

## **Exit, vote and sovereignty: migration, states and globalization**

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### **ABSTRACT**

In this article I introduce a framework for understanding the political effects of globalization on labor. While the globalization literature is rife with references to the effects of sovereignty from global trade and capital networks, there is surprisingly little written about the effects of increased labor mobility on national sovereignty. To fill this void, I adapt Albert Hirschman's (1970) model to examine how exit might affect national voice in the context of free international migration. This adapted framework generates concrete expectations about how increased mobility affects both internal and external conceptions of sovereignty. In particular, increased mobility is shown to improve the responsiveness of governments to citizen demands. Thus, in contrast to the general consensus that labor/voters benefit least from increased globalization, I suggest that the problem facing labor is not globalization, per se. In a world characterized by relatively free mobility for other factors of production (and their owners), labor/voters appear to be handicapped by being prisoners of territory.

### **KEYWORDS**

Exit; globalization; Hirschman; migration; sovereignty; voice.

The global economy is leaving millions of disaffected workers in its train. Inequality, unemployment, and endemic poverty have become its handmaidens. Rapid technological change and heightening international competition are fraying the job markets of the major industrialized countries. At the same time systemic pressures are curtailing every government's ability to respond with new spending. Just when working people most need the nation-state as a buffer from the world economy, it is abandoning them. (Ethan Kapstein, 1996: 16)

Ethan Kapstein offers a familiar depiction of how globalization affects labor. Social, political and academic commentators tend to agree that

globalization undermines the economic and political power of labor; protests on the streets of Seattle and Prague (to name just two prominent examples) remind us of the unpopularity of globalization, generally. Allegedly, those citizenship qualities that are the pride of developed states (such as labor, health and environmental regulations) are being underbid and undermined by producers in the developing world. Though we – as consumers – are said to gain from globalization; we – as workers and voters – are seen to suffer.

Although the rhetoric about globalization and labor has grown exponentially in recent years, the nature of the relationship remains undertheorized. There is, of course, a large migration literature, but it concerns mostly migrant motives and supporting networks; citizenship, assimilation and identity; state migration controls; and the costs/benefits associated with each. In contrast to a deep and lively literature on the determinants and effects of global patterns of trade, production and capital flows, the literature on globalization and human mobility is remarkably thin.

Perhaps this should not surprise us. After all, contemporary levels of human migration pale in comparison with earlier periods and with the mobility levels of other factors, goods and services. In comparative terms, goods, services and investment portfolios all enjoy more freedom of movement than does today's man or woman on the street. Because labor markets remain the most secure bastion of national economic regulation, the globalization literature can afford to ignore them.

Yet things are bound to change. 'Immigration is set to be among the most – if not *the* most – controversial topics of the 21st century' (Wolf, 2004). The shrinking relevance of space and time increasingly lends itself to greater mobility across frontiers, while political developments in both the developed and the developing world are pushing migration issues to the front of the political agenda.<sup>1</sup> It is not without reason that the WTO introduced temporary migration to the international trade agenda (so-called Mode 4 trade).

Social scientists need an analytical framework for providing clear, testable hypotheses about the political effects of increased migration. This article provides such a framework: it demonstrates how increased human mobility can affect sovereignty in terms of both voice (within states) and relations among states (internationally).

The argument is divided into three parts. I begin with a broad review of the existing political economy literature as it applies to migration. This review emphasizes the lack of theoretical and analytical attention paid to the issue of human mobility and its effect on sovereignty (both internally and externally).

In the main body of the article I build on Albert Hirschman's (1970) influential 'Exit, Voice and Loyalty' model to create a framework for analyzing

the effects on sovereignty of increased human mobility. I divide this part into four sections. The first section provides a framework that resembles contemporary conditions: where exit functions as a residual to voice. The second section examines a more hypothetical situation, where exit can be understood as an alternative to voice. The third section provides a brief discussion about the role of loyalty in this context. Finally, the concluding section sketches a few historical examples to illustrate the model's explanatory purchase.

I conclude the argument by summarizing the rather controversial and somewhat counter-intuitive results generated by this framework. While there is a broad consensus that labor has benefited least from increased economic globalization, this framework suggests that increased globalization (into new realms) might actually benefit labor, as citizen-voters. In particular, governments are found to be more responsive to potentially mobile citizens.

Thus, migration reinforces traditional political cleavages and encourages new ones along mobility lines. To the extent that labor, as a class, is comparatively less mobile than capital, its political influence is limited by its inability to threaten exit. Labor's resistance to globalization may be derived from the fact that the benefits of free mobility have not been extended to most workers. Under contemporary conditions, some forms of labor wield more political influence because they enjoy greater opportunity of exit. By liberalizing international migration we can help to shrink these political inequalities across class lines and skill levels.

Before proceeding any further, two caveats are in order. First, much of this article is an attempt to discuss a hypothetical state of affairs. In it I will assume a world of free human mobility and ask: What political consequences might result? The framework is purposively general in the sense that it can be employed in any number of contexts: on migration from poor to rich states (globally), or among states that share relatively similar levels and forms of development (e.g. among member states within the European Union).<sup>2</sup> I recognize that the transition to this state of affairs is difficult to imagine, potentially costly, and maybe even unlikely.

Second, this article concerns the political effects of human mobility. I am aware that both the economic and social motives (and consequences) of migration are significant, and I do not mean to belittle them. As the next section will show, there is already a significant literature on the motivations for, and consequences of, migration. Nor do I intend to argue about the relative importance of political versus economic/social effects and/or their consequences. My simple intent is to map how states might react to increased migration: both toward its citizens and toward other states.

## I. MIGRATION LITERATURE

Until recently, modern students of International Political Economy (IPE) have not concerned themselves with labor issues. Denmark and O'Brien's (1997) survey of 200 IPE programs at various American and British universities did not reveal a single course dedicated to labor issues. Similarly, Leah Haus (1995) has documented both the importance of, and the lack of professional interest in, labor migration issues among IPE scholars. This lack of concern with labor is also evident in the burgeoning globalization literature.<sup>3</sup>

Still, there is a growing and important political economy literature on migration. This section reviews that literature in terms of economic and political approaches across three levels of analysis: individual, national, and international.<sup>4</sup> The review concludes that we still lack a general theoretical framework for analyzing the broader effects of migration on state sovereignty. In the remainder of the article I attempt to fill this gap by expanding on some of the most promising attempts reviewed in the section below.

### Economic literature

It is not uncommon to assume that economic factors are central to understanding the motives and patterns of migration. Indeed, there is a distinguished social scientific tradition that focuses on general, mostly ahistorical, arguments about the utility maximizing nature of migration. Formalized, these arguments usually assume that individuals maximize utility ( $U_i$ ) defined in terms of expected income ( $y_i$ ), place attributes ( $i = 0, 1, 2, \dots, p$ ), hours worked ( $h$ ) and amenities ( $a_i$ ). They then evaluate the expected utility of residing in different places over a given planning horizon (e.g. they compare the utility derived at their current location ( $U_0$ ) with the utility that can be derived from other locations, net the costs of migrating,  $c_i$ , between 0 and  $i$ ). The difference,  $\Delta_i$ , refers to the net gain in utility from migration. Utility-maximizing individuals migrate when  $\Delta_i > 0$ :

$$\Delta_i = U(y_0, h_0, a_0) - U(y_i - c_i, h_i, a_i).$$

More generally, these 'push – pull' theories perceive the causes of migration in terms of a combination of 'push' factors (e.g. demographic growth, low living standards, lack of economic opportunities, etc.) that impel migrants to leave a given country; and 'pull' factors (e.g. demand of labor, availability of land, promising economic opportunities, etc.) that attract them to a specific area/country.<sup>5</sup>

At the national level, a broad literature evaluates the economic costs and benefits for host and sending countries of immigration/emigration. In

both Europe and the United States, there have been exhaustive empirical studies documenting the effect of immigration on welfare costs, local labor markets, as well as national economic conditions.<sup>6</sup> Others have focused on the effects of emigration on sending countries: for example, via the brain drain, the effects of remittances, or the more general economic effects of emigration.<sup>7</sup>

In contrast to the lower levels of analysis, there are few economic studies of the international effects of labor mobility. Indeed, for much of international economics, labor mobility is seen as an integral part of international trade theory. Standard trade models, resting on the work of Heckscher, Ohlin and Samuelson, begin by assuming that labor is immobile across countries, and hold that labor-abundant countries will export those goods that are relatively intensive in the production of labor. In a sense, these countries are seen to export labor: the trading of goods substitutes for the trading of people.

A notable exception to this lack of interest in the systemic effects of free labor mobility is Hamilton and Whalley (1984). On the back of a series of rather heroic assumptions, Hamilton and Whalley estimated that a world with free labor mobility could anticipate enormous efficiency gains and significant distributional improvements among the world's richest and poorest countries. Recent updates of their work confirm that the potential global rewards from free migration today are enormous, and may be as high as 55 trillion US dollars (Moses and Letnes, 2004, 2005)! Similarly, a recent study presented to the WTO suggests that a very small increase in the developed world's immigration of both skilled and unskilled temporary workers (equivalent to 3% of their workforces) could generate an increase in world welfare of over \$150 billion per annum (Winters, 2002).

### Political literature

Political motivations for individual migrants are easily incorporated into the push – pull models introduced above: the amenities attribute ( $a_i$ ) can include any number of political, natural and social factors: climate, natural environments, schools, hospitals, security and policing, cultural facilities, political freedoms, etc. At this level, the economic/political distinction loses much of its utility.

At the national level, we can distinguish between receiving and sending country effects. Most of the new political literature on migration focuses on receiving country effects – if very narrowly defined: they concern national variations in migration control systems, and their effectiveness. National controls regimes can be seen as part of larger nation-building projects (Torpey, 2000), the result of domestic interest group pressures (Money, 1998, 1999), the rights-based politics of liberal states (Hollifield, 1992a), state interests – broadly defined (Weiner, 1985; Zolberg, 1981), or changes in

the international system (Guiraudon and Lahav, 2000; Hollifield, 1992b; Sassen, 1996). There are also several studies that consider the effect of migration on assimilation, national identities and conceptions of citizenship (e.g. Honig, 2001; Joppke, 1998, 2000; Soysal, 1994). There are also studies that see migrants as a surplus pool of labor (an industrial reserve army) that is more exploitable politically, as it is unregulated, non-unionized, and cheap (Castles and Kosack, 1973; Piore, 1979). In addition, it is possible to generate expectations about state responses to migration flows based on Tiebout's (1956, 1961) influential work on political consumers who vote with their feet.<sup>8</sup>

But this literature is not confined to the receiving side of the migration equation. There is a smaller literature that aims to map and explain the nature of exit (emigration) restrictions across time and space (Dowty, 1987; Inglés, 1963). There is also a growing literature on the effects of emigration from developing countries (for a review, see Skeldon, 1997). Finally, Albert Hirschman's (1970) exit and voice model has been used as a starting point for several *ad hoc* studies of national responses to emigration. This literature becomes my point of departure in the section that follows.

At the international level, it is possible to find work that question why migrants lack the sort of international regime that protects the movement of goods and capital (Bhagwati, 1984; Zolberg, 1992). Most recently, Meyers (2004) offers a theoretical approach to making sense of immigration policy, internationally. There is also a small literature that addresses international human mobility in normative terms, in light of universalistic conceptions of justice.<sup>9</sup> But there is a shortage of work that considers how international, or inter-state, relations might be affected by increased human mobility.

To conclude this review, the political economy literature on migration has been mostly concerned with specific policy responses to migration flows in a few important states. Although this literature helps us to understand why states impose the control regimes they do, it does not help us to think about the *broader* political consequences of increased mobility (either for the sending country; the host country; or for the system at large). The foundations for a broader theoretical edifice can be found in Hirschman's work, but the studies informed by this framework have been (thus far) empirical and *ad hoc*.

## II. A NEW FRAMEWORK

Three decades ago, Albert Hirschman rocked the 'certain timidity' of both economists and political scientists by comparing and contrasting the forces of recovery most common to each discipline. His 1970 book, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*, challenged us to consider the apparently irrational behavior of boisterous consumers, and the role of exit in American party politics. After briefly introducing

Hirschman's argument, I move to apply his model to states (rather than firms). In doing so, I develop a set of expectations about state behavior in attracting, and maintaining, citizen support. Indeed, if people become more mobile between states, economic models based on firm-customer behavior may enjoy increased salience in the study of international politics.

Hirschman's central argument can be traced to two competing 'forces of recovery' by which firms and organizations learn of deterioration, and correct it before becoming obsolete: exit and voice. Exit, he suggests is neat (one either leaves or one does not), impersonal, and indirect, and belongs to the field of economics; voice is messy, personal and direct, and belongs to the study of politics (*ibid.*: 15–6).

Hirschman expects only one mechanism to dominate in an organization (either voice or exit), and he does not want to argue that firms/organizations can define an optimal mix of exit and voice strategies (*ibid.*: 33). Rather, organizations need to rely on both mechanisms, at different times, in order to ensure that they can respond to constituent dissatisfaction.

For consumers, exit is the main means for responding to a decline in the quality of a firm's product. For citizens, voice is the main recourse for responding to a decline in the quality of their state's policies (i.e. citizenship). As human mobility increases we can expect to see states acting more like firms in a competitive market: they will face citizens who wield both voice and exit. However, to conceive of state action in this way, we must first acknowledge two very restrictive (if common) assumptions: (1) citizens/voters act like consumers; and (2) states act like firms.

It is not uncommon to think of voters/citizens as consumers, at least since the work of Joseph Schumpeter (1942) and Anthony Downs (1950). At one level, the notion that voters are generally motivated by self-interest (and economic self-interest in particular) is as old as the study of political behavior itself. Still, it is an assumption fraught with difficulties. First of all, the resources available to consumers and voters are not the same. While the purchasing power of consumers is allowed (even encouraged) to vary, we tend to expect the influence of voters to remain fixed at the 'one person-one vote' level. Second, several students of voter behavior have proposed strong empirical and normative objections to this assumption. Finally, I do not think that it is entirely reasonable to expect the potential migrant to have the same cold/calculating attitude to social uprooting as he/she does when changing his/her brand of toothpaste. By modeling citizen/voters as consumers, I do not mean to suggest that 'non-rational' factors are not influencing migration patterns.

Similar caveats should be applied to the second core assumption: that states act like firms. Here, too, the assumption is not uncommon. Clearly, the growing popularity of game-theoretic applications to state behavior implicitly accepts this assumption: its introduction to the social sciences

was through the study of strategic firm behavior. But there are also a number of ways that states are not like firms, and we should be vigilant in reminding ourselves about these differences. Obviously, firms hire and fire workers, and are not usually required to consider the social consequences (externalities) of their decisions; states do not enjoy this luxury. Firms profit-maximize; it is debatable whether states maximize any one thing. Finally, although firms must be responsive to consumer demands, they are – in the end – responsible to their shareholders/owners. To whom are the shareholders politicians must answer?

Aware of their inherent problems, I employ these assumptions cautiously. At a certain point, the analogies to firms and consumers break down, and we must be careful not to push them too far. In the final analysis, however, two factors argue for their inclusion: (1) their common employment elsewhere; and (2) the problems associated with them are not crippling enough to inhibit our careful progress. In the end, I believe that the benefits associated with these sorts of assumptions (e.g. parsimony and intuitive grasp) outweigh their apparent costs.

In the argument below, I follow Hirschman's presentation of the relationship between exit and voice, and extend its implications to states. This relationship can be presented in three phases: exit as a residual to voice; exit as an alternative to voice; and the role of loyalty in this context. I conclude with a couple of brief examples of how the model can be employed.

#### **Exit as a residual to voice**

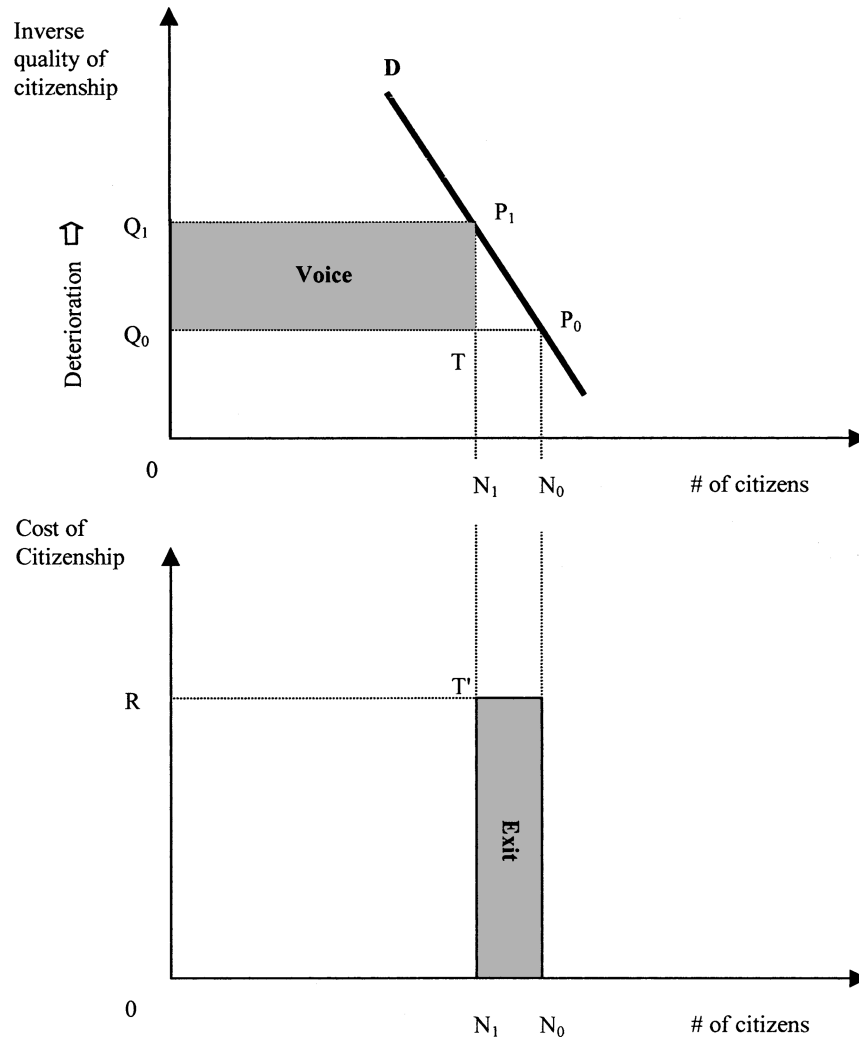
Trained as an economist, it is not surprising that Hirschman begins by assuming that constituents will choose exit before voice. When facing a deterioration in product quality, the first response of the customer is to seek alternative products. Those customers that remain (despite the quality deterioration) have an opportunity to voice their dissatisfaction. The effectiveness of this voice is seen to be a function of the customer's quality-demand elasticity: the more costly the exit option, the larger the role for voice. Thus, in applying this framework to states and citizens it makes more sense to think of exit as a residual to voice (because the cost of exit is so high).

We can adapt Hirschman's model to states, by reproducing his quality demand graph with one that is aimed at interpreting citizen demand for variations in citizenship quality.<sup>10</sup> This is done in Figure 1.

Because this figure is similar to a traditional demand curve, only different, I will describe it in some detail. The upper part of the diagram is a traditional demand curve, where the cost of citizenship has been replaced by the quality of citizenship (depicted inversely, in order to maintain the traditional downward slope of the demand curve).



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**Figure 1** Inelastic quality demand for citizenship.

The demand curve, **D**, represents the quality-elasticity of demand (or the exit response of citizens to a deterioration in the quality of citizenship). It falls because I assume that a drop in the quality of citizenship will result in a decline in the demand for that citizenship, as residents will seek exit.<sup>11</sup> As with traditional demand curves (which assume that quality remains unchanged when the effect of price changes on demand are considered), we can assume that the 'cost' of citizenship will remain unchanged while we consider the effect of quality changes on citizenship demand.

The quality of citizenship,<sup>12</sup>  $Q_c$ , can be understood in terms of a function of the benefits of citizenship (e.g. jobs, wealth, influence, size, role in the world, social and economic ideology, etc.) as well as the opportunity costs associated with choosing another state's citizenship.<sup>13</sup> The cost of citizenship,  $C_c$ , is similarly understood as a function of the costs of citizenship – in both economic and less tangible means (e.g. greater responsibilities, military draft, community service, larger tax burden, etc.) as well as the opportunity costs associated with choosing citizenship elsewhere. Along the horizontal axis we find the quantity equivalent for states: the number of citizens or residents in a country. The demand curve reflects the quality-demand elasticity.<sup>14</sup>

To interpret the figure, we can begin by assuming that the quality of a given state's citizenship declines from  $Q_0$  to  $Q_1$ . Say, for example, political freedoms are drastically curtailed. The figure helps us to map out the effects of this change on citizen and state behavior. Presumably, the demand for citizenship will drop with the decline in quality, and this fall in demand translates into emigration. (Similarly, an increase in the quality of citizenship will provoke immigration.) Thus, in Figure 1, outward migration is measured in terms of the decline in the number of citizens (e.g.  $N_0 - N_1$ ). The gray area marked 'Voice' can be used to capture the amount of voice (of whatever type) that is generated in response to that decline in citizenship quality. Obviously, the larger the size of this area, the more significant the potential voice in correcting for the decline in citizenship quality. Thus, in response to a drastic curtailment of political freedoms, citizens can choose voice or exit, depending on their quality demand elasticities. States can be assumed to monitor voice for dissatisfaction to changes in citizenship quality.

The lower part of the diagram reflects the potential costs of exit, in terms of the 'revenues' (broadly defined) that are lost by the state as the result of emigration, sparked by a decline in the quality of citizenship. (Similarly, an increase in the quality of citizenship will induce revenue gains.) When citizenship quality drops from  $Q_0$  to  $Q_1$ , and assuming that the unit cost of citizenship does not change, the total revenue loss to the government is depicted in the 'Exit' rectangle. Of course, these revenues are set arbitrarily in the diagram; their significance lies only in their comparative utility, when we contrast these revenues to those lost under other conditions.

This model assumes that states calculate revenues equally for all citizens. In practice, of course, states generate more revenues from some citizens than others. In both political and economic terms, the revenue-losses from an exiting unskilled labor might not compare to the anticipated losses of a fleeing CEO. Neither are these sorts of differences unique to the revenue side of the model: it is possible that states value individual voices differently as well. These are some of the conceptual difficulties that any

framework of human mobility must address. As a first approximation, however, we can adopt the assumption of standard revenues. In the next section I will relax this assumption.

In effect, this first model is rather characteristic of today's international conditions.<sup>15</sup> Because of the very high cost of exit, the quality demand curve for citizenship is inelastic. Under these conditions, effective voice becomes essential for (the vast majority of) citizens who remain: it is their only avenue for addressing grievances. States rely on voice, in various guises, as the sole mechanism for monitoring citizen discontent. To the extent that states act as *de facto* monopolies, offering few realistic alternatives for dissatisfied citizens (as consumers), then citizens – in effect – become locked into the citizenship where they were born. On the margins, we can still expect some exit to result from a deterioration in citizenship, but most citizens will remain at home. A citizen's likelihood of affecting state policy in the wake of a decline in citizenship quality depends largely on the size of the polity, as well as the nature and effectiveness of existing domestic and cultural institutions to channel voice (i.e. the bread-and-butter issues of political science).

#### Exit as an alternative to voice

In a world without barriers to human mobility, we can expect that exit will become a more likely (if costly<sup>16</sup>) option for disgruntled citizens: it becomes an alternative to voice. In this depiction, one of the main constraints on quality demand elasticity is relaxed, and we can expect that the exit-response to a decline in citizenship quality will increase. Under these conditions, both citizens and state enjoy increased opportunities (and corresponding costs).

Figure 2 depicts the conditions of this hypothetical world. An increase in the elasticity of the quality demand for citizenship is depicted by the shift in demand curves from  $\mathbf{D}$  to  $\mathbf{D}^*$ . ( $\mathbf{D}$  is the demand curve in Figure 1.) As in the previous figure,  $\mathbf{D}^*$  corresponds to a decline in citizenship quality (from  $\mathbf{Q}_0$  to  $\mathbf{Q}_1$ ). The effect of this deterioration in quality (in the new context) is a decline in the citizenship population (from  $N_0$  to  $N_1^*$ ). The more elastic quality demand curve,  $\mathbf{D}^*$ , shrinks the relative effect of voice and significantly increases the revenue effect of exit (compared to  $\mathbf{D}$ ).

In this model, exit is no longer subordinate to voice, but can be interpreted as a real alternative to voice.<sup>17</sup> The citizen, in effect, has a new channel through which to respond to deteriorations in citizenship quality. Obviously, this new (exit) option complicates the citizen's utility function, as he/she must now decide whether to leave (and this decision depends critically on several factors, including the citizen's evaluation of his/her prospects for effective voice).<sup>18</sup> If a citizen believes that his/her voice will be effective in correcting a decline in citizenship quality, he/she may postpone

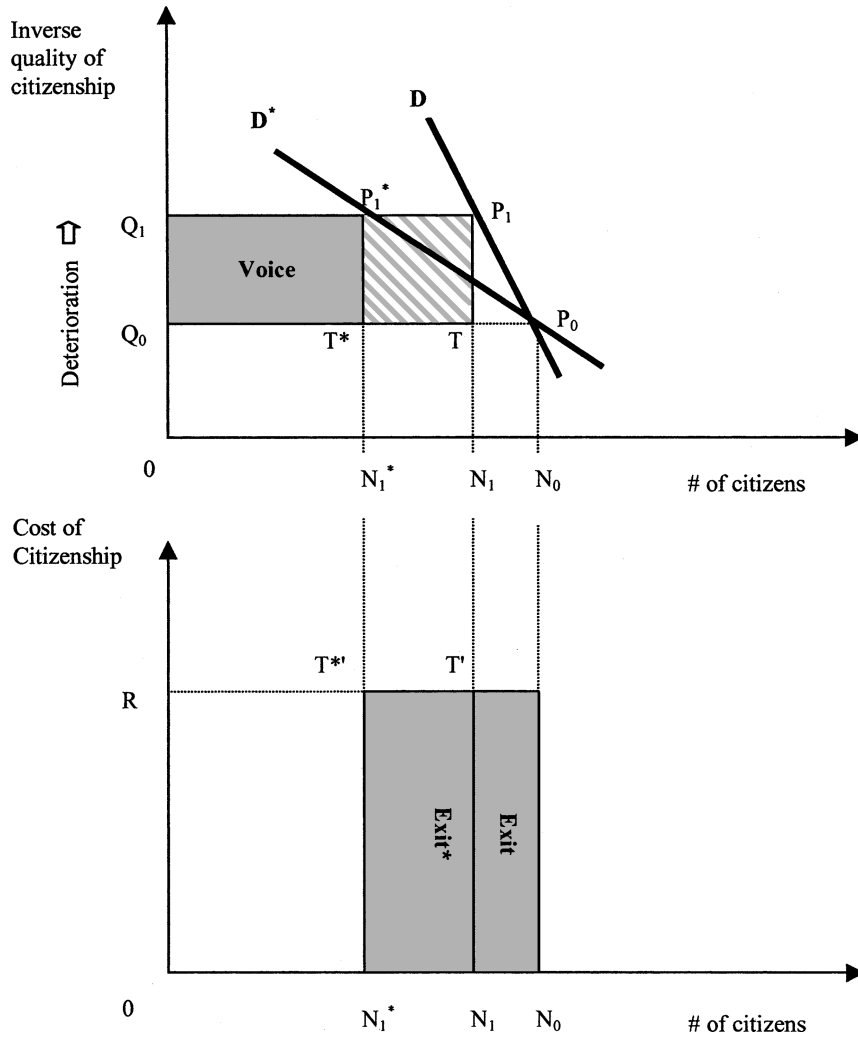


Figure 2 Elastic quality demand for citizenship.

exit. Thus, the quality elasticity of exit (demand) depends both on larger structural considerations (e.g. globalization of labor), as well as the ability and willingness of citizens to use the voice option.

With a real threat of exit, and the revenue losses it incurs, states are forced to respond to lapses in citizenship quality or risk losing power (read people and money). By comparing  $D^*$  with  $D$ , we see that there is an important connection between the citizen's quality elasticity of demand and the effectiveness of voice and exit on the actions of states. Like firms

in Hirschman's model (1970: 23–4), we can summarize the state's response in terms of a discontinuous three-value function:

1. for a small drop in revenues, states will not need to respond/recover;
2. for an intermediate drop in revenues, states can respond/recover fully;  
and
3. for a large drop in revenues, the state will not be able to respond/recover.

Let us examine these responses more closely.

*Response 1.* If citizenship quality demand is highly inelastic (as it is today, and as depicted in Figure 1), the state's potential loss of revenue from exit will be quite small. States rely mostly on voice for gauging citizen dissatisfaction. As a result, states may not receive enough information to respond effectively to a lapse in citizenship quality. These lapses if uncorrected, may eventually lead to the state's demise.<sup>19</sup>

*Response 2.* If the quality elasticity of demand is neither too large nor too small, we can expect that states will receive appropriate and effective signals – and have time with which to react to them. Or, as Hirschman put it:

For competition (exit) to work as a mechanism of recuperation from performance lapses, it is generally best for a firm [state] to have a mixture of *alert* and *inert* customers [citizens]. The alert customers [citizens] provide the firm [state] with a feedback mechanism which starts the effort at recuperation while the inert customers [citizens] provide it with the time and dollar cushion needed for this effort to come to fruition.<sup>20</sup>

Under the conditions that lead to Response 2, states can expect a mixture of these alert and inert citizens. Alert citizens will provide information about policy failures; inert citizens will provide the state with a cushion of time and resources. This is the flip side of Hirschman's notion of organizational slack. Given the costly nature of exit, and the role of loyalty in the modern state (see below), it is possible that this second, optimal, response will be characteristic of a world with free human mobility.

*Response 3.* If, however, quality demand is highly elastic, the revenue shock may be so large (and quick) that states will not have time to respond: the state risks a drastic and immediate outflow of resources. In the face of significant emigration shocks, policy-makers risk ruling over empty states before they have an opportunity to respond to a deterioration in citizenship quality.

Thus, by imagining a world with free human mobility, we can use this framework to generate three explicit expectations about the effects of migration on political sovereignty. First, citizens will enjoy increased influence on issues of internal sovereignty (while the role of voice has shrunk, they now have access to the threat of exit for articulating dissatisfaction).

Second, in response to the increased empowerment of citizens, states themselves need to become more responsive to citizen demands – failure to do so effectively can lead to serious resource and legitimacy losses. Finally, and as a consequence of the first two expectations, we should see states begin to compete with one another in attracting mobile citizen resources (like firms in a competitive marketplace).

There is a second, less speculative, means of interpreting Figure 2. Rather than assuming an aggregate shift to  $D^*$  in the context of free human mobility, we might assume that citizens meet, in effect, different quality demand functions.<sup>21</sup> Most of the resident population may face rather steep (inelastic) demand curves because of international norms that prohibit immigration (e.g.  $D$ ). However, some citizens may enjoy access to markets that are more integrated: they face a more elastic quality demand curve (e.g.  $D^*$ ). For these citizens, voice plays a relatively smaller role in their response to policy dissatisfaction. Their threat of exit carries with it significant revenue flight ( $Exit+Exit^*$ ). If strategically inclined, these citizens can serve a potent mix of political influence: voice mixed with a strong threat of exit. Other citizens, who do not have a real threat of exit, must channel their dissatisfaction through various forms of voice articulation (e.g. voting, protests, corporatist influence, etc.).

State responses to this type of citizen variation will be similar to the aggregate ideal types sketched above. For most citizens, states will be unable to efficiently monitor their dissatisfaction. Even in democratic states, the voice-recovery mechanisms become increasingly ineffective with time. In short, states lack effective responses to those citizens who do not have recourse to exit (Response 1). Alternatively, states are not able to respond quickly enough to the dissatisfied citizen who attaches little cost to exit (Response 3).

States can respond most effectively to the signals sent by citizens who combine voice and exit strategies (Response 2). The citizens' threat of exit in the long run signals to the state the seriousness of the dissatisfaction and provides it with a time and resource cushion in which to respond. Citizen voice provides the state with unambiguous information about what needs to be changed.

This discussion implies that increased migration affects two important political cleavages. First, at the most general level, we can expect freer migration to increase the influence of voters relative to what Sassen (1996) refers to as the economic citizenry – or mobile capital owners, who already enjoy the threat of exit. Second, we can expect new cleavages to develop among voters facing different opportunities for migration. In short, the opportunity for exit translates into political capital.

To conclude, this interpretation of Figure 2 suggests that the state will respond with different levels of effectiveness to the dissatisfaction articulated by different citizen groups. Most strikingly, potentially mobile citizens have

a clear advantage in articulating their dissatisfaction with a deterioration in citizenship quality. (Inversely, citizens without access to migration risk being ignored.) Relatedly, states are expected to respond most effectively to the concerns of citizens who enjoy both voice and exit options for articulating dissatisfaction. States must concern themselves with the threatened revenue losses that result from emigration.

### **On loyalty**

Thus far I have only made brief references to the issue of loyalty. It is time to clarify the role of loyalty in this model, and its consequences for evaluating the exit-effect on voice in states with free labor mobility. After all, loyalty plays an essential role in the picture I have developed above; without it, many of the conclusions derived could not be sustained.

Because his primary concern is with consumer/firm relations, Hirschman assumes that voice is relatively costly when compared to exit; he believes that voice will become less effective where exit becomes a real and cheap alternative. If this were true, we might expect liberal democratic institutions (i.e. relatively effective institutional transmitters for voice) to become less important in a world with free labor mobility.<sup>22</sup> It is questionable, however, that this cost relationship (between exit and voice) is the same for dissatisfied citizens as it is for dissatisfied consumers. Arguably, the costs of exit are high enough (for social and personal reasons) that their negative effects on voice can be discounted.

My point is that loyalty can be understood as an important means of raising the costs of exit, thereby securing an important role for voice – even in a context characterized by a cheaper exit option. Loyalty – in the form of patriotism – is, of course, one of the modern state's strong suits. Thus, under conditions with a viable exit alternative, and where loyalty is a strong and real force, we can expect that the citizen's ability to influence policy outcomes will be stronger than under conditions where voice is the only means of responding to a qualitative change in citizenship. In all likelihood, a decrease in world migration controls will improve the responsiveness of governments to citizen demands.

### **Some examples**

Because the world today is characterized by restricted labor mobility, it is not easy to find empirical support for this type of argument. I am further handicapped by the inherent (space) limitations of an article format. Nevertheless, it is possible to illustrate the analytical purchase of these models by briefly mentioning three examples: the fall of the Berlin Wall; the threat of exit from white farmers in southern Africa; and a brief introduction to thinking about European history in this way.

## REVIEW OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

Following Hirschman's (e.g. 1992a, 1993) own example, we can consider the options facing an East German citizen in the fall of 1989. Dissatisfaction with the communist regime could be articulated in two ways: street demonstrations (as were common in Leipzig, Dresden, Berlin and other East German cities), or emigration (following the tens of thousands who had escaped to the West via a porous border with Hungary). For a variety of different reasons, East German citizens chose both, with significant political consequences. Because East Germans were welcomed in West Germany, the exit option became an important and real alternative to voice in articulating opposition to an unsatisfactory level of citizenship quality. The immediate threat of exit by large numbers of East German citizens forced the authorities to concede power. In a rapid series of responses to citizen voice and exit, the East German authorities tried to placate citizen dissatisfaction, but their response was too little too late, and the regime collapsed within a year.

Another example can be found in southern Africa today. In both Zimbabwe and South Africa important land reform programs have been hamstrung by the real threat of exit from white farmers, and the effective voice that has resulted. For example, in Zimbabwe, President Mugabe's reforms are aimed to acquire five million hectares of land from white commercial farmers and give it to poor black families. Likewise, the new democratic government in South Africa has promised to redistribute land from white to black farmers.

While there is significant political support for these reforms among the black majorities in both countries, the voice of a very small minority has been amplified by their real threat of exit: white farmers in both countries enjoy exit options to Britain (and elsewhere). In the face of deteriorating (for them) levels of citizenship (e.g. land reform), some white farmers leave, but many remain and voice effective demands. The effectiveness of these demands rests critically on their implicit threat of exit, and the loyalty it conveys.

In these two, very different, examples we see the way in which the threat of exit, combined with effective voice at home, can have a significant influence on policy outcomes. The examples are relatively unique in that both the white farmers in southern Africa and East German émigrés have/had the possibility of settling elsewhere. This makes their threat of exit real and effective.

More examples could be drawn from 19th-century European history, when international migration was not only legal, but encouraged. At the time, migration facilitated political and economic development on both sides of the Atlantic. While the positive political and economic influence of immigration is generally recognized in American history, it is less common to recognize the effects that massive emigration had on the sending countries. A great exodus of surplus labor from Europe to the New World



strengthened the political and economic power of the labor that remained. In contrast to today's perception that globalization is anti-democratic, late 19th-century globalization was concomitant with the extension of democratic suffrage and the development of the modern welfare state in Europe. The principle difference that separates these two periods of globalization is that people today are not free to migrate internationally.

### III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

While human mobility is on the rise, we lack a theoretical framework for analyzing the broader effects of migration on state sovereignty. In stark contrast to the proliferation of work on the sovereignty-effects of global capital, trade and investment flows, we lack a means for systematically analyzing the political effects of human mobility. This article has introduced a modified version of Hirschman's 'Exit, Voice and Loyalty' model to try and fill this void. Building on a series of simple assumptions about human and state behavior, this new framework provides us with clear, testable hypotheses about the effects of increased mobility on political sovereignty.

The framework itself was presented in three stylized forms. First, I suggested that exit could be interpreted as a residual to voice. Generally, this form is characteristic of political conditions today. In the second and third forms, exit is seen as an alternative to voice. I suggested there are two possible interpretations to this (latter) characterization: (1) a hypothetical context, where all citizens enjoy free mobility; and (2) a hybrid context, where different citizens face different citizenship quality demand curves. The latter is, perhaps, the most realistic interpretation, as it mirrors the way in which states today encourage some types of immigration, while deterring others. Together this framework, in its various forms, generates three types of lessons: bottom-up; top-down, and inter-state.

*Bottom-Up.* Increased mobility provides individual citizens with more influence on state policy outcomes. First of all, the effectiveness of voice increases (given the relative costs of exit and the existence of loyalty). In addition, citizens face more options with which to respond to a decay in citizenship quality. Although few citizens may actually choose to defect, the simple threat of exit can prove an effective constraint on over-zealous states. Indeed, should states remain unresponsive to the threat of exit, citizens will not be forced to suffer the consequences of ineffective voice: they can simply leave.

Implicitly, this framework offers one explanation for the growing citizen dissatisfaction with voice in most established democratic states (Pharr and Putnam, 2000). It would seem that many democracies are becoming increasingly callous to voice; they are unable to respond effectively to dissatisfaction expressed solely by voice. One reason for this may be that society's most privileged groups have captured the channels that broadcast

voice, alienating the larger citizenry. As exit today is mostly enjoyed by political and economic elites, free migration offers one way to settle the political score.

Finally, this framework suggests that there are significant political inequalities associated with varying levels of citizen mobility. Those citizens who enjoy greater mobility are shown to wield greater political influence. As this sort of inequality of opportunity was one of the main justifications for loosening national capital market regulations, it is curious to note the lack of support for deregulating stringent national labor market regulations.

*Top-Down.* This framework also generates lessons about the way in which states are expected to react to citizen influence in the context of freer human mobility. Generally, we can expect states to become more responsive to the citizen as voter/migrant. More importantly, states will find it increasingly difficult to pursue extremist policies. On the margins, totalitarian regimes should find it difficult to hold citizens captive, and will be unable to attract new citizens.

I draw this lesson cautiously. There is some question as to whether or not states might act to exploit specific demographic or policy niches. In a context of free human mobility, states might use hidden mechanisms to support self-selection and/or discourage the migration of certain sub-sets of labor (as can be seen in some 'exclusive' neighborhoods today). There is also a distinct possibility that states might try to attract citizens based on specific criteria like race, sexual preference, skills levels, religion, etc.<sup>23</sup> While this framework does not allow us to elaborate about these possibilities (or their likelihood); they should not be ignored.

One final lesson at this level concerns accountability. This framework suggests that states may be able to jettison many of the inefficiencies associated with today's democratic regimes (e.g. costly checks and balances), as citizens have a variety of means with which to respond to declining citizenship quality. In short, we might expect governance efficiency to increase in the new, more competitive, context.

*Inter-State.* As human mobility increases, we can expect interstate relationships to change as well. The lessons here follow directly from those described above. In particular, as states become concerned about losing attractive citizen stocks, we can expect them to compete with one another in offering more attractive citizenship bundles. Here the lessons are not unlike those being generated by the larger globalization literature. In the same way that states today compete by offering attractive investment havens for mobile capital, we might expect states in a free migration context to compete with one another for mobile citizens/labor. At any rate, citizen voice would be amplified, allowing it to be heard more easily (over the already significant voice of mobile capital) by national policy-makers.

In conclusion, this simple framework provides a strikingly optimistic picture of how globalization might actually benefit labor, as citizen-voters. In contrast to the general consensus that labor is hampered by increased globalization, a modified Hirschman approach suggests that the problem facing labor is not globalization, per se. In a world characterized by relatively free mobility for other factors of production (and their owners), labor appears to be handicapped by being a prisoner of territory.

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### NOTES

- 1 In the developed world, migration is discussed as a potential solution to the serious problem of a declining and ageing population (see, e.g., Turner *et al.*, 1998). In the developing world, migrant remittances outstrip official development assistance and have become one of the few dependable sources of development capital (see, e.g., Kapur and McHale, 2003).
- 2 While this type of generality is an asset in scientific modeling, it is a distinct liability in the world of politics. In proposing a theory that can embrace a larger sample of events, I expose myself to the usual hyperbole that accompanies the immigration debate in the developed world: free migration opens a *tidal gate*, allowing a *flood* of new immigrants that will *swamp* domestic economies and welfare policies in the richest states. While I do not share these anxieties (and question the assumptions they are based upon), I intend to set them aside for the time being. For further elaboration, see Moses (2005a). To address them here would lead us too far astray from the problem at hand. To see how this approach can be applied to European integration, see Moses (2005b).
- 3 The exception is Stalker (2000).
- 4 In focusing on the political economy literature, I do not mean to ignore the important work on the subject by demographers, anthropologists, sociologists, geographers or historians. Obviously, there is a large literature on migration and recent developments on two fronts offer some theoretical promise. In particular, a nascent but growing literature shows how social networks serve to smooth the hurdles along migration pathways and to channel resources along predictable conduits (e.g. Curran and Saguay, 2001; Massey, 1990; Massey and Garcia-España, 1987; Massey and Zenteno, 1999). By linking individual and household decisions to larger social structures, this literature helps to refine many of the individualist assumptions common to the more economic models reviewed below. With networks in place, the price/risk of migration for individuals drops, facilitating subsequent migration – widening the net. Similarly,

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new work on transnationalism documents the continued importance of identity in creating ethnic enclaves in receiving countries – enclaves that influence organizations, ideology and community in both host and receiving countries (e.g. Sassen, 1996; Schiller *et al.*, 1992; Skrbis, 1997).

- 5 The work of George Borjas (1989 and 1990) is exemplary.
- 6 For general accounts of the effect of labor migration on post-WWII European economies, see Kindleberger (1967), Böhning (1984), Hollifield (1992a), and Castles and Miller (1993). For the US case, see Simon (1989) and Borjas (1990).
- 7 Recent work in development economics suggests that the brain drain may be exaggerated. These revisionist studies argue that the prospect of emigration increases the incentive for individuals to acquire skills. Thus, developing countries may be producing a surplus of skilled residents (than would otherwise be the case without the potential for emigration), with important spill-over effects on the local economy. These domestic gains are complemented by a significant flow of homeward remittances from emigrants. In many cases, the size of these remittances dwarfs foreign aid, and represents a substantial source of development capital in poor countries (see, e.g. Kapur and McHale, 2003). For a review of the revisionist literature, see Faini (2005). For a more general review of the 'brain drain refrain' see Dowty (1987: 147–66). On the more general effects of emigration on development, see Massey (1988), Papademetriou and Martin (1991) and Skeldon (1997).
- 8 For a review of this very extensive literature, see Dowding *et al.* (1994).
- 9 Starting with Rawls' original position behind the 'veil of ignorance', many political and legal theorists have questioned the notion of national conceptions of justice, and have developed more universal theories of justice. Joseph Carens has systematically employed these conceptions to the study of migration issues. See, for example, Carens (1987, 1988a,b, 1991, 1992a,b). In addition, see several other contributions in Barry and Goodin (1992), and Chapter 8 in Weiner (1995) for an overview.
- 10 Like Hirschman, I assume this deterioration to be exogenous and could occur for any number of reasons. For Hirschman's graphical depiction, see Hirschman (1970: 130).
- 11 Given the likely role of loyalty in this context (see below), the demand curve will probably be broken up and curvi-linear. As Hirschman (1970: 90) suggests, there may be one demand schedule for the deterioration in quality (with low demand elasticities at the beginning, and high elasticities as we approach the exit point), and another demand curve for when quality returns.
- 12 Obviously, this attempt at capturing citizenship quality is a gross simplification. Not only is citizenship quality multidimensional, it is questionable whether we can make inter-personal comparisons about citizenship quality (as we do, for example, with television sets). Again, the demands of parsimony are my only defense.
- 13 In a later piece, Hirschman lists a number of public goods that might deter potential migrants from exit. These include national power, prestige, social justice, withdrawal from international conflicts, and respect for human rights and democratic liberties. See Hirschman (1981c: 263–4).
- 14 Of course, it is important to emphasize that there are several factors that affect an individual's quality demand elasticity, many of which will be discussed in more detail below. However, the main determinant today is national regulations that forbid free movement of labor. This means that the propensity to exit, given a deterioration in citizenship quality, is very low. Thus, the quality demand for citizenship today is quite inelastic. If these legal constraints were

- lifted, we can expect to see other factors affecting this elasticity, but it is not hard to imagine that the level of elasticity would be higher than it is today.
- 15 International law allows citizens free exit from a country, but does not grant the corresponding right of free entry into other countries. Even the right to 'leave any country, including his own' is not granted everywhere. See Weiner (1995: 444–5) for a description of various exit rules. As a result, the freedom to exit is mostly illusory.
  - 16 The question of cost is a complicated one. In one way, the cost of exit is smaller than the cost of voice, as the nature of the return to exit is fixed and known. The return on voice, however, depends on the effectiveness of the voice strategy, and is therefore more risky. For Hirschman, the costs of exit to the individual consumer are smaller than the costs of voice. See, for example, Hirschman (1970: 40). Later, Hirschman (1981a: 222) recognizes that he 'took the costlessness of exit too much for granted'. Obviously, when discussing migration as an exit option, we must presume that the perceived costs will be much higher than those facing a consumer deciding between different brands of detergent.  
 There is a third option that I will leave latent. There is real possibility that the dissatisfied voter will remain ambivalent and alienated, and might withdraw completely from the political realm. The option of detachment falls between voice and exit. Roger Ko-Chih Tung (1981) replaces loyalty with the notion of *autism*, or self-adjustment, to compensate for this possibility.
  - 17 In *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Hirschman assumed that there was an inverse (or see-saw) relationship between exit and voice, especially when the costs of exit were small. See also Hirschman (1992b: 91). Later (Hirschman, 1993), he modifies this position and recognizes cases where exit and voice can work in complementary, or collaborative, ways.
  - 18 In particular, we might expect the likelihood of exit to increase: (1) given the proliferation of alternative (substitute) states; (2) given the relative ineffectiveness of voice in the home state; (3) the larger the population of the home state; (4) the relative unimportance of citizenship issues to the individual citizen; and (5) the less developed are the cultural and institutional contexts for voicing dissatisfaction in the home state.
  - 19 It should be noted that these conditions hold irrespective of the state's institutional framework (e.g. democratic or totalitarian). Continued over-reliance on voice (without recourse to exit) means the effectiveness of this conduit will deteriorate with time.
  - 20 *Ibid.*: 24. The italics are his, the bracket substitutes are mine.
  - 21 In this discussion I assume that the demand for emigration is constant across groups. In practice, of course, the motivation and capacity for emigration can vary significantly across individuals and groups. These differences should have the same distributional consequences as those outlined below: more mobile groups can expect relatively more influence.
  - 22 This does not mean that the outcomes are necessarily less democratic. An argument can be made (and it is one to be taken seriously) that the most effective labor unions are those that are least (formally) democratic. The formal rules and institutions of democracy are not necessary for ensuring that the union's leadership pursues the rank-and-file's best interests. If the union leadership calls for a strike, and nobody shows up at the barricades, then we know that the union's leadership does not represent the rank-and-file's interests. In a world of global political and economic competition, this sort of 'voting with one's feet' may become all the more important, as it allows states to avoid many of

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the complicated (and inefficient) 'checks-and-balances' that are necessary in a no-mobility context, but costly in a context of inter-state competition.

- 23 For example, critics doubt whether the welfare state is commensurate with free immigration (e.g. Friedman, 1997). As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, free migration might induce an anti-welfare bias if we could expect that the wealthy (who would find migration easier) were likely to move from high- to low-tax regimes, while the poor (who would find migration harder) were likely to move from high- to low-welfare regimes. But I sincerely doubt the underlying assumptions of this argument (that rich, anti-tax, people are most likely to move in a world without migration restrictions). Neither is there much evidence of this anti-welfare state bias in the United States, where inter-state migration is highly developed. There is, after all, quite a bit of variation among US states (and, for that matter, European states) in the welfare options that states offer. Consider California: a huge magnet state for immigrants, yet it offers one of the US's most developed welfare states.

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