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1 Introduction

Nearly twenty years ago, on a brisk spring morning, with just a bag of personal belongings, I said goodbye to my family and left my village in south-east Albania to step into the foreign world of 'the abroad'. I was the first woman since the fall of communism in Albania to leave my village to work abroad. It was to be the start of a new life and, at eighteen years old, I felt like I was embarking on the greatest adventure of my life: full of uncertainties of the unknown and the joys and dreams of the desired. My journey joined those of hundreds of Albanians who had already emigrated and the hundreds of thousands more who would follow thereafter.

As post-communist Albania was coming to terms with its new-found freedom of movement, the need to escape constraining political and socio-economic conditions at home and, not least, the urge to experience 'the West' unleashed migrations of epic proportion. It is estimated that nearly 1.5 million Albanians, equal to almost half the resident population of 3.2 million, emigrated between 1990 and 2010 (World Bank 2011: 54). Many Albanians also moved internally, principally from rural to urban areas. However, for many migrants these journeys abroad and internally have been interlinked in various and complex ways, affecting the communities of both origin and destination. It is the aim of this book to investigate these linkages between internal and international migration and their developmental effects in Albania.

1.1 Why link internal and international migration in development?

In the vast array of migration studies, researchers have traditionally tended to consider migration as a process that takes place by crossing *either* administrative borders internal to a country *or* national borders – respectively, internal and international migration. These two migration types have thus been studied as two separate entities, involving separate groups of participants and needing separate conceptualisations. Very rarely have the two processes been considered as part of a linked system. It is the aim of this study to consider precisely this largely unexplored nexus of migration research. This is important for various reasons. First, in a globalising and

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polarising world, migrants are using an array of livelihood opportunities to ensure their survival and prosperity. As a result, a combination of mobility strategies is becoming the case nowadays, manifested in more and more families being involved in both internal and international migration. Second, increasingly the same person is involved in both these types of migration. Third, the patterns do not appear to be as clear-cut as a step-wise migration might suggest, i.e. migrating internally first then internationally, or vice versa. As such, analysing the two types of migration within a unified framework would facilitate and promote the understanding of the overall migration process better than a single-analysis context.

These dynamics are important and relevant particularly in relation to development and underdevelopment.[1] First of all, both of these migrations are used as combined livelihood strategies in many developing countries, including Albania. Second, they might not affect, or be affected by, development in the same way. An international move might provide higher remittances for certain groups of households, while an internal move might ensure a lifeline for poorer families. Furthermore, there is a growing realisation that the impact of both internal and international migration on countries of origin goes well beyond remittances, to affect socio-cultural, political and demographic aspects of society. Addressing these various dimensions of the migration-development nexus within a framework of integrated (internal and international) migration types becomes imperative.

Albania is one such country where internal and international migration strategies are combined by individuals and households. Shaped by challenges of post-communist transformations, the impact of such strategies has become vitally important for the development potentialities of every aspect of society. However, these migration-development dynamics cannot be easily understood outside of the socio-historical context that frames and conditions them, as explained below.

1.2 Albania: Some background notes

Having been the last people in the Balkans to fall to the Ottoman conquest in the fourteenth century, Albanians were also the last to gain independence. At the end of five centuries of Ottoman rule, the territories that constitute today's Albania were characterised by deeply feudal socio-economic relations and general poverty (Logoreci 1977).[2] The country formally declared its independence in 1912, confirmed internationally when it joined the League of Nations in 1920. The years until World War II were dominated by the conservative leadership of Ahmed Zog, first as president (1925-1928), then as King Zog (until 1939). Zog's dictatorial rule was marked by economic stagnation, although some improvements in education were achieved and the country became more stable. However, Zog failed

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to resolve the question of land reform, and the peasantry remained impoverished (Vickers 1995: 124-126). He is also attributed with laying the foundations of the Albanian nation-state by bringing some form of national unity. However, this was undermined by the increasing influence that Italy exercised over Albanian affairs during the later years of his rule. By the time Italy invaded in 1939, the country was already de facto an Italian protectorate. This lasted until the surrender of Italy in 1943 and the take-over of the Albanian territory by German troops. During the war, nationalists, communists and monarchists in Albania resisted the country's occupation with varying degrees of zeal and effectiveness. The communists eventually prevailed, seizing power and ousting the Germans in November 1944. Enver Hoxha was installed as the country's new leader, ruling with absolute and commanding authority until his death in 1985. The Hoxha regime launched a radical reform programme that destroyed the power of the landlords, nationalised all industry, banks and commercial properties and created a state-controlled socialist society. However, considerable positive achievements were recorded in eradicating illiteracy, improving access to free medical care and instituting old-age pensions. The positive legacy of its social policy meant that Albania's social indicators were some of the highest in the region (Tahiraj 2007). On the other hand, its record of human rights was abysmal, the true extent of which only became apparent after the regime fell in 1990-1991. Although claiming to be economically self-reliant, Albania received a significant amount of foreign aid from 'sister' socialist countries (Backer 1982). Nonetheless, its relationship with these countries was fickle, as it broke first with former Yugoslavia in 1948, then with the former Soviet Union in 1961 and lastly with China in 1977.

Although Albanians had emigrated far and wide throughout history, especially during (and within) the Ottoman Empire and later to North America and Australia, emigration was banned under the Hoxha regime. The few successful defectors were mainly political opponents of the regime. Internal migration during this period was also strictly regulated and such population movements were centrally planned. Most of the population was fixed in rural areas providing labour for collectivised agriculture; the towns were centres of basic services or industry. Albania in the 1980s was unique in Europe for having a young and growing population – two thirds of which lived in rural areas – and for having a low rate of urbanisation. In fact, through most of the communist period Tirana, the capital, accounted for a *decreasing* share of total population in Albania (Carter 1986; Hall 1994). I stress these demographic facts because of their background relevance to this book, especially given the explosive nature of rural-urban migration and of Tirana's growth after 1990.

After Hoxha's death in 1985, and reflecting some of the changes that were taking place in neighbouring communist countries, the successor government headed by Ramiz Alia started to loosen its grip. However, the

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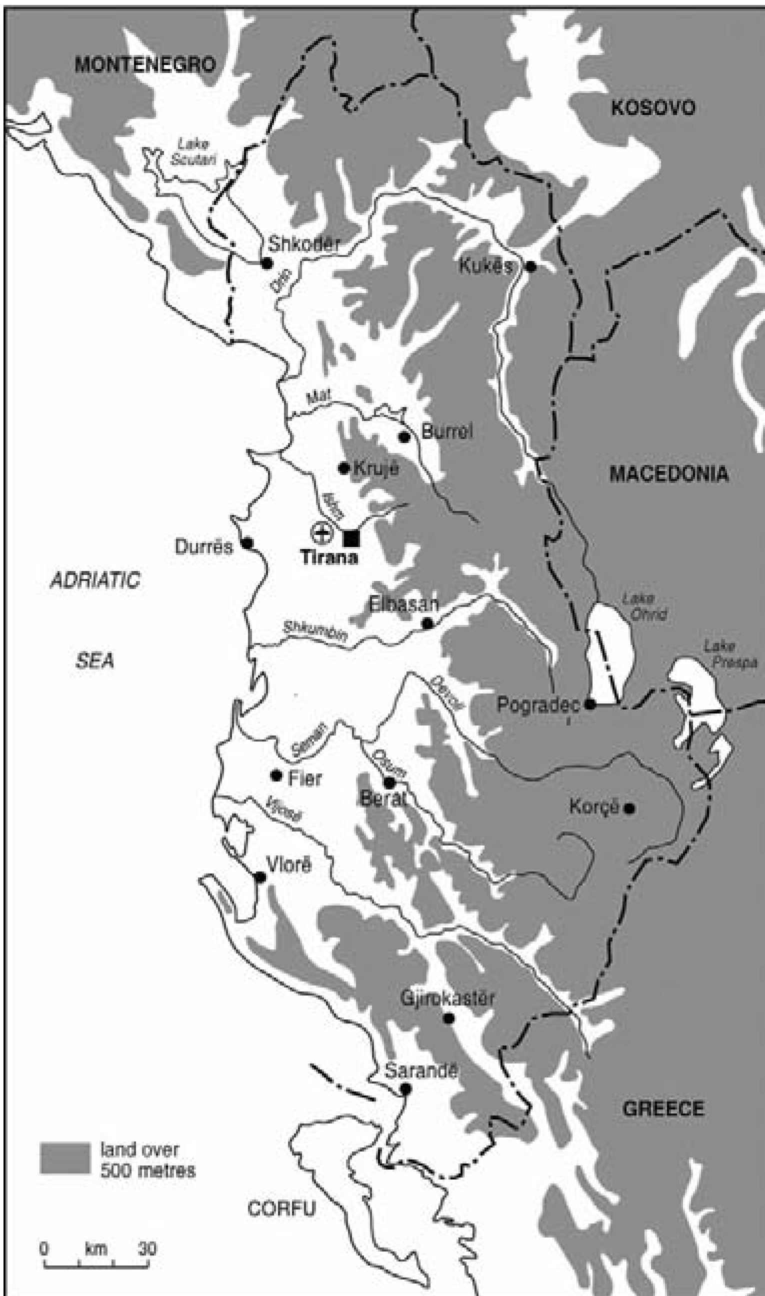
Figure 1.1 *Albania: Location map*



Source: King and Vullnetari (2003: 13)

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reforms were too little, too late. In the winter of 1990 and early 1991, popular student protests forced the government into democratic elections. Following these changes, international migration took place on a massive scale, primarily to neighbouring Greece and Italy, but also to other European Union countries and North America. Internal movements, particularly in the rural-urban direction, have also been intense. These migrations have had important impacts on the communities left behind and on destination areas in Albania, including transformations through remittances, depopulation or overpopulation, social mobility, chaotic urbanisation, etc. 'Development' thus went hand-in-hand with migration. Figure 1.1 is a location map of Albania, depicting the main towns and the country's relief.

1.3 About the book

This book examines the links, differences and co-dynamics between internal and international migration seen from a country-of-origin perspective. It further seeks to understand the developmental impacts of these linkages on migrants and their families, as well as regions and countries of origin, by taking post-communist Albania as a case study. The starting point for this investigation consisted of the following two key research questions:

– What are the interconnections between internal and international migration, seen from a country-of-origin perspective, in this case Albania?
– How do these internal-international migration dynamics impact processes of development in Albania?

In order to explore these links and relationships further, it is important to understand the complexities of migrants' lives and migration strategies. Therefore, a number of further subsidiary questions need to be asked, organised under the umbrella of the two key aims set out above. The first set of questions is related to the two migration types, and I start this line of inquiry by seeking to find out if there are differences between these migrations. In this context, I look at the categories of migrants participating in each type of migration; the migration intentions and regimes; the geographical and socio-cultural distance between places of origin and places of destination; the legal aspects of migration; access to citizenship and the cost of migration.[3]

Once the differences have been established, I proceed with questions related to the links that exist between these two types of migration. What are the links, precisely, and how are they manifested? Here, I seek to establish a sequence of movement: does one migration type precede the other? Or are they carried out simultaneously by different members of the same family?

Relevant to these links are also the decision-making processes prior to migration. Thus, I seek to find what the key differences and influences are

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over the decision-making prior to migration. The different influencing factors are considered with regard to structural determinants as well as meso- and micro-level elements contributing to the decision.

With reference to the dynamics of these links on the one hand, and development or underdevelopment on the other, I present a second set of subsidiary questions. These are directed towards finding out what the respective impacts of the two types of migration are on the communities of origin at the micro-, meso- and macro-levels.

The analysis will not stop here, however. After having established these differences, links and impacts, I also seek to address issues relevant to policymaking and theorising. Thus, a third and last set of subsidiary questions is outlined. I first map out the benefits and problems that migrants and their families experience during the migration process, from the first intention to leave to the actual act of moving to another place. The question that follows is whether and how the positive effects of migration for community members, migrants and non-migrants can be enhanced, and the negative effects reduced. Can these findings on development be brought to the attention of policymakers, and what recommendations should be presented for them? Last but not least, considering the limited pool of knowledge around the conceptualisation of the links between internal and international migration, can a contribution be made to theory in this area? If so, what would be the nature of such a contribution?

1.4 Methods and sites of data collection

Migration is a complex process, the study of which requires a multidimensional approach. Equally important for choosing a particular methodology is the set of aims for that specific research. As detailed in the previous discussion, I wanted to find out about the 'what', the 'how' and the 'why'; in other words, I wanted to learn about what processes are taking place, and how and why these processes are happening. More than that, I wanted to learn about lived experiences and feelings of migrants and their families. Thus, my emphasis is on migrants' worlds, seeking to present reality through their eyes. Therefore, an in-depth qualitative approach was the most appropriate research design, allowing me to analyse these relationships and experiences and understand them in their complexity through time and across the spatial contexts within which they exist (Holdaway 2000). My approach exemplifies a strategy that 'aims to place non-dominant, neglected knowledges at the heart of the research agenda' (Smith 2001: 25) and consider migration and related issues through the eyes of those who are the subject of research. Ethnography is particularly suitable in this context, since by revealing the '*processes* and *meanings*' that underpin social life across space, it can shed light on the relationships that exist

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between 'structure, agency and geographic context' (Herbert 2000: 550, emphasis in the original). The richness of data that can be produced through participant observation and in-depth interviews yields significant potential for allowing the voices of the migrants to be heard and bringing back the 'human' in human migration (McHugh 2000: 72). King, Iosifides and Myrivili (1998: 159) emphasise the power such voices can have when directly and emphatically listened to: after all, they point out, 'the real experts on migration are the migrants themselves'. As these migrants move across a range of internal and international locations, their multiple linkages and experiences encompass several geographical, socio-cultural, economic, political and identity dimensions. Thus, the application of multi-sited ethnography *à la* Marcus (1995) is in order. Scholars have emphasised the suitability of such an approach in studying experiences in transnational settings and social fields (Levitt & Glick Schiller 2004: 1012-1013; Vertovec 1999: 457).

Inspired by Marcus' (1995) multi-sited ethnography, I 'followed the people' (migrants) from their origin to their destination areas and back again. By applying a 'village outward' approach (Baily 1992), I began my fieldwork in a cluster of four villages in south-east Albania, in the district of Devoll, from where I traced individual migrants and families to their destination areas in urban and peri-urban Tirana (Albania's capital); in urban Korçë (a regional town close to the villages);[4] and in Thessaloniki, Greece (the single most important international destination). Once I had mapped out the various migratory fields, internal and international sites and migrants' profiles in the four villages, I followed the links to the study destinations given to me by 'residual' migrant families still living in the villages. I then continued to use the snowballing technique as a 'method of contact in a practical sense' throughout my fieldwork (Atkinson & Flint 2001; Cornelius 1982).

This 'village outward' approach presented an opportunity for an integrated analysis of families and migrants in their sending and (multiple) receiving communities. As Bourdieu and Wacquant (2000) assert, the full system of determinants that first trigger and then sustain migration cannot be understood without reconstituting the complete migration trajectory of the migrating individuals and their families. Thus, starting the research from the communities of origin, analysing attentively their structure, history and contradictions, becomes imperative. This exercise further allows for the application of the social field, a concept I will outline in more detail in Chapter 2. For now, this is visually presented in Figure 1.2 as an imaginary field encompassing multiple locations and social relations, generating a multi-sited terrain of a 'diasporic world, independent of the mere movement' of migrants between these locations (Marcus 1995: 106). As such, internal and international migration are examined as interlinked processes. Their combined and differentiated impacts on the development of

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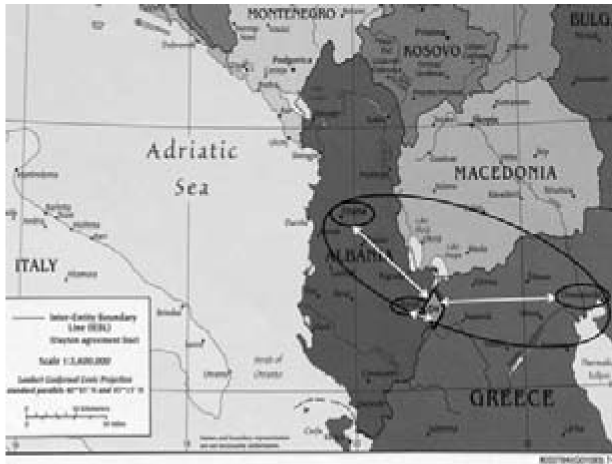
Figure 1.2 *Fieldwork sites and imaginary social field, Albania-Greece*



Source: Adjusted from Central Balkan Region political map 2008[5]

Albania are considered at a macro-scale and in terms of individual families and village communities.

The bulk of my analysis is based on 150 in-depth interviews with participants in the locations mentioned earlier. However, many of the interviews were not with single individuals, but with couples as well as larger family/household units, thus bringing the number of interviewee 'voices' to 197. Along with migrants, these interviews included family members remaining in the villages and returnees; a variety of ages, education levels, socio-economic statuses and migration trajectories were represented. In addition, I also interviewed several key informants such as Albanian researchers with expertise in migration and development as well as local key informants in the villages and representatives of migrant associations in Thessaloniki. Participant observation was also very important in understanding many issues, not least the environment where the respondents lived. During my thirteen months in the field, I lived in the communities I studied and participated in their everyday life. This included a range of activities from the very ordinary and daily such as household chores, chatting with the neighbours, visiting some friend's place for a coffee, to more complex community gatherings such as weddings and festivities. I visited migrants' homes, places of work, leisure and entertainment; walked along a travel route (involving a mountain pass) taken by migrants going to Greece during the 1990s; travelled to Tirana, Korçë and Thessaloniki by public transport as well as private car – this included the torturous border crossing between Albania and Greece at Kapshticë/Krystallopigi in a bus; and I went to offices of public service

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provisions in all these sites, including health, education and immigration services in Thessaloniki. All these experiences and observations were very valuable in understanding the migrants' 'lifeworld' and the complexities of the dilemmas they often expressed during our conversations. This would have not been possible through interviewing alone. Although I have never lived and worked in Greece as a migrant, my own migratory experience proved helpful for understanding and empathising with the issues presented by the participants.

In addition to the interviews and ethnographic observation, I also conducted two group discussions in Thessaloniki. Both comprised male participants, between the ages of 22 and 35 and 44 and 55, respectively. These individuals belonged to the social network of two of my male key informants, who helped arrange the two meetings in the cafés where these migrants socialised during their days off – one near Kamara (the Triumphal Arch of Galerius in the centre of the city) and the other near the railway station.

1.4.1 *Field sites in Albania*

Devoll and the villages of origin

Devoll is one of four districts of Korçë prefecture in south-east Albania, bordering Greece on its eastern flank, from the Prespa Lakes down to the Pindus Mountains (see the upright triangle in Figure 1.2).

This geographical position enabled intensive emigration to Greece from the early 1990s, much of which was circulatory and temporary in character. The 2001 Population and Housing Census (PHC) enumerated 34,641 inhabitants (INSTAT 2004a), or a loss of a little more than 9 per cent of the 1989 population of 38,094. Devoll is also one of the most rural districts in the country, with more than 80 per cent of its population living in villages. Its only town and principal administrative centre, Bilisht, had around 7,000 inhabitants according to the 2001 census (INSTAT 2004a). The district is also characterised by a 'top-heavy' demographic profile with a high proportion of aged persons and a low proportion of under-fifteens in the general population, similar to a group of six other contiguous districts in the south-east of the country (Kotzamanis, Duquenne, Pappas & Kaklamani 2003: 28).

The cluster of four villages included in my study had a population of around 3,600 by 2001, principally ethnic Albanians of Muslim religion.[6] However, a number of Balkan Egyptians (Evgjit), Arumanians, ethnic Greeks, as well as ethnic-Albanian Orthodox Christians can be found in this cluster.[7] Some of the Christian population here lay claim to forms of Greek citizenship. These links date to before 1944 and include ethnic Greek ancestry and citizenship, ethnic Albanian ancestry but Greek

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citizenship, ethnic Slav-Macedonian ancestry but Greek citizenship, etc. (for these variations, see also Psimmenos & Georgoulas 2001).

The area has also been an important origin place for historical migrations to the Balkans and overseas, much of which has been revived to link to contemporary flows. The benefits accrued from this historical migration – the transmission of knowledge, attitudes and money down through the generations – have been reinforced by other factors. First, there is the geographical location. Although at an altitude of 850 metres above sea level and surrounded by mountains, with very harsh winters and hot summers, the villages have high-quality soil and access to water due to their location in the rich valley of the Devoll River. Second, and relatedly, there is the infrastructure. Being located along one of the two major roads linking Albania with Greece, the area further benefits from transport, trade and information. This road also links the villages to the biggest local market of Korçë where farmers go to sell their produce, while at the same time making the villages more accessible to traders who buy produce directly from the farmers in the field. And third, there is a highly educated and hard-working population that, despite out-migration, remains quite demographically robust. These factors combined have enabled higher living standards and more open societal attitudes and gender relations than the upper highland districts, which are more isolated and poorer. They have also prevented the communities from extreme depopulation, isolation and deterioration, as has happened in other more remote villages.

The main economic activity in the area is farming, most of which is at subsistence levels. The major crops produced are potatoes, beans, tomatoes, peppers, onions, cereal crops such as grain and corn, fodder for the livestock, etc. Livestock mainly consist of cows, fowl, sheep and some goats. A variety of fruit trees are also grown in the area, where a dominance of apple trees is apparent. Many inhabitants have vineyards in their gardens, but separate areas of viticulture for the market are being developed only slowly.

The trade sector is one of the most significant after agriculture, dominated by small grocery shops and bars. The services sector covers transport, personal services such as barbers and hairdressers, blacksmiths and carpenters, a petrol station, a small motel and an undertaker. Construction has been especially buoyant, mostly improving dwellings, but also building new ones. Two limestone quarries in the area and sand extraction from the riverbed provide much-needed material for the Korçë construction industry. Besides agriculture, the main employment sector for women with lower education levels is in the only factory – a Greek-Albanian joint venture producing baby diapers. Many day labourers commute to the nearby towns for work – men in construction, women in garment factories. The highly educated and the political elite are employed primarily in the public sector,

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which covers the local administration and government, teaching, medical services and the police force.

However, migration has been the key to survival and prosperity since 1990. This links directly to my other research sites – Tirana, Korçë and Thessaloniki.

Tirana

As Albania's capital, Tirana is by far the most important administrative, economic, social and cultural centre in the country. Located in the western lowlands, it is situated at 110 metres above sea level, enjoying a mild climate throughout the year. The city was founded in 1614 and became the capital of Albania in 1920 (Carter 1986). This certainly influenced its population, which by the end of World War II stood at around 60,000 inhabitants (Tirta 1999: 89).

During the communist years the capital enjoyed considerable growth as it became not only the most important administrative city, but also one of the most important industrial hubs in the country (Carter 1986: 274). The city's industrial pool included light industry (especially textile manufacturing), engineering (especially tools and equipment maintenance), food-processing and building materials. The majority of the city's population growth of almost 130 per cent between 1945 and 1960 resulted from in-migration from all parts of the country (Carter 1986). In addition, the city became the most important educational centre after the founding of the first university in Albania there in 1957. Construction was also a major employment sector, given this industrial and demographic expansion. However, starting from the 1960s – due to the loss of Soviet help with industry and the party-state's policy to stem rural-urban migration – the city's share of the country's population *declined* (see discussion earlier in this chapter). A few years before the regime collapsed, the spectacular growth of the city that was to follow was almost unimaginable, even for attentive scholars such as Carter. He wrote: '[T]he idea of a Tirana-Durrësi urban agglomeration emerging in the near or more distant future seems remote' (Carter 1986: 281).

A little more than twenty years later, this is a clear and undisputed reality. The transformation started as soon as the regime fell, accompanied by massive unrestricted Tirana-bound migration from all parts of the country. The 1989-2001 intercensal increase of the city attributed to migration was between 90,000 and 100,000 individuals, or more than 25 per cent of the 2001 population (Agorastakis & Sidiropoulos 2007: 479; Zezza, Carletto & Davis 2005: 189). Most authorities agree that the actual population is much higher than that officially recorded, as many newcomers have not registered. Furthermore, it has become a challenge to capture the city's rapid transformation in the form of coherent figures and data (Tirana Regional Council 2005: 32).[8]

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Available data suggest that the majority of these in-migrants have settled on former agricultural and state-owned land, forming squatter settlements on the fringes of the city. By 2003, almost 45 per cent of Tirana district's population lived in such informal settlements. The Kamëz area to the north-west of the city, housing an estimated 60,000-80,000 inhabitants – only around 7,000 of whom lived there before 1990 – is the biggest of them all (Cila 2006: 34; Göler 2006: 7). Other such settlements have been formed within the city itself, primarily within the bounds of the many former industrial plants that have now become obsolete. The majority of migrants in both types of informal settlements come from the north and north-east of the country, with a certain specialisation. While the majority in peri-urban Kamëz (in Bathore, for instance) originate from Kukës and Dibër, an estimated 40 per cent of those living in the city's 'industrial settlements' originate from the district of Tropojë alone (Cila 2006: 33; Göler 2006: 13).

Tirana district houses the largest number of public and private providers of education, health and social services, as well as the largest number of international agencies, NGOs and businesses in the country. While chiefly employing the highly skilled, these institutions have also spurred a large services and trading sector where the less skilled work. As far as industry is concerned, besides some key areas within the city itself, there is a clearly defined industrial zone to the west of the city along the Tirana-Durrës dual carriageway (Tirana Regional Council 2005). Here, some of the biggest industrial plants in the country have been located, providing employment opportunities for the young labour force. These are mainly in food-processing, wholesale trade and construction materials. Within the city, a number of labour-intensive garment factories – usually Italian- or Greek-owned – are major centres of employment for women. However, figures for Tirana city show a gender-biased picture, as employment for men is twice as high as that for women (Tirana Regional Council 2005: 44). One of the most important sectors of growth is also transport, and Tirana is perfectly situated in that respect since the only functional civil airport of the country is located close to the city. Following its privatisation, it has become an important income-generating source, especially in terms of local jobs and benefits.

But Tirana is also a city of contrasts: simultaneously serving as home to some of the country's most affluent and its poorest. The former reside primarily in newly built multi-storey apartment blocks in the inner-city areas, especially in the *Bllok*,[9] while the latter are concentrated in the peri-urban squatter settlements. For instance, the 2002 Albanian Living Standards Measurement Survey (ALSMS) data show that centrally located mini-municipalities 5 and 10 have the lowest poverty incidence and the highest per capita consumption, while mini-municipalities 4, 6 and 11 located on the fringes of the city show the opposite typology (Tirana Regional Council 2005). The 2001 census data reveal that these are also the mini-municipalities with the highest share of in-migrants, as Figure 1.3 shows.

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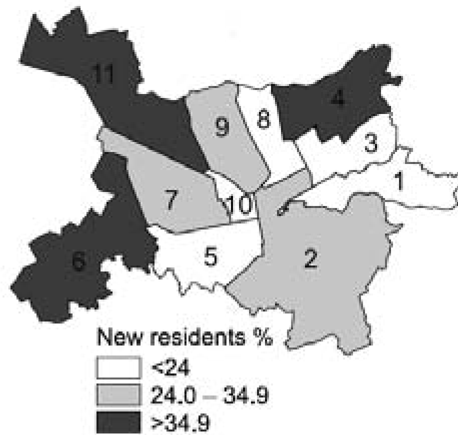
Figure 1.3 *Tirana: In-flow of migrants by mini-municipality*



Source: PHC data in Zezza et al. (2005: 190)

Korçë

The most important regional pole of the south-east is the university city of Korçë, located along one of the principal transport and trading routes that link Albania with the Balkans and the EU through Macedonia and Greece (refer back to Figure 1.2).[10] Situated at 850 metres above sea level, almost 60 per cent of its prefectural terrain is dominated by mountains. However, its plains, such as those of Korçë and Devoll, are some of the most fertile in the country, making it a major area of agricultural production (Korça Regional Council 2005).

Founded in the thirteenth century, Korçë was historically an important market town which by the mid-nineteenth century had around 1,000 shops. By 1945, its population was about 25,000, making it one of the most important towns in Albania (INSTAT 2004a: 9; Korçë Municipality 2005: 13). Although it lost its place from then on – along with other older towns – to the fast-growing urban areas along the littoral, it has managed to retain a significant degree of socio-economic importance.

During the communist years the district, and the town in particular, developed an industrial base that included food-processing factories, ore extraction mines, a glass factory, as well as one of the biggest textile factories in the country. While the latter two became obsolete as the regime collapsed, food-processing has been revived and is a major employment sector for the city's labour force, especially for women. Trade and commerce have also grown considerably, but rapid growth is particularly observed in the garment industry, which is characterised by small businesses, usually of foreign (especially Greek) ownership (Korça Regional

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Council 2005). In fact, more than a quarter of all foreign enterprises in the Korçë region by the mid-2000s were Greek, making it one of the most important poles of Greek investment in Albania (Belba 2005: 88).

As in the case of Tirana, in-migration has resulted in informal squatter settlements around the city, located mainly in formerly state-owned industrial zones such as the former Machine and Tractor Station (SMT), the former Public Enterprise for Construction (NSHN) and the former Korçë Agricultural Enterprise (NB). Other settlements have formed along the Ersekë road and between the roads leading to the adjacent villages of Mborje and Drenovë.[11] These areas have inadequate infrastructure, suffering from mud roads, interrupted electricity and water supplies and problematic sewage systems, although the situation is better than in Tirana (Korçë Municipality 2005: 15). Most of these migrants come from the mountainous hinterland, which lost as much as 30 per cent of its population in the 1989-2001 intercensal period. Besides this rural to urban and peri-urban migration within the region, there is also more distant out-migration internally and abroad. In fact, Korçë district scores high as a top sender of both internal and international migrants, the outflow of the latter being twice as high as the former (Carletto, Davis, Stampini & Zezza 2004: 27, Table 8). Internally, almost 60 per cent of migrants moved to Tirana, but Durrës and Vlorë were also important destinations (Korça Regional Council 2005: 24). The majority of international migrants have moved to neighbouring Greece. Other international destinations include Italy, the United States, Australia and Macedonia.[12] The overall balance of these movements is an intercensal population loss of almost 60,000 individuals at the district level (Carletto et al. 2004: 24, Table 8). By 2001, the census enumerated a population of 142,909 for the district, around 55,000 of whom lived in the town of Korçë (INSTAT 2004a). However, according to the population registers, the town's population was almost 85,000 by 2004 (Korça Regional Council 2005: 15).[13]

But migration is not a new phenomenon, as Korçë was one of the major sending areas of labour migrants during Ottoman times and later on, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, to the US and Australia. Closer to home, a key destination was neighbouring Thessaloniki, a prelude to contemporary migration patterns and events.

1.4.2 *Field sites in Greece*

Thessaloniki

My interest in choosing this site is manifold. First, I was guided by the general literature according to which Thessaloniki is an important city in terms of Albanian migrants' concentration in Greece, second only to Athens. In the course of my fieldwork I found that this applied to the migrants I was studying as well, indeed having even greater importance than

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Athens for my villages of origin. Second, most of the existing research on Albanian migration focused on migrants in Athens, in particular, while Thessaloniki had, at the inception of my research, attracted little academic attention.[14] Third, since this city is rather close to the origin villages, yet is a large metropolitan area, I was interested in the cross-border dynamics of migration and the resulting social field between these villages and the Greek city. And finally, this proximity fitted well with my limited resources and logistics within an already widely spread research field.

My fieldwork there took place in the Thessaloniki conurbation (Figure 1.4), that is to say the built-up urban surface consisting of the mini-municipality of Thessaloniki (no. 15) and twelve other mini-municipalities adjoining it (except for in mini-municipalities 3, 10 and 9). Geographically, this is spread from Menemeni south-west of the centre, all the way to Kalamariá to the south-east extending around the Thermaic Gulf for around seventeen kilometres. This area is situated largely between the city's ring road above and the seafront below, forming thus a visible

Figure 1.4 *Thessaloniki: Conurbation map*

Source: Courtesy of Nikos Vogiatzis, Regional Development and Policy Research Unit, Department of Economics, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki

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'pocket' so to speak. The village of Kalohori, situated in the industrial area to the south of Menemeni (does not appear on the map in Figure 1.4), is an exception, being the only rural settlement where my snowballing exercise took me to.

Thessaloniki is the second-largest city in Greece after Athens and the most important political, economic and cultural centre in the north of the country. The 2001 census recorded a population of 1.1 million in the prefecture of Thessaloniki, 70 per cent of whom lived in the conurbation (Hatziprokopiou 2006: 82).[15] Immigrants make up nearly 9 per cent of the prefecture's total population, with the vast majority originating from the Balkans and the republics of the former Soviet Union (mainly Pontian Greeks). Thus, nearly half of the Ukrainians in Greece (46 per cent), 38 per cent of Georgians and 26 per cent of Russians lived here by 2001, while the corresponding figure for Bulgarians is 8 per cent. As for Albanians, their presence is at 7 per cent, making Thessaloniki the second place of concentration after Athens. Here too, as elsewhere, they constituted the dominant migrant group, namely nearly half of the prefecture's migrant population (Hatziprokopiou 2006: 311, Table A3; Kokkali 2008: 391). Numerically, they were the most important group of immigrants also in the urban Thessaloniki area at 25 per cent, followed by Georgians at 14 per cent (Labrianidis, Hatziprokopiou, Pratsinakis & Vogiatzis 2008: 33). The main sectors of employment for the Greek population are services (trade, education and health, transport and communications, financial services, hotels and restaurants, etc.), manufacturing, construction and agriculture. Migrants' employment largely follows these trends, namely, in services, construction, manufacturing and agriculture in that order. However, there are qualitative differences in that migrants have higher levels of working informally and much lower levels of skilled occupations than their Greek counterparts.

Albanian migrants in the prefecture of Thessaloniki are employed primarily in services (31 per cent), construction (28 per cent) and agriculture (13 per cent). Around half of Albanian women are recorded as working in the domestic and care sectors. The character of the Thessaloniki economy has affected female employment, particularly with regard to its share in manufacturing and agriculture, the former recording higher employment shares than countrywide (25 per cent compared to 9 per cent, respectively), while the latter presenting an opposite trend (6 per cent compared to 15 per cent countrywide) (Baldwin-Edwards 2004a; Hatziprokopiou 2006: 83). Of course, the dominance of Thessaloniki's industrial sector, especially manufacturing, is a major factor that helps explain this discrepancy. A significant part of the industrial activity, however, is unrecorded and consists of family-run and labour-intensive small businesses. These include small manufacturing firms that are particularly important for the local economy and are typical places of employment for Albanian women (Hatziprokopiou 2003: 1043-1044). Although there is a slight concen-

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tration of industry to the west and north-west of the city, the smaller firms are spread relatively equally all over the city, as are most commercial activities, entertainment venues and migrants' working places (Hatziprokopiou 2004: 330-331; Kokkali 2008: 386-390).

In fact, a distinctive feature of Thessaloniki has long been its mixed nature of social classes and places. What segregation there was took place mostly vertically (in literal terms: the affluent living on the upper floors) rather than horizontally across the urban space (Hatziprokopiou 2004, 2006: 46; Kokkali 2008). However, both Hatziprokopiou and Kokkali argue that this is changing, and that social differences are becoming increasingly evident in the spatial diffusion of the city. They divide the conurbation into three main parts of somewhat distinct social character (refer back to Figure 1.4): the more prosperous, better conserved and more expensive east whose construction has been more planned (especially Kalamariá); the poorer, more run-down and cheaper west that has suffered from chaotic urbanisation; and a more socially mixed centre (the principal mini-municipality including the historical area) in between. But even within these three parts, there are small areas or neighbourhoods that do not conform to the general pattern. For instance, some downgraded areas can be found in the northern and western zones of the centre (e.g. Kassandrou Street, or Vardaris) or in the east (e.g. Foinikas), while some nicer, upgraded neighbourhoods can be found in the west (parts of Stavroupoli) (Hatziprokopiou 2006: 82).

Besides a mixed social-class background, the areas also display ethnically mixed populations, i.e. migrants generally live along with Greeks. The 2001 Greek census data show that the majority of migrants live in inner-city areas, with a somewhat higher concentration in the north-western mini-municipalities of the conurbation. However, in general, for Albanians as for other migrants, there appears to be no 'ghetto-like situations' that would involve the 'concentration of large numbers of migrants in specific "downgraded" neighbourhoods, displacing locals' (Hatziprokopiou 2006: 173-174).

Finally, Thessaloniki's long history of multiculturalism, hosting various populations from all over the Balkans and the Mediterranean, is regenerated through the immigration and settlement in the city of new populations with diverse ethnic, social, religious and cultural backgrounds (Kokkali 2008; Mazower 2004). In some cases these historical links have been revived and reshaped into new transnational fields based on historical and cultural bonds and facilitated by geographical proximity. At the heart of these fields stand the cross-border social networks channelling not only migrants' mobility, but also trade, transport, business and investment. The Thessaloniki-Korçë 'corridor' is the perfect example of this (see Hatziprokopiou 2006: 85, 106-108). Such social relations and networks, embedded within a wider migrant-centred approach, are at the centre of my analysis in the ensuing chapters.

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1.5 Some ethical issues

As multi-positioned authors of research projects, we bring to bear various degrees of power in our research. Particularly the relationships we build with those who become the subject of our research – our research participants – are 'saturated with power', to use Foucault's (1980) words. But more fundamentally, our own subjectivity and multidimensional positionality affect the entire research process, from choosing which topic to study to deciding which interview quote to include in our written articles and other research outputs (De Souza 2004). Therefore, critically reflecting on issues of power, knowledge and 'self' is an important part of the knowledge production process that we engage in (Daley 2010).

Most of the ethical issues I had to consider in my research were related to ensuring that informed consent to participate was obtained in an ongoing process, protecting participants' anonymity and confidentiality as well as being reflexive of power relations. Several techniques were employed in this process, such as informing participants through an information sheet (as well as orally) about the aims and expectations of the research; using pseudonyms instead of real names and, where necessary, changing other characteristics in written citations, such as age and occupation; holding the data in a secure location, etc. However, I was also confronted with challenges resulting from my positionality as an insider to the local communities of origin – I was born and grew up in a village close to the research area – and as a migrant. For example, during my fieldwork many interviewees referred to me as a 'daughter' or 'sister' from the village and a migrant. They thus inferred similarities in experiences with their children (as older parents) or themselves (as migrants). This would be reflected when respondents would suggest that I should 'know how these things are' (related to my questions of experiences of migration, remittances and future plans) because of this position. The trust that results from such a relationship is exactly where researchers base their strategy for gaining access to communities, participants and information. Yet, this comes with significant responsibility to their communities in the way trust and information are used (see also Markova 2009).

Besides the obvious advantages of this accumulated knowledge and the quality of material collected, the insider's position has certain pitfalls as well. Most of all, one's familiarity with the research material can result in failing to spot important clues through taken-for-granted knowledge that risks being neglected (De Souza 2004). Using return trips to the UK as 'analytical breaks' to critically reflect on my material gave me the chance to assess things in a different light. For those positioned as insiders it, thus becomes equally imperative to be constantly reflexive about processes, data collection, analysis and relationships.

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1.6 Book outline

This introduction now ends with a chapter-by-chapter overview of the book. While the key research questions were provided earlier, Chapter 2 proceeds with a theoretical elaboration of some of the key concepts and debates that frame my research. I examine the linkages between internal and international migration as well as the various ways in which these migrations differ from one another. Their impact on origin developing countries is, in turn, discussed through a critical review of the key literature on migration and development. I close the chapter by proposing a framework for the study of these issues within an integrated analysis of internal and international migration, embedded within the literature on transnationalism and social fields.

Chapter 3 focuses on the specific situation of Albanian migration and development. I follow a dual temporal and thematic line of inquiry. A brief historical account of both migration types is presented here, in order to make linkages to contemporary patterns and processes, not least to contextualise the large-scale migrations in the post-communist years. The latter also forms the heart of the discussion, itself structured around chronologies, figures, typologies and destinations for both international and internal migrants. I pay special attention to reviewing some key literature on Albanian migrants in Greece as the main destination country for this group generally, but also as the field of my research specifically. I round off with an analysis of the developmental effects of the linkages between both types of migration on Albania. Considering the fact that this book has come together more than three years after submitting my thesis for the doctoral degree, I deemed it necessary to update statistics presented in this chapter – where possible – with the most recent data. However, this does not affect the specific analysis in the book since the statistics are used to provide the overall background to the events.

Chapter 4 is the first of four findings chapters. I start by describing the patterns of internal and international migration as they take place in the research villages. This is followed by a thematic discussion of the differences between these two migration types in terms of the characteristics of participants, migration regimes, cost-opportunity structures, legality issues and socio-economic patterns. However, these differences are often blurred and substantial overlapping occurs. Thus, the links are potentially more important in exploring these two migration types as integral parts of household strategies. These linkages, especially their sequencing – internal then international, or vice versa – are mapped out accordingly. I conclude by pointing out some of the essential characteristics of both migration types and the ways they interact with one another as part of complex migratory trajectories.

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Chapter 5 carries forth the analysis, placed within the 'social fields' framework. Taking the reader with me on the journey from Devoll across the border to Thessaloniki, I examine issues of everyday life from the perspective of migrants in this international destination. These include aspects of identity such as ethnicity, gender, religion; migrants' employment; their living conditions and spatial diffusion in the city; as well as their thoughts about the future. Although various barriers are put in the way of migrants' incorporation into Greek society, they use a number of strategies to overcome difficulties and achieve their migratory objectives.

In Chapter 6, I move back across the border, this time to consider the combined impact of both internal and international migration on origin communities at the micro-level, i.e. on individual migrants and their families. I start by analysing the uses and effects of internal and international remittances. I continue with a discussion of how skills gained during migration are employed in Albania. Ideas and behaviours are examined in the subsequent section, especially regarding gender and generational roles and attitudes. I conclude with a discussion of some of the most important ways in which both migration types are interlinked.

In Chapter 7, I step up vertically in scale to examine the internal and international migration-development nexus at the next two levels. Analysing the impacts of migration and the resulting dynamics on local communities of origin and destination, I pay attention to financial transfers, agriculture, urbanisation and social remittances. At the macro-level, I provide a wider analysis of these issues and dynamics for the country as a whole, including the role of macro-level policies on migration and development. The last section presents a number of conclusions, which link, in turn, with the final chapter.

Here, in Chapter 8, I discuss the key findings of the research, drawing together the main conclusions and suggesting a number of policy and research recommendations. The strengths and weaknesses of this study, as well as potential areas of future research, are also outlined.

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