Uneven urban development in North West England: City-led transformation within a post-industrial region in the process of developing public transport networks

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Outline

1. The arrival of the upgraded HST and the quantitative result of economic performance
2. Research Context / Question / Methodology
3. Overview of the trajectory in North West England
4. Government intervention at different scales
5. Four kinds of local transformation processes
6. Summary / Conclusion / Implication
Starting point

The starting point is that the arrival of HST strengthens regional capital, but not some sub-regions around it.
The Definition of HST

Max 200 kph on Upgraded West Coast Main Line ("Low-speed high speed")

- 1998 - the modernisation project began
- 2004 - Phrase one completed
- 2008 - Phrase two completed
Uneven growth within North West England

Public Transport Accessibility
- Rail: Pendolino trains, Super Voyager trains, Existing rail network
- Airport

Urban and Regional Policies
1960s-1970s
- New Towns

1980s
- Enterprise Zones
- Urban Development Corporations

1990s
- City Challenge
- Urban Regeneration Companies
- New Deal for Communities
- Housing Market Renewal

2000s
- Strategic Regional Sites
  - A: Growth Target Sectors
  - B: Established Target Sectors
  - C: Strategic Distribution
  - A+B
  - A+B+C

Sub-regional Economic Performance
- Revived regional centre in the knowledge economy
- Performance maintained / Private services economy
- Performance maintained / Public and private services
- Improved but below national average / Public services
- Isolated sub-regions / Path dependency
Context

• Inter-regional: North-South divide is widening

• Intra-regional: “Archipelago economy” (Pierre Veltz and Danny Dorling)

• How did the austerity policy affect uneven development within a region? Lessons learnt?

Source: Financial Times (2012)
Theoretical background

The phenomenon of agglomeration in the megacity region

Revisit neo-classical location theories
- Thünen (1926) – Agriculture
- Weber (1929) – Manufacturing
- Christaller (1933) – Consumer services

Emphasis on
1. Static equilibrium
2. Max (revenue) / Min (costs)

Social relations
- Granovetter (1985)
- Harrison (1992)

Cost-productivity
- Marshall (1890)
- Scott (1988)

Creativity & innovation
- Perroux (1955)
- Porter (1990)
- Törnqvist (1983)
- Andersson (1985)

Buzz
- Clustering
- F2F

Technology
- Investment in infrastructure (e/hard)
- Other changes
  - Benign tax, regulation, quality of life...
  - Llewelyn-Davies-planning (1996)
Research context

1. The phenomenon of Mega-city Region (MCR)
   - Capital region (SE)
   - Other regions (NW)
   - Sub-regions (Greater Manchester)
Research context

2. City Relationships

• An in-depth analysis: *The role of government intervention* in the regional transformation process *with transport opportunities*

*Source: The Northern Way (2009)*
Research Question

Why did not the effects of high-speed trains spread from the regional core city to nearby sub-regions?

• What was the role of national context?
• How did the local react to the change in the national context?
• The role of transport improvement in possible transformation process.
Research Methodology

- Analysing different levels of government Intervention
  • National
  • Local- regions/sub-regions (municipalities)

- Policy analysis and Interview with key academics and decision-makers.

- Tracing the transformation process and thematic analysis of qualitative findings.
Typologies of sub-regions

**TYPE 1- HST-served Regional Metropolitan Areas**
1. Greater Manchester South
2. Merseyside

**TYPE 2-HST-served NON-core sub-regions**
1. Warrington & Halton
2. Central Lancashire
3. Greater Manchester North
4. Cheshire East
5. Cheshire West and Chester

**TYPE 3- Non HST-served NON-core sub-regions**
1. Pennine Lancashire
2. West Coast Lancashire
Spatial-economic trajectory of the region

- Cradle of the Industrial revolution
- A heterogeneous industrialised region

1930s-1960s: A process of overspill from metropolitan areas
Prior to 1980s

1960s-1980s

Decentralisation

- Electrification (WCML-60s)
- 4 New Towns (1961-1980s)
- Motorways (till late 1980s)

10 subregions

HST subregions:
1. Greater Manchester South
2. Greater Manchester North
3. Merseyside
4. Halton and Warrington
5. Cheshire East
6. Cheshire West and Chester
7. Lancaster
8. Central Lancashire

Non HST subregions:
9. West Coast Lancashire
10. Pennine Lancashire
Time series for Observation

- Squeezing local capacity
- Abolishing Metropolitan counties
- Rail Privatisation
- Urban & Regional policy
- Railtrack went bust, government intervention

Mid-1980s

- The turning point of Manchester

1998

- The turning point of Liverpool

2004

- Pennine Lancashire / Super Casino

2008

- National
- Regional
- Sub-regional/cities
National Level: austerity > market-led

• The change of political economy: privatising public transport (air, coach, rail)

• Waiting for private money / long-delayed WCML modernisation
• WCML was regarded as “a problem rather than an opportunity”
• Under privatisation, the upgraded WCML proves a lack of public/private planning and investment.

• Prioritise inter-city link rather than intra-regional linkage

• The factor of Business model> technical electrification: The case serving Chester rather than Blackpool.

• No additional new HST stations, but the location of HST stations reinforces the existing uneven patterns concentrated in the southern part and follows the suggested business model.
1980s: National Urban policy
To tackle Inter-city problems:

- Enterprise Zone
- Urban Development Corporation
- City Challenges
Late 1990s
National Urban & Regional policy
- The construction of WCML upgrade
- Urban Regeneration Company
- New Deal for Community
- Housing Market Renewal
- Strategic regional sites
National Level:

• A political tradition- separate central-peripheral relationship: A pure national transport project

• A process of weakening local capacity
  - Weak financial discretion
  - Abolishing strategic planning authorities
  - A fragmented mixed system: 2-tire / 1-tier

• A competition- and guidance- led planning approach
  - Metropolitan-focused urban programmes
Regional Level:

- 1980s-No regional authorities. Regional campaigning group- the reaction to the Channel Tunnel with the fear of peripheralisation. “DfT got the final decision-making power with a national perspective”

- Late 1990s- although a revival of regional strategies, problematic regional planning operation between GONW, NWDA, NWRA.

- 2004- The Northern Way (lack of regional consensus)

- “Indirect regional institutions are not effective”

- From institutional reasons, attention was shifted to city-regional local levels, in particular to individual municipal authorities.
Four sets of transformation processes:

1. The recentralisation of regional hegemony around Manchester
   Greater Manchester South

2. A catching-up process in Liverpool: in contrast to Manchester.
   Merseyside /Liverpool

3. A stable, less difficult, less strategic process in the non-metropolitan HST sub-regions.
   Preston, Warrington, Chester

4. An arduous but frustrated process in non-HST sub-regions
   Blackpool, Blackburn, Pendle
“I first came to Greater Manchester 20 years ago as a student. My first impression was of an unhappy place, truly full of “dark, satanic mills”. The city had a huge stock of under-valued buildings, a centre that seemed to shut down at 5:30pm and a shaky local economy struggling to figure out where to go next”

-Tom Bloxham, the chairman of Urban Splash in the 1980s
### 1980s-2000s/ a persistent process of re-concentration

#### National context
- Airport and Rail privatisation
- Constraint rail investment
- Unreliable WCML services
- Massive de-industrialisation in inner city
- Economic restructuring

#### Manchester’s Actions:
- The ownership of airport as a key asset/ developing new economies/ transport link.
- The connectivity to wider catchment through the corporation with Trans-Pennine express (internal & external one)
- The expansion and consolidation of transport network and poly-centric city redevelopment / local capacity

### External link
- 1980s- The expansion of Manchester Airport
- 1990s-Rail link to city centre and beyond
- 2000s- Northern Hub

### City Redevelopment
- 1980s- Central Manchester UDC
- 1996-IRA Bomb / city centre rebuilt
- 2000s- City centre and polycentric development in city region

### Internal link
- 1980s- Manchester Metrolink tramway system
- 1990s- Metrolink Expansion
- Critical Governance: AGAM + GMPTE: Leadership/tenacity
The creation of Manchester Hub

- Multi-model transport system: domestic and global interchange @ airport
- City-regional tramway network
- Wider inter-regional catchment
- The arrival of WCML modernisation
2. Merseyside (Liverpool)

1. The historical trajectory of economic function
   - Historical and contemporary rival to Manchester
   - The Ship Canal (1894) shifted the development to southern Lancashire around Trafford and doubled the size of Manchester’s territory
   - Specialised function around the port; lacking competitive manufacturing industries.
2. The contrasting response to contemporary challenges (In contrast to Manchester in the 1980s)
- Political conflict with Whitehall and lack of leadership & vision
- Fragmentation: lacking strategic governance/ a rundown centre
- Public vs. Private: Privatisation of assets (port and airport).
- A divided view: Other local authorities were ashamed of it

3. Actions led to the belated transformation in Liverpool
- From mid-1990s:
  European funding/ partnership/ leadership/ cultural events
- City centre- Liverpool One: URC/physical transformation
3. Preston / Warrington / Cheshire E/W

- Good transport position: Rail / Motorway, but 4 of 10 worst stations in UK.
- Warrington: 1h46m to London the shortest, but no benefit from the HST; Likewise: Preston.
- Less industrialised, less problematic & less strategic.
- Lack of efforts in seizing HST opportunity.

*Rising as a motorway town, but “just settled down and never exploited rail…”.*
Background/ problems:
• Specialised post-industrial towns
• A polycentric structure
• Isolated places: (accessible problems)

Actions:
• 14 big ideas to change the fate- 10 regional link.
• Housing market renewal pathfinder (Elevate)
• Lobbying for transport link to hubs.
• Improving Education

Difficulties:
• Institutional reform (UA) led to disintegrated actions (in two groups)
• With ideas but without administrative power is still difficult.
• Generation spin-off (social reproduction)
4-2 West Coast Lancashire

**Background:**
- Blackpool, a resort town, is the main core town in this sub-region
- Was a popular leisure and tourist place.

**Problems:**
- Was well-served by rail but left out of electrification in 1960s, then not served directly under privatisation since 2001
- Deindustrialisation
- Travel abroad + Low-cost Air
4-2 West Coast Lancashire

**Actions:**
- Re-Blackpool URC founded.
- Campaign being served by direct rail service, but failed when the casino bid failed.
- “No plan B” from LA.
- New tramway arrived in 2012 (from 2005).

**Difficulties:**
- Institutional reform (UA) created the obstacle for integrated planning.
- A lack of strong political leadership
- Casino bid failed because of value judgment

*Blackpool lost its Casino bid in 2005 because of the ideology from the state “regeneration benefits of the proposal before us are unproven”* (Casino Advisory Panel, 2007).
To summarise

Factors underlying differential results

- Restructuring & Dissolution
- Institutional Structure
- Planning Approach
- Transport & Urban and Regional policy

Diagram:
- National Context
  - Constitutional capacity
  - Policy Priority
  - Local intervention on attractiveness
  - Economic trajectory
  - Local initiatives
  - Transport accessibility
  - Political leadership

- National level
- Local level
Conclusions

- National context: a separate central-local relationship, a disadvantaged situation for local intervention and a city-led transformation.

- Local intervention needs to play a role sensible to the national context, which involves improving local attractiveness (physical/education/environmental/connectivity...). It involves economic trajectory, sub-regional governance, leadership, and constitutional capacity and political priority.
Conclusions (Ctd)

• Capable cities took all and disadvantaged ones remained depressed. Manchester’s strong leadership leads to solid revival in contrast to some sub-regions, further peripheralised without integrated improvement of transport link despite local regeneration efforts.

• A lack of an inclusive governance, regional consensus, and an intra-regional transport connectivity needs to be tackled for wider regional impacts.
Lessons and Implications

- **City relationships and transport need**: An appropriate spatial scale for intervention:
  - Dynamic mega city-regional development or regional development?
  - The integration of transport systems

- **Resource and capacity**: The importance of public intervention
  - The ideological concern for inequality regarding weaker local authorities which need
  - The assistance and public resource the most.

- **Vision & governance**: Sub-regional governance and consensus, which could look beyond rivalry for wider benefits in a long term
Thank You

Any question or comment?

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