Thus, a combination of reasons, rather than one overarching driver, explains the decline of the White population in Lidcombe – although, as suggested by Burnley (2006), the concentration of high-class, all-White neighbourhoods in Sydney has always provided strong support for the view that race and class interact to structure settlement patterns in the city.

Table 1 also shows that there has been a growing share of certain nationalities in Lidcombe, although the neighbourhood remains very diverse in its population base. The most gain is in the Korean population. A major reason for this shift is that the price of real estate in Strathfield, a nearby neighbourhood whose population is dominated by Koreans, has become increasingly less affordable. Lidcombe, then, has offered an escape route from a heating-up property market in Strathfield. Of course, the increasing Koreanisation of Lidcombe is itself a magnet to pull other Koreans to Lidcombe. That said, the population and social culture in Lidcombe are diverse, including the coexistence of different types of churches (Figure 5). One physical location where diversity is literally on display is in the Lidcombe Remembrance Park (see Figure 6), where people from all nationalities meet for social activities, relaxation and light exercise. A popular Lidcombe Public School song captures the mood better:

We are from Lidcombe School (clap! clap! clap!) . . . learning in harmony is what we do best! Our students come from many different lands. United on Australian soil is where we choose to stand. Respecting one another and everyone we meet. Learning in harmony makes our lives complete.



Figure 5: A sample of churches in Lidcombe (photo: Hae Seong Jang).



Figure 6: Lidcombe Remembrance Park (photo: Hae Seong Jang).

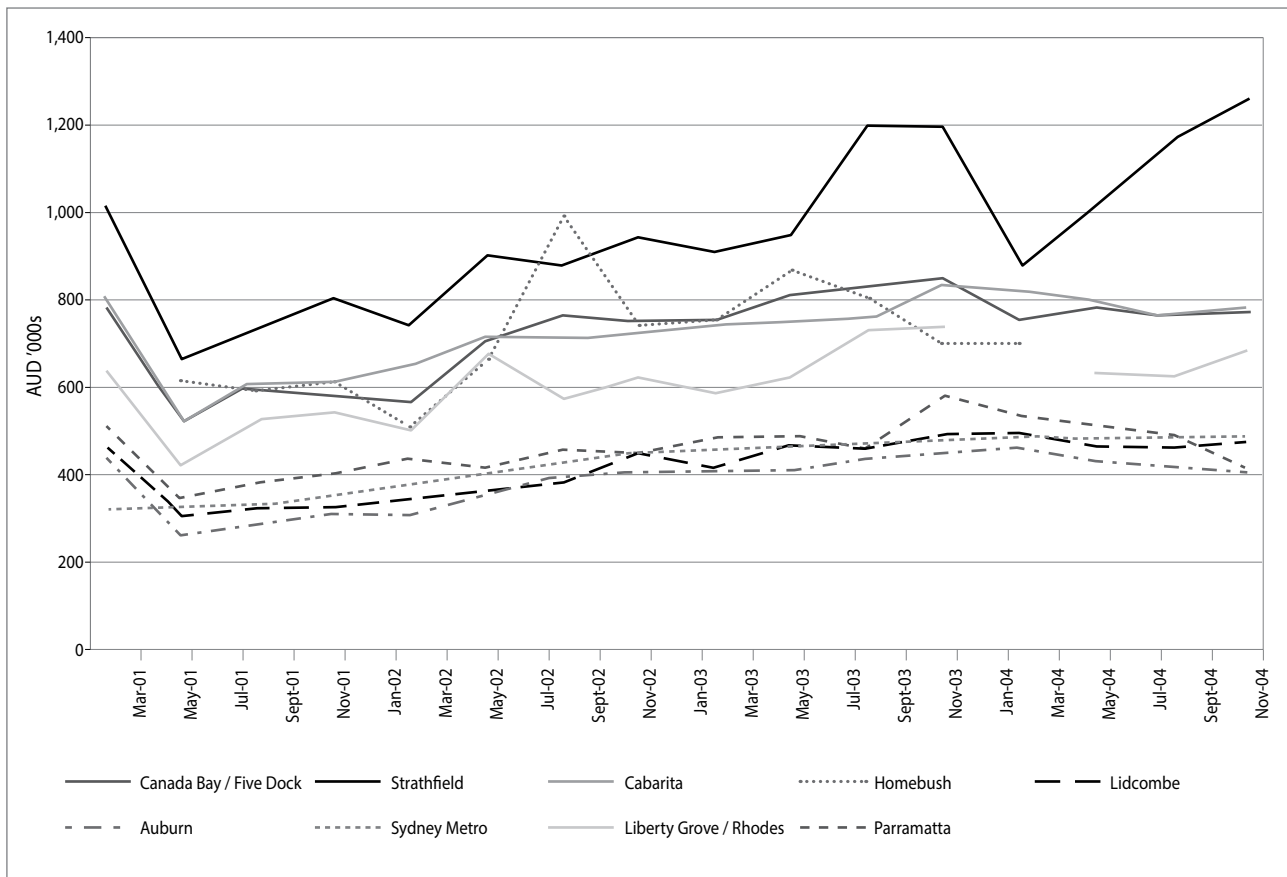


Figure 7: Median sale prices of surrounding suburbs in Sydney, 2001–2004 (source: Randolph et al., 2005).

Because students in Australia can only attend public schools in their local government area, the lyrics to this song complement the statistical information about diversity. Compared with the sparse population of the past, Lidcombe is now bustling with human activity and population growth, as shown in Table 2.

These figures exclude tourism, which is also substantial. Local accounts and systematic urban research (Stilwell, 1998) indicate that the population growth in Sydney and its suburbs is driven by immigration; the original White population in Lidcombe must be in decline both numerically and proportionally. A common reason for the increase in the migrant population in Lidcombe, according to the accounts of some migrants, is relatively cheap housing and easy access to other parts of Sydney because of the train station. Another reason is that an increase in the population of particular groups begets further increases because others are attracted to the location for a variety of reasons, such as the provision of enticing information, the community and other social support. The increase in housing prices elsewhere, notably in Strathfield, which is a suburb near Lidcombe (see Figure 1), also pushed away some migrants to Lidcombe (Han & Han, 2010). Migrants, however, have favoured the neighbourhood. Housing in Lidcombe is relatively cheap compared to other suburbs, as Figure 7 shows.

Second, Lidcombe is accessible to the CBD and other locations where migrants work, shop and socialise. Third, it is a migrant neighbourhood. Although this third reason may sound circular, migrants have tended to gravitate towards areas known to offer social, religious and economic support, contrary to neoclassical economic theories about how migration is an individual rational affair (Molho, 2013). These reasons were commonly given by real-estate agents, operators of shops, railway workers and post office workers. A pastor of a Korean church, predominantly attended by Koreans and in whom church members confide, also preached a sermon on 12th January 2014 on the topic: confirming the three reasons, but adding a fourth: that God had brought the migrants to Lidcombe for the neighbourhood's transformation.

There is wide variation in push factors applicable to countries of origins. Different and sometimes similar conditions apply to the over thirty nationalities that live in Lidcombe today (see, e.g., Han & Han, 2010 for Korean migration to Sydney and Moustafine, 2011 for Russian migration to Sydney). Taking the Korean case as an example, the ban on migration was lifted in the late 1990s, paving the way for greater emigration.

Migrants have typically moved in as families, although many single individuals have come in too. According to the commu-

Table 3: Lidcombe (Southern Lidcombe/Rookwood Area): Employment statistics, 2001–2011.

Employment status	2001	2006	2011
Employed	2,288 (90.5%)	2,326 (91.9%)	3,421 (90.4%)
Employed full time	1,549	1,619	2,175
Employed part time	615	613	1,084
Hours worked not stated	124	94	162
Unemployed	239	204	361
Looking for full-time work	151	139	186
Total labour force	2,527	2,530	3,783

Source: Auburn City Council (2015c).

nity profile on household size (Auburn City Council, 2013b), currently only 15% of households have a single member. The rest have two people (26%), three people (21%), four people (21%), five people (9%), or six or more people (7%). Broadly, these figures are also similar for Lidcombe. Such group migration challenges the individual-based explanations and its dominants and domino effects or versions in neoclassical economics (Molho, 2013) and Australian migration policy (Collins, 2013). The evidence that only one recruitment company, Max Employment, has registered 1,400 job seekers (*Auburn Review*, 2014) shows that migrants are not only waiting for the dole. Their contribution to local, municipal and urban economic development has been substantial, contrary to claims that they are a drain to the Australian economy.

4 The local, municipal and urban economy

The unemployment rate in the entire Auburn Local Government Area is 5.6% (*Auburn Review*, 2014), much lower than the national average of 6.0 or 6.1. It is important to zoom in on the neighbourhood itself. Taking the southern part of Lidcombe alone, which is an important example because it has historically been much less developed and desired than the northern part, Table 3 shows that a majority of residents in Lidcombe are employed, either on a full-time or part-time basis, and working either in Lidcombe or outside of the neighbourhood. Table 3 offers statistical information on the employment status of the population.

In 2011, 63% of the population was of working age (20 to 59 years old) in both Rockwood and Lidcombe in general. Thus, the demographics are quite similar for both areas and they suggest that the migrants do not exert excessive pressure on public funding for retirees and migrant seniors. Residents work in a range of occupations, with manual labour (the stereotyped job for migrants) being only one of them. There are professionals and managers, technicians and trade workers, clerical and administrative service workers, and sales workers. Details of the share of these occupations are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Occupational structure of Lidcombe (%)*

Occupation	2006	2011
Managers	8.4	8.2
Professionals	17.8	23.1
Technicians and trade workers	14.2	14.4
Community and personal service workers	7.5	8.3
Clerical and administrative services	15.8	14.5
Sales workers	9.2	8.4
Machinery operators	9.3	6.7
Labourers	14.7	12.4
Insufficient information	3.3	3.8

Note: * Figures apply only to the southern part of Lidcombe.

Source: Auburn City Council (2015d).

This evidence is not sufficient to know how vibrant the local economy is. Not all employed people work in Lidcombe, a feature of the suburb that has been systematically determined by the city authorities in its community profile (Auburn City Council, 2013b). The evidence can be complemented by looking at the large flow of people that leave the neighbourhood and entrain for other destinations during rush hours at Lidcombe Station. Similarly, the sudden influx of people from outside Lidcombe around 6 to 7 pm on weekdays shows that not everyone living in Lidcombe works in the city. However, the combined effect of the movement in and out of Lidcombe suggests that some migrants' expenditures (e.g., on shopping and eating at work) impacts other local economies outside of Lidcombe, including the greater Auburn City municipality and elsewhere.

We do not have a record of the quantitative contribution of Lidcombe because the Australian Bureau of Statistics from which the City Council collates its data does not seem to offer this finer detailed information. Qualitatively, however, we know that Lidcombe itself has a variety of occupations: sales are the most conspicuous and most visibly active in serving the local population and people elsewhere, and so migrants' expenditures impact the local economy more directly. Joseph Street, a commercial hub of the neighbourhood, is lined with



Figure 8: A major commercial precinct in Lidcombe (photo: Hae Seong Jang).

Table 5: Household income quartiles of Lidcombe, 2001–2011.

Lidcombe	2001	Middle class	2006	Middle class	2011	Middle class
Quartile group	%		%		%	
Lowest group	23.0		25.2		23.2	
Medium lowest	26.9	54.4	26.9	53.8	26.9	54
Medium highest	27.5		26.9		27.1	
Highest group	22.5		21.0		22.9	

Source: Adapted from Auburn City Council (2015e).

Table 6: Key to interpreting household income quartiles, 2001–2011.

Household income ranges (AUD)	2001	2006	2011
Lowest group	0–418	0–530	0–614
Medium lowest	419–828	531–1,034	615–1,233
Medium highest	829–1,462	1,035–1,788	1,234–2,272
Highest group	1,463+	1,789+	2,273+

Source: Auburn City Council (2015f).

shops, groceries, a bakery, hairdressers, restaurants, bars and a pharmacy. Joseph Street also has businesses, such as a medical practice, a tax agency, legal services and bars. Also available is the multinational fast-food provider McDonald's. Victoria Street East has a small industrial base, a modest business park and a couple of small-scale industries such as a removal company. In the northern part, there is also a long and busy commercial street interspersed with the long-established Tooheys brewery, hotels and bars. This is John Street.

The trend of business is upwards, judging by the rate at which new commercial activities are springing up. In the last three months, three additional Korean restaurants have been added. This is conspicuous on Joseph Street, and also in other places. Apart from being a visible business, real-estate agencies are springing up in the neighbourhood. We counted three new ones in the last year, all located in the commercial precinct of Joseph Street. One of these is an "add on" to a hitherto small jewellery and grocery shop, and the others are new agencies. We do not have accurate data on their profitability because this information is not readily available. However, we know that Lidcombe is a middle class neighbourhood, no longer a working-class suburb like it used to be, as can be seen from Table 5.

Although our interactions with residents over the last two years that we have lived in the neighbourhood show that much of the working population lives in Lidcombe, not all workers live in this migrant neighbourhood. The key point is that even areas in the neighbourhood closest to the cemetery site now enjoy substantial economic vibrancy. The funeral and burial industry remains active. There is an industry for engraving and making cemetery monuments that employs local stonemasons. Apart from the one pictured (Figure 9), another is operated by the trust that manages the cemetery, and there is at least one more that is privately owned.

The Guardian Funeral Home is also active in planning and preparing funerals. This death-related industry actively advertises its activities, including in the *Auburn Review*, a municipal newspaper, and we also visited some of these businesses to confirm that they are active. However, the local economy is now more diversified.

The interpretation of these income classes has changed over the years, and so it is important to understand Table 6 in conjunction with Figure 7. Looking at them together shows the palpable economic prosperity in the neighbourhood and conspicuous decline in deprivation, whereas incomes seem to be uniformly distributed. These migrants remit money and send gifts back to relatives in their countries and invest in their



Figure 9: The funeral industry (photo: Hae Seong Jang).



Figure 10: Gravestone and monument business in Lidcombe (photo: Franklin Obeng-Odoom).

countries of origin. It would be interesting to study whether there are any differences between this process and how Africans in Sydney generally send remittances to Africa (Obeng-Odoom, 2010).

5 Conclusion

To repeat the question posed at the beginning of this paper: how do migrants shape their local spaces and contribute to the host economy and society? Although the dominant view holds that the migrant footprint is emphatically negative, our case study suggests that the idea of a "migration effect" or "effects of migration" may be rather simplistic. The migration question

is an empirical issue. Strongly associated with death and the dead, Lidcombe, a major migrant neighbourhood in Australia, is bustling with economic activity and renewal. Not only has the southern part, formerly mainly a settlement of the dead, been revamped with lively migrants actively working within and outside the local economy, the northern part has also continued to be vibrant and well settled. Life here has not only impacted Australia, the host country, positively through an expansion in its economic activities via multiple channels such as building, banking and billing, but also through variety in its social and moral economies. Simultaneously, the migrants do not seem to be exerting untold and undeserving demands on the Australian public. As contributors to Australia's common wealth, now active workers, the migrants will be entitled to their own share of the national prosperity, especially when there is no proof that they consume public resources to maintain peace and safety because the crime rate has fallen drastically over the years (Auburn City Council, 2013a). Not only have the migrants brought life to Australia, but they have also sent life to their relatives overseas. Remittances and tourism contribute to improving the social conditions of foreign countries just as foreign labour helps the host country, in the case of Lidcombe, to transform a dead city. The funeral industry exists, of course, but Lidcombe's local economy is more diversified today and looks poised to achieve further socioeconomic progress.

These findings significantly extend the existing literature on migrants, which assumes that they are in the diaspora but the "attachment to their homeland" suggests that they do not invest in their host countries (Min & Park, 2014). In the case of Lidcombe, there is attachment to "home" in the sense of bringing "home culture" to Australia (e.g., eating out on a scale never before seen in the area), but the migrants have also transformed an old and dying township. Far from being just one ethnic enclave in the neighbourhood as other research shows happens (Kim, 2014), or one regional group of migrants investing in the investment property market as Franklin Obeng-Odoom's (2012b) earlier study of African migrants in Sydney shows, the neighbourhood is populated and transformed by migrants from different races, ethnicities and regions. In this sense, the study also extends the literature on the migrant transformation of neighbourhoods, which has previously concentrated on refugees and individual nationalities or ethnic enclaves (e.g., Stilwell, 2003). White Australians have moved out, but they have hardly been "pushed out" to occupy less ideal places. Thus, unlike the situation when the White population in Australia pushed out Black and Aboriginal groups in Australia to live in worse and isolated places (Jang, 2015), the White population that used to be in Lidcombe has moved to "better places" and economically

benefitted from its departure. In turn, the story of Lidcombe is not merely a case of displacing the White population or simply a story about individual migrants becoming successful, as some research suggests (Saunders, 2012).

There are important problems such as increasing housing costs, a reduction in essential services, lack of mixing and possible radioactivity. Admittedly, these problems are generally symptomatic of migration in Australia. Moreover, the lack of cohesion leads to opportunities for policy intervention, linked with opportunities to foster greater mixing. Greater awareness through research disseminated in the community newspaper, the *Auburn Review*, together with multiple communication through written, visual and audio means can all be used to inform and sensitise people. A study of migrants in the United States by Jerry Park (2013) also shows that religious groupings are often vectors of insularity and ethnicity, but they can also be avenues for change, perhaps even the avante garde in the process of integration if they set out to make changes to their own organisation, which, in turn, might provide the grounds for example, for interracial marriage, another possible process of integration. The council provided free or subsidised multicultural English courses interspersed with topics about various cultures and race. Real-estate pricing and prices that are often pushed up through bidding are particularly worrying because they may result in bubbles and hence exacerbate affordability problems in the local economy. Ways to check the apparent mismatch between demand and supply and hence the need to resort to competitive bidding include implementing a Georgist land taxation programme to "cool down" the urge and motivation to speculate in a booming local economy. In addition, social housing packages can be implemented to expand the supply side of the housing market without pushing up rents. Starting such reforms for housing for migrants will itself be controversial, but the city authorities can promote it if they choose to, especially now when the council has a strong migrant base. For the same reason, greater mobilisation can be made to oppose plans to turn Lidcombe into a radioactive storage site. However, the analysis of the precise nature of the politics of change and the political economy of how different interest groups can resist change or be harnessed to support change will have to wait for another time.

For now, it will suffice to emphasise that migrants have brought life to Australia's dead city, life to themselves and life to their relatives overseas, without placing undeserved pressures on Australia's finances. Just as the migration pattern (group migration) and the processes of change and continuity in Lidcombe have structural and historical underpinnings and dynamics, the story of Lidcombe contrasts with the assumption of individual migration that belies much thinking in economics,

and Australian migration policy (i.e., policies on granting visas to such migrants) ought to accordingly reflect the “historical-structural paradigm” of migration rather than the less nuanced neoclassical “economics of migration”. Because migrants have succeeded in heading this major transformation in Lidcombe, there is a strong basis to support incoming migrants without policymakers and others chanting “over my dead body”.

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Notes

[1] Data from Google Scholar search (keywords used: Frank Stilwell, Affghans) on 11 Jan. 2014.

[2] Newspapers also said there are no rooks, but crows. However, because both crow or caw, rook is acceptable (Hedges, 1992: 234).

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