

Remittances and Development:
Local Empowerment and National Dependency

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Remittances, or money that is sent by a migrant to their home country, have been increasingly viewed as a potential way to economically develop low to middle income countries. Presently, the level of remittances sent is higher than that of official developmental aid. Considering that remittances are private capital utilized by locals, the intervention of a non-profit or large international financial organization to spur developmental projects is perhaps not needed. However, there are countless factors that prevent remittances from being the solution to global structural economic inequalities. Migration is not a uniform process nor accessible by everyone. Moreover, migration often occurs where there are already historically embedded power imbalances between countries. Finally, higher income for citizens does not automatically equate to greater or more sustainable economic development.

For countries that are reliant on remittances, there are a considerable number of tradeoffs associated with this inflow of capital. Firstly, although difficult to quantify on a large scale, remittances have thus far not significantly triggered national economic development. For low to middle income countries, remittances are primarily used for basic consumption such as food, education and health care. Secondly, the innate nature of remittances requires that origin countries relinquish power to immigration countries. Origin countries are often powerless to protect their citizens abroad as many find themselves victims of xenophobia and in precarious work conditions. Thirdly, a dependency on remittances reshapes migrants' national ties. Migrants are more likely to identify as transnational and may be reluctant to return to their origin country. Furthermore, remittances implant a social acceptance that success is only achieved through migrating, discouraging individuals to invest domestically or feel nationally tied. Finally, migration and the receiving of remittances radically impacts individuals differently based on their identity. Women are often unable to migrate and instead typically are the recipients of remittances. However, simply because they have a new access to capital does not eliminate structural barriers and therefore emancipate them from patriarchal structures, but rather may reinforce them.

This thesis project is organized in three parts. The first part provides an overview of remittances and why their ramifications are complex and controversial. The second and third part utilize Morocco and Tajikistan as case studies for a deeper analysis of the implications of remittances on development. Morocco and Tajikistan were selected because they are both post-colonial countries that maintain a high dependence on remittances. Morocco is one of the world's largest recipients of remittances and Tajikistan possesses one of the highest remittance-reliant GDPs in the world. Remittances are important to study because they illuminate how individual survival strategies can have detrimental implications for the nation. This paper argues that remittances provide some degree of individual empowerment but ultimately present problems of national dependency which hinder development. Morocco demonstrates that low to middle income countries must relinquish power over political, economic and social factors when remittances are encouraged. Tajikistan illustrates that remittances may be the most attainable solution for post-colonial countries, yet they provide longer-term problems that deeply entrench historical relations of dependency. Remittance-dependent countries must ultimately find a balance between encouraging their citizens to pursue the best economic opportunities through migration while also thinking critically about how retain the population to induce national economic growth.

PART I:
The Complex Relationship Between Remittances and Development:
The Tradeoffs Between Local and National Growth

In recent years, the topic of migration has received considerable attention by governments and non-profit organizations alike. One component that is particularly at the forefront of this discussion is remittances, or “money that is sent home to the country of emigration from a country of immigration” (Samers 2010, 327). Remittances can serve a variety of functions for recipients: income, insurance, or future savings (Yang 2011, 136). This influx of capital positions remittances to possess significant potential for overcoming economic challenges faced by low and middle-income countries. Since the 1990s, remittances have drastically increased and are now considered to be greater in quantity than that of foreign aid (Yang 2011, 129). In 2019 alone, low and middle-income countries received a combined \$550.5 billion from remittances (World Bank 2019). Whereas the total official international development assistance of 2018, the most recent data, was only \$167.8 billion (World Bank 2018). Presently, the greatest recipients of remittances are India, China, Mexico and the Philippines (World Bank 2019). The popularity of migration and remittances is typically a result of significant wage-differentials in origin countries (Yang 2009, 1).

However, remittances remain unique from other foreign exchange flows because they happen frequently and in small quantities. For example, El Salvadorians in Washington D.C. remitted an average of nearly \$300, 16.9 times per year (Yang 2011, 142). The degree to which one remits is also influenced by how often a migrant is able to return to their origin country. For example, Mexican migrants have some of the lowest rates of remittances because they have one of the highest temporary return ratios (Sana and Massey 2005, 518). As communities become established abroad and as remittances prove to provide a higher income, migration increasingly becomes politically, socially and economically entrenched for both sending and receiving countries. As a result of mutual dependence with destination countries and few other economic options, remittances are often encouraged by the governments of low to middle-income countries. Remittances are an important phenomenon to consider because they exemplify how individual survival strategies can perpetuate historically embedded power imbalances that are detrimental to development. Through an exploration of the ramifications of remittances, this paper argues that remittances provide some degree of local empowerment but ultimately create more challenges for national development due to increased dependence abroad.

Strengths and Limitations of Remittances as a Form of Development

The high level of remittances has created a discussion regarding whether governments can leverage such financial flows to spur development in low-income countries (LICs). The World Trade Organization, International Organization for Migration, and the European Union are strong proponents for harnessing remittances’ potential for development in LICs (Wise et al. 2013, 430). Such entities are advocates of remittances because by framing remittances as the catalyst for development, migration is depoliticized (Skeldon 2008, 4) and neoliberal values are furthered (Wise et al. 2013, 434). In other words, migration and remittances are viewed as a method to increase economic competition, empower individuals and positively affect national

income (Clemens 2018, 179). The relatively stable flow of remittances is also likely more resilient against market fluctuations than other forms of financial flows (Bobeva, 2005, 298).

While such optimists are eager to implement the necessary tools to encourage development, there have been limited ways in which such institutions can intervene in the process. One local and semi-successful operation was Mexico's 'Dos por Uno' program in which "the federal and state government matched each dollar that hometown associations contributed to development projects" that were funded by remittances (Grabel 2010, 93). Other government incentives to encourage remittances have included reduced transfer fees (Hamdouch 2005, 71), increasing the security of banks (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1125) and establishing resources abroad for migrants (Gallina 2006, 29). While these efforts have had some degree of successful local impact, creating the desired effect on a national scale remains challenging. This is both because significant government intervention is in opposition to neoliberal values and because the most economically poor cannot afford to migrate in the first place (De Haas 2009, 1271). Therefore, remittances may actually be a force that perpetuates inequalities, as they channel additional assets to those already relatively financially stable (Willis 2010, vi). The optimism to harness remittances' potential is still held by such Western forces, but precisely how to do so remains unclear.

The pessimists of the remittances debate are highly skeptical of the optimists' faith in neoliberalism's ability to encourage development. The encouragement of migration provides a source of cheap labor for high-income countries (HICs) while simultaneously bolstering their competitiveness (De Haas 2005, 1272). Therefore, migrants may actually be developing other countries rather than their own and solidifying power inequalities. Furthermore, pessimists point out that the desire to leverage migrants for development paints these individuals as 'heroes' when the vast majority of rhetoric and interaction with such migrants is extremely exclusionary and infused with social stigmas (Wise et al. 2013, 434). The optimist perspective generally overlooks how migrants are also up against powerful bureaucratic systems and therefore do not possess limitless mobility. Regardless of whether neoliberal values are the motivation for this development model, it is evident that migration presently is predominantly aiding HICs.

Pessimists further contend that optimists have greatly oversimplified the reality of remittances and the promise of neoliberalism. First, the number of migrants coming from LICs compared to HICs is relatively low (Skeldon 2008, 6). This reality, complicated with the unevenness of migration in the first place, exemplifies that migration and remittances may actually be more likely to sustain inequalities rather than deconstruct them. Moreover, receiving remittances does not necessarily translate to development. Optimists often assume that remittance recipients are entrepreneurs ready to devote their energy to tackling their country's developmental challenges. Pessimists remind the opposing side that remittances are private funds and this model puts the burden of development on migrants themselves (Bobeva 2005, 297; Skeldon 2008, 9). Possessing additional income may simply mean more financial independence (De Haas 2005, 1275). They are by no means required to utilize them for the sake of their community and regulation might be harmful to the process.

Remittances may also induce political passivity for recipients. Recipients may be discouraged from politically participating because they are increasingly indifferent to and less reliant on

public services due to higher incomes (Clemens 2018, 186). In other words, remittances may encourage a sense that individuals are responsible for their own economic challenges which, in turn, does not address the span of national challenges present. Additionally, as a country develops, remittances are likely to decrease (Bobeva 2005, 311). This makes remittances an unsustainable and unpredictable model for growth.

The notion of return migration further complicates the potential for remittances to act as an impetus for development. Optimists see return migration as having the ability to create an important link in development through the transfer of knowledge (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1411). From the pessimist's perspective, there is no guarantee that migrants are interested in returning to their origin country and willing to transfer the skills learned (Ellerman 2005, 621). Moreover, if an enormous number of migrants did return, they have the possibility to strain home country resources (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1413). This is especially concerning if migrants return by force rather than free will. Their families may not be prepared for their return and they may have no assets to return with, making them worse off than when they were abroad (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1413). While there are non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that assist with reintegration, pessimists remain skeptical that this is another tactic used by neoliberal powers to further their interests (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1427). However, pessimists see the opportunity for neoliberal governments to be of assistance in their ability to lower fees for sending remittances and decrease the bureaucracy and barriers tied to migration possibilities (De Haas 2005, 1279). Therefore, accessible circular migration may be a more realistic approach to development (De Haas 2005, 1281). While there are certainly endless possibilities for the injection of cash into resource poor areas, it is evident that there are also countless hurdles and complexities to consider for the sake of development.

The Economic Impact of Remittances: National and Local Implications

The economic impact of remittances is challenging to grasp because there are different implications on a national and local level. On a national scale, the economic significance of remittances has been largely inconclusive. This is likely because there is a high variance in remittances and that remittances grow alongside the number of individuals migrating (Clemens 2018, 199). Moreover, there has been no serious growth in GDP in the past 20 years for countries with high levels of remittances compared to countries that receive less (Clemens 2018, 180). For example, India, one of the top recipients of remittances, has demonstrated no causal national economic growth from remittances (Siddique et al. 2012, 1060). However, on a local level, many Indian households' livelihoods have improved as a result of an increased income (Siddique et al. 2012, 1060). It nonetheless remains difficult to fully understand the impact on household consumption levels because migrants are not a uniform category (Yang 2011, 137). Rather, they are influenced by various political, economic and social factors, making it difficult to quantitatively grasp the effect on a large scale. There is also a general fear that deep dependence on remittances, and therefore the transnational economy, will result in local hardship when countries of immigration receive high levels of unemployment or their own economic crises (Grabel 2010, 95). While there is no direct correlation with remittances and long term national growth, it is evident that greater economic impact occurs when remittances are being sent from HICs to LICs rather than between LICs (Grabel 2010, 99). These analyses reveal that remittances are an unreliable source for national economic growth.

On a local level, the new economics of labor migration (NELM) theory posits that remittances have been a substantial asset for households to overcome economic challenges. The NELM theory views the household as a singular decision-making unit and migration as a collective decision (Samers 2010, 63). According to this lens, by diversifying the employment and location of family members, economic risk is reduced (Sana and Massey 2005, 512). However, the NELM theory greatly oversimplifies the diversity of migrants and cultural influence. For example, female Dominican migrants are less likely to send remittances and instead settle abroad because they typically migrate independently (Sana and Massey 2005, 523). While it is therefore too presumptuous to claim that migration is the product of a collective household decision, remittances have nonetheless demonstrated significant, positive economic impact on a local level. In general, once essentials are met, remittances often go towards agriculture, debt alleviation, savings, and social capital (Grabel 2010, 92). Although these may not go directly toward national development projects, the influx of capital has the potential to create a ‘multiplier effect’ such as building better infrastructure and accumulating more human capital (Willis 2010, iv). The multiplier effect translates to positive indirect impacts on other community members that do not receive remittances. While this does not necessarily alter GDP, remittances certainly have the potential to institute beneficial change within the local sphere.

While the influx of capital delivered by remittances has bettered the individual lives of many, there are several unintended economic consequences that create further challenges to national development. First, remittances may create ‘public moral hazard.’ Governments of LICs may become less inclined to create needed public services and opportunities to develop human capital because remittances can or have been sufficiently filling this void (Grabel 2010, 88). This is exemplified in Tajikistan when the government ceased providing social services during a massive power outage in 2008 and remittances increased as a result (Hemmings 2010, 15). Second, remittances may perpetuate migration because they demonstrate that migration produces desirable outcomes, such as a higher income (Ellerman 2005, 619). National dependency on other countries is therefore likely to be reinforced. Finally, remittance recipients may be discouraged from working because they are already receiving a steady income, creating a ‘culture of dependence’ (Grabel 2010, 97). These possibilities illuminate that remittances can alter economic incentives which may have larger negative implications.

A conceivable way for remittances to have a greater national economic impact is through investment. Theoretically, if remittances are channeled into investment projects instead of simply consumption, national growth would be more prosperous. However, presently only a minute portion of remittances are utilized for investment purposes, such as buying land or starting a business due to a lack of knowledge and fear of losing savings from economic and political instability (Bobevea 2005, 299). This reality is complicated by the fact that when migrants do invest, it is typically a less rational decision compared to foreign direct investments because of emotional ties, making it difficult to advise and create helpful government policies (Bobevea 2005, 300). For example, a migrant may not maximize their investment because they are influenced by their social ties to their hometown. When governments have attempted to incentivize investment through premiums on deposits, tax breaks and access to free economic zones, it has mostly been ineffective (Bobevea 2005, 309). In the Dominican Republic, for example, remittance-recipients are actually associated with lower levels of entrepreneurship and

investment (Amuedo-Dorantes and Pozo 2006, 952). It is also speculated that such government policies may ultimately be detrimental to the investment environment because it prioritizes certain individuals (Bobeva 2005, 310). This provides further evidence of the difficulty to regulate remittances without imposing unintended consequences.

Social Remittances and Transnational Identities: The Exportation of Ideas and Culture

In addition to the monetary exchange of remittances, another impact of migration is ‘social remittances’. Social remittances are the exportation of ideas and culture to the origin country (Levitt 2011, 3). Such information can be physical, virtual or mediated through a designated individual (Isaakyan and Triandafyllidou 2017, 2798). The level of available technology increases possibilities for social remittances now more than ever (De Haas 2005, 1273). This notion is an important factor for development because such information inherently influences how individuals perform and function. For example, social remittances may impact ideas of gender and marriage. The cultural norms of a migrant’s destination may shape their idea of family size and gender roles (Levitt 2011, 4). This has the possibility to either reinforce ideas or create space for more autonomy, especially for non-migrating women. Moreover, social remittances can have a significant influence on children. With a family member abroad in a HIC, there may be a shift in desires toward greater consumption, Western ideals, and migration as well (Isaakyan and Triandafyllidou 2017, 2789). For example, evidence indicates that beauty standards of African immigrants in Europe changed to fit European standards of attractiveness (Toselli et al. 2016, 13). These desires have palpable implications on the social infrastructure and community expectations for origin countries, further complicating the progression of national development.

The tangible impact of social remittances and development is apparent in the relationship between Dominican migrants in Boston and their home communities. Dominicans were successful in not only fostering community amongst other migrants but also allowing space for cultural exchange with others through the organization of baseball events (Levitt 2011, 10). As a result of these events, the Dominicans were inspired to build a similar sports complex at home (Levitt 2011, 10). Without this experience abroad, they would have likely not been inspired to build it. Therefore, new ideas of community participation and organization enabled the Dominicans to create an impactful community project at home. However, social remittances can also lead to tensions. For example, some non-migrants were frustrated with the sports complex project because it felt frivolous when other basic necessities were not being met (Levitt 2011, 15). In another example, the Dominicans in Boston pooled their money and sent a firetruck home because they were eager to assemble a firefighter team. However, with differing understandings and visions for the operation, frustration ensued and the project was never fulfilled (Levitt 2011, 17). Social remitters can therefore feel powerless when they are unable to physically be present to translate their visions for development (Isaakyan and Triandafyllidou 2017, 2791). This example illuminates how social remittances can simultaneously be a powerful catalyst for development but also create problems regarding the vision of the home community and ideas of development.

While social remittances directly transfer culture and ideas, transnational identities are formed as a result. In particular for individuals who repeatedly migrate and return home, ideas of ‘origin’

and ‘destination’ become increasingly blurred (De Haas 2005, 1273). Transnational identities are an important consideration for development because they shape the capabilities of an individual. For example, it can be difficult for a return migrant to re-embed oneself or feel a sense of belonging due to a new sense of identity (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1414). Community acceptance is often based on whether migrants are deemed to have had a ‘successful’ experience abroad (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1417). A sense of belonging is likely to impact whether the migrant is able to easily transition home and therefore their interest in investing in their community (Van Houte and Davids 2008, 1413). The emotional well-being and experience abroad considerably influences not only what migrants remit, but what they bring home.

Labor Reallocation and Family Reorganization: The Impact of Remittances on Those ‘Left Behind’

Migration intrinsically impacts families and communities. The loss of an individual’s presence creates the necessity for labor reallocation within a family, or the compensation and reorganization to accommodate for the deficit of labor (Lenard and Strachle 2010, 287). Labor reallocation has significant possibilities concerning gender norms. Considering that the majority of migrants are men, women are more likely to hold an autonomous position within the household as a result of this migration. However, in order for this to occur, strict gender norms must exist. For example, in agricultural communities where women already performed the same task as men, labor reallocation did not change women’s individual power (Lenoël and David 2019, 126). Instead, women continued to perform the same duties, but were burdened with more work.

The loss of labor alongside the introduction of remittances impacts the degree to which family members are motivated to work. For example, the presence of remittances may actually discourage women from entering the labor force in the first place because it increases their reservation wage (Lenoël and David 2019, 127). While this reality may appear discouraging for the feminist agenda, it is important to consider that entering the labor force does not necessarily equate to female empowerment everywhere. For example, in Morocco, married women with migrant husbands are unlikely to enter the labor force because traditionally the man provides financially and there are limited opportunities for women (Lenoël and David 2019, 129). This case highlights that local context must be considered and that the presence of remittances does not necessarily address structural forces that are keeping individuals from labor force entry. Labor reallocation and remittances have the potential to enhance family life but it does not automatically lead to empowerment. This reality is important to acknowledge when considering the capacity remittances have to create progressive norms.

In addition to the relationship with norms and the labor market, remittances also influence cultural understandings of family organization. Cape Verde is a prominent example of this phenomenon. The majority of the population lives abroad and nearly every person has a relative that is a migrant (Åkesson 2009, 384). Because of the prevalence of migration, family reorganization has become a national experience. In particular, migration has influenced marital trends. Because of the high number of individuals living abroad, people are increasingly avoiding marriage because relationships with lifelong partners are more difficult to maintain. This has led to increased sexual behavior among the youth (Åkesson 2009, 389). As a result of

these changing norms regarding trust and relationships, remittances are progressively being sent to parents instead of partners (Åkesson 2009, 391). Moreover, because of these shifting ties, people are more likely to settle abroad and stop sending remittances altogether (Åkesson 2009, 392). This case exemplifies how migration and remittances are deeply tied to social norms. These will therefore need to be examined within their contexts in order to fully understand national development possibilities.

Another form of family organization migration impacts is the potential capabilities of children. The loss of a parent and the necessity to reorganize the family can lead to a deterioration of mental health for children (Tang 2017, 91). As previously discussed, children may be less interested in investing in their home communities if migration is a popular path (Lenard and Straehle 2010, 287). If children do not see a future for themselves as a result of these factors, they are more likely to exhibit behavioral problems and delinquency (Tang 2017, 91). This reality is especially prevalent in China where there are currently 61 million children left behind from migration (Tang 2017, 90). An analysis of this particular situation has not shown an indication that remittances can offset the negative consequences of the loss of a parent (Tang 2017, 103). However, the care of extended family members has been an important tool to combat such negative implications. The situation in China exemplifies how meaningful familial ties can be priceless and therefore not replaced by the capital gain of remittances. The familial implications of migration illuminates how remittances create new complexities that do not necessarily increase the capabilities of a population, despite higher levels of income.

Conclusion

Remittances and migration are complex forces. The literature provides ample evidence that they have unlimited potential to create newfound development in LICs. However, when enacted in reality, it is unlikely that remittances can successfully be harnessed for national development, despite government regulation. Culture, history, resources, and infrastructure must all be acknowledged when understanding the potency of remittances. Individuals do not have equal opportunities to migrate nor does the influx of capital immediately translate to development. While it is best to expect that the greatest impact of remittances will arise within the local sphere, the unintended consequences and complexities of remittances will likely exacerbate inequality and dependency on migration on a national scale. The neoliberal model of remittances enables better livelihoods of some but creates a sense that individuals are responsible for their economic success, ignoring the complexities of how identity pre-positions individuals. Considering that remittances are utilized as a means for economic survival, it is counter-intuitive for governments to expect they will be utilized for national investment. Beyond the economic lens, additional opportunities for remittances to spur local development include social remittances. The exchange of information and ideas has the capacity to initiate projects for community growth. The ramification of transnational identities, labor reallocation, and changing family circumstances, however, are likely to create difficulties for the implementation of such projects. Ultimately, individual survival tactics are not a sustainable model for national economic growth, as remittances are only likely to further entrench international dependency.

PART II:
Morocco's Structurally Embedded Migration: Relinquished Power for Stability

Morocco's geographical location and history provide fertile ground for migration. Presently, Morocco is one of the largest sources of emigration (Berraine et al. 2015, 503), and, of low and lower-middle income countries, it was the fourth-largest recipient of remittances in the world in 2003 (Kusunose and Rignall 2018, 415) and the eleventh in 2018 (World Bank 2018). Remittances constitute over 7% of Morocco's GNP and out of its population of 34 million, 4 million individuals live abroad (Berraine et al. 2015, 503). The country's close physical proximity to the powerful and wealthy countries of Europe also makes migration accessible (de Haas and Vezzoli 2013, 1053). Such high levels of mobility are a result of a history of colonialism and the Moroccan government's encouragement of remittances due to its own economic instability. The majority of migrants are men in their late 20s seeking to improve the standard of living for their families (Sadiqi and Ennaji 2004, 64). More than half of migrants remit a quarter of their income and 30% remit one third (Hamdouch 2005, 70). The experience and success of migration for Moroccans is not uniform; migrants' success abroad stems from their previous employment positions, network, role within the family, marital status and willingness to take risks (Agoumy and Tamin 2009, 1689). Morocco provides an important case study for remittances and development because its history of colonialism and geographic proximity to Europe indicate that this phenomenon is unlikely to decrease in the future. Additionally, compared to other major remittance recipient countries such as India and China, Morocco's population is small. Remittances are therefore more nationally experienced, providing a clearer lens of the implications. This paper explores how the post-colonial neoliberal approach to migration and remittances has created contradictory forces for societies like Morocco where the state desires to maintain control over social, economic and political affairs but is forced to relinquish responsibility over development as remittances are encouraged.

Structurally Embedded Migration: Historical and Economic Legacies of Morocco

The prevalence of migration in Morocco derives from a history of colonialism. The first major flows of migrants to Europe began when France colonized Morocco in 1912. Moroccans were recruited by the French government for industrial labor and military support during World War I (Berraine et al. 2015, 505). Upon Morocco's independence in 1956, foreign direct investments decreased and high rates of unemployment ensued due to political instability (Leichtman 2002, 115). Due to these factors and a significant demand for low-skilled labor as a result of strong economic growth in Europe, migration rose in the 1960s (de Haas and Vezzoli 2013, 1052). The enlistment process for official labor migration programs was described as humiliating, however, because migrants were forced to strip in front of French officers to display their capabilities for demanding physical work (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 547). The social and economic power imbalance between France and Morocco continued after independence. Migrants had to endure racism in order to secure the economic gains of migration.

Despite such hardships, migration continued. Because of continued economic growth in Europe, Moroccans' immigration destinations diversified to include predominantly Belgium, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Germany in the 1970s (Berraine et al. 2014, 503). However, migration became more difficult in the 1980s as countries implemented immigration restrictions (de Haas

and Vezzoli 2013, 1052). The disruption of circular migration forced Moroccans to either settle abroad or return home. Those who permanently settled solidified Moroccan communities in Europe and became important points of contact for future migrants. In the 1990s, Morocco started to become a more popular destination of both temporary and permanent immigration for Sub-Saharan Africans, forcing the government to confront its own immigration policies (Berraine et al. 2014, 513). Morocco's history illuminates how migration has become deeply embedded in society and why it is one of the leading sources of emigration in the world.

Patterns of Moroccan Migration 1968-2012 (in thousands) (de Haas 2014).

Year	France	Netherlands	Belgium	Germany	Spain	Italy	Total
1968	84	13	21	18	1	N/A	137
1972	218	28	25	15	5	N/A	291
1975	260	33	66	26	9	N/A	394
1982	431	93	110	43	26	1	704
1990	653	184	138	62	59	78	1,174
1998	728	242	155	98	200	195	1,618
2005	1,025	316	214	73	397	253	2,278
2012	1,147	363	298	127	672	487	3,094

As a result of its colonial history, Morocco's economy remains dependent on the export of raw materials. Phosphate minerals and agriculture account for the majority of its exports (van der Erf and Heering 2002, 14). These sectors have been insufficient in supporting serious economic growth. In urban areas, unemployment in Morocco is as high as 18%, and of such individuals, 68.5% are under the age of 30 (Khachani 2009, 1611). There is also a high population growth rate of 1.68% annually which continues to create a surplus supply of labor (Khachani 2009, 1610). This has steadily declined beginning in 1982 (World Bank 2018) due to an increase in migration and the implementation of family planning policies that encourage later marriage and contraception use (van der Erf and Heering 2002, 10). In order to significantly decrease unemployment, however, at least 400,000 jobs must be created each year (Khachani 2009, 1611). It remains difficult to spur economic activity because Morocco has one of the lowest rates of return on investment in the world, making it an unattractive place to invest and foreign direct investment extremely low (Gallina 2006, 20).

Morocco's insufficient number of jobs has maintained the motivation for Moroccans to migrate to Europe. Remittances are considered to be the most stable source of foreign financial inflow (Gallina 2006, 20). Recipients of remittances typically possess twice the income of non-migrants and tend to have better standards of living (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 48). Alternatively, for retired return migrants, pensions from their work in Europe serve as their source of income, which is, on average, equivalent to the median household income (Kusunose and Rignall 2018,

428). While remittances and pensions provide an important potential source of financial inflows, such income is not typically utilized to invest in development projects. Instead, 83.3% of investments are in real estate (Hamdouch 2005, 78). Unfortunately, real estate investments do not provide significant rates of return (Leichtman 2002, 121). The history and economic foundation of Morocco reveal how it remains politically easy to rely on migrant remittances because it allows governments to avoid the challenging task of boosting productivity domestically.

The Challenging Task of Politically Managing Mobility

The structural system of migration has pressured the Moroccan government to both manage and leverage such mobility. The significant proportion of the population living abroad makes Morocco a ‘deterritorialized nation-state,’ or a state that “stretches beyond its geographic boundaries” (Basch et al. 1994, 269). Morocco’s policies are ultimately geared towards neoliberal ideals and the financial access that Europe has to offer for its emigrants. This positions Morocco as an optimist that remittances are an empowering way to develop economically. However, this mentality ultimately requires that Morocco abandon significant control over the exact direction of its future as the fate of development is placed on the shoulders of migrants and a dependency on Europe is increased.

While Morocco embraces an optimistic approach about the potential of remittances for development, it nonetheless expresses pessimism regarding the decreased national ties that often come with migration. In response to the poor economic situation upon gaining independence, in 1963, Morocco signed an agreement with France that allowed for the recruitment of Moroccans for France’s labor shortages (Kusunose and Rignall 2018, 416). This agreement became part of a five year plan that utilized emigration to solve the unemployment problem (Leichtman 2002, 116). The Moroccan government promoted the sending of remittances but discouraged assimilation abroad (Berraine et al. 2015, 511). These efforts exemplify how Morocco attempted to leverage its position and relationship with France while simultaneously maintaining national ties. Ideally, through this model, Moroccans would reap the benefits of remittances and migrants would eventually return. At the time, migrants were remitting 80-90% of their income (Collyer et al. 2009, 1557).

As migrants began to return home or settle abroad in the 1970s, the Moroccan government implemented measures in an attempt to encourage the influx of remittances for development purposes. In 1971, the government made an effort to keep the Moroccan *dirham* parity to the French Franc “by adding 3 percent to all funds deposited by emigrants in Moroccan banks” and later a loyalty bonus as well (Collyer et al. 2009, 1558). Furthermore, in 1976, the King of Morocco funded mosques and Arabic teachers in France to maintain ties (Leichtman 2002, 117). However, he did not allow for dual citizenship or voting from abroad (Leichtman 2002, 117). These efforts once again articulate the government’s desire for migrants to remain loyal to and economically supportive of Morocco. The government can encourage loyalty but ultimately does not possess the power to decide how remittances are spent or whether migrants return. Development may therefore only be as strong as the government’s ability to provide incentives for investment and patriotism. While the government was actively attempting to manage

emigration, irregular immigration, or mobility outside of the law, from Sub-Saharan Africa to Morocco was not considered to be a problem (Natter 2014, 15).

Beginning in the 1980s, migration became further embedded as Morocco was pressured to embrace neoliberal values. The demands from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank reinforced Morocco's position to continue sending labor to Europe (de Haas and Vezzoli 2013, 1054). Additionally, due to structural adjustment programs, Morocco increasingly provided fewer jobs and eliminated welfare for the unemployed (Khachani 2009, 1611). Remittances proved to be an important part of keeping some families above the poverty line (Khachani 2009, 1612). Simultaneously, Morocco was attempting to distance itself from Sub-Saharan Africa and associate itself more with Europe. In 1984, Morocco left the African Union and in 1987 it applied to join the European Union (Natter 2014, 18). However, Morocco was denied membership due to its location and fear from the EU that uncontrolled migration would damage stability and national identity in Europe (Kreienbrink 2005, 204). Morocco became even less of a significant player to Europe as the Iron Curtain fell in 1989 (Natter 2014, 18).

In order to combat its diminished position, Morocco became more accepting of dual citizenship in the 1990s as a means to ease the migratory process for its citizens (Berraine et al. 2015, 511). While Morocco became more accepting of emigration, xenophobia began to rise towards irregular immigration (de Haas 2007, 56). These shifts illustrate the challenging situation Morocco finds itself in: it is highly in Morocco's interest to maintain economic ties and diplomatic relationships with Europe, yet in order to do so, it must accept the EU's position that Moroccan immigration is presently unwanted (Kreienbrink 2005, 204). If Morocco was able to successfully redefine its relationship with Europe to be one where both parties held relatively equal power, perhaps Morocco could persist with migratory patterns but with greater leverage and more national loyalty.

Today, the Moroccan government has continued to prioritize its citizens abroad rather than non-migrants. In order to maintain ties and secure allegiance with migrants, the two most recent Kings established foundations to promote education, investment guidelines and the Arabic language abroad (Gallina 2006, 29). Simultaneously, the government has continued to withdraw support from essential domestic public services (Collyer et al. 2009, 1564). To make up for this loss, the government strongly encouraged the continuation of remittances through incentives. For example, the government offered low transfer fees, protection from the risk of depreciation, along with other special bonuses for emigrants living abroad (Hamdouch 2005, 71). These efforts parallel the migration policies Morocco implemented in the 1970s and exemplify public moral hazard, as Morocco believes remittances are successfully filling the lacuna of public services.

However, the reality is that remittances are not received equally across households, and therefore have been by no means sufficient in covering public needs. To fill this void, an emigrant established the non-profit Migration & Développement. This organization channels funds from emigrants to various development projects (Gallina 2006, 28). These projects typically include infrastructure ventures such as roads and electrification (Lacroix 2009, 1671). While this model has been successful in some cases, it is not sustainable nor powerful enough to support national development. For instance, because of decreased attachment to Morocco, second and third-

generation migrants are less likely to send remittances (Gallina 2006, 21). Moreover, this neoliberal approach places the burden of development on migrants themselves (Skeldon 2008, 9). In this way, Morocco finds itself in a paradoxical situation where it encourages citizens to migrate yet expects national loyalty even though it does not provide civil support.

The Moroccan government has also been criticized for implementing immigration policies that reinforce those of Europe. While data is limited, in 2019, it was estimated that there are 700,000 Sub-Saharan immigrants in Morocco (Ghazouani 2019) and in 2010, 20,000 of such immigrants were estimated to be irregular (Natter 2014, 16). Morocco has increasingly become a place of transit for Sub-Saharan migrants. As borders have become more restrictive in Europe, however, such immigrants often settle permanently in Morocco (Kreienbrink 2005, 207). While originally unconcerned with irregular immigration, in 2003, Morocco instituted a law that criminalized the phenomenon (Natter 2014, 16). This regulation has forced many Sub-Saharan irregular immigrants into employment positions of Morocco's informal economy, like many Moroccans in Europe (Kreienbrink 2005, 207).

This policy posited the country as a victim of irregular migration in order to align with powerful colonizers of the past, reassert its power as a major regional player and avoid further saturating the job market (Natter 2014, 20). These efforts attempted to mask Morocco's inability to provide economic opportunities with national security concerns (Natter 2014, 21). Such greater restrictions harmed relationships with Sub-Saharan African countries (Natter 2014, 23). Simultaneously, however, Morocco has been rewarded by European countries for increasing the restrictions of its borders. For example, in 2004, Spain praised Morocco for increasing its border restrictions by donating 390 million euros to the Moroccan government (Kreienbrink 2005, 213). Morocco therefore finds itself rewarded for its subordinate and dependent position on Europe.

Morocco is in a challenging position when it comes to managing deeply embedded migration due to greater international and economic implications. It is evident that Morocco has spent considerable resources attempting to prolong an unsustainable model for economic development by predominantly focusing its energy on catering to the needs of migrants and its relationship with Europe. This has come at the cost of public services for its domestic citizens and its relationship with other African countries. Although some individuals experience greater standards of living, the long history of migration and remittances has not resulted in significant economic development. Morocco has therefore been forced to relinquish political power for this approach to development. Moreover, the poor relationship with African neighbors and insubordinate position to Europe does not lend Morocco well to possible beneficial trade or diplomatic relationships in the future.

Are Remittances Emancipatory or Burdensome? The Dynamics and Implications of Migration for Moroccan Women 'Left Behind'

The neoliberal approach to migration and remittances assumes recipients are better-off and does not consider the ways in which identity complicates how capital is received and utilized. Therefore, substantial literature argues that an opportunity for greater agency for women 'left behind' by their migrant husbands. Agency is defined as "the ability to define one's goals and act upon them" (Lenoël 2, 2017). Theoretically, the lack of the husband's presence and the influx of

money creates new space for women to feel empowered because they can make their own financial decisions (Sadiqi 2004, 71). Moreover, women may even have the opportunity to enter the labor force for themselves. However, the implications of migration and remittances tend to be homogenized in literature (Lenoël 2007, 2). It is important to consider how cultural and religious norms influence how remittances are handled and define agency as means to understand that these forces do not automatically equate to development. For Moroccan women, the patriarchal norms and gendered expectations inhibit women beyond financial access. While remittances certainly offer some level of emancipation for women, the familial dynamics and new expected duties may actually create a more demanding situation. Through a neoliberal approach, the Moroccan government is unable to control the social ramifications of remittances that may perpetuate constricting gender norms rather than liberate women.

Moroccan society largely operates on a traditional patriarchal structure. Historically, women have lacked confidence in the Moroccan state's ability to regulate social inequalities and often feel vulnerable as a result (Zoglin 2009, 975). The vast majority of migrants are therefore men. The few women who do migrate tend to possess different motivations than men. Rather than simply an income, women who migrate predominantly seek freedom and democracy (Salih 2001, 660). This is because the patriarchal norms in Morocco can, at times, be constraining for women. Traditional gender norms place men and women into separate spaces – men in the public and women in the private sphere (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 48). Moreover, according to Islamic law, women cannot inherit and men can marry up to four wives (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 49). The average age of marriage for women in Morocco is fifteen years (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 49). However, due to income provided by remittances, more women are staying in school and marrying later (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 51).

The economic and symbolic prestige makes it desirable for women to marry migrants. Aside from a higher income, migrants offer women greater social status (Lenoël 2017, 5). Migration is therefore perceived to be a beneficial and a desirable lifestyle. The patriarchal structure of Morocco undermines the NELM theory because migration is not considered to be a household decision but rather is a method for men to become an attractive candidate for marriage. Therefore, rather than migration being a collective method to overcome economic barriers, in Morocco, it can also be considered a way to solidify gender norms and positions of power. The negative gendered consequences of remittances are unlikely to be visible and prioritized as a substantial problem to solve.

Simply because a woman marries a migrant that sends remittances does not mean that she has financial access, feels a greater sense of agency or that labor is reallocated in an empowering way. For many migrant marriages, the wife moves in with the in-laws from a few years to decades (Lenoël 2017, 6). In this scenario, remittances are typically controlled and received by the oldest men or older relatives (Lenoël 2017, 3). This is because it would be “considered shameful and an offense to his patrilineal family if a husband sends money directly to his wife if she is living with his parents or brothers” (Lenoël 2017, 7). These pressures reinforce a traditional family organization which may be disempowering for women, as traditional roles often diminish agency. In particular, tensions may occur amongst the family because the wife must request money when she needs it (Lenoël 2017, 7). The situation is exacerbated by the fact that the husband is rarely, if ever, around to defend the wife (Lenoël 2017, 6). While a simple

solution appears to be for the wife to join her husband abroad, complications persist. In addition to the challenge of restrictive immigration policies, the migrant may not want the wife to join him because of the racism he experiences or the in-laws may be reluctant to lose their access to remittances (Lenoël 2017, 4). Therefore, a woman's agency is not contingent on whether she is the recipient of remittances.

Remittances may be more burdensome than emancipatory for Moroccan women. As previously discussed, the relationship with in-laws can be stressful and reinforce constraining gender roles. Liberation and greater well-being are felt for most women when their migrant husbands purchase a separate home for themselves (Lenoël 2017, 7). However, independent living brings about new challenges. For example, women must take on the husband's household responsibilities and affairs if she no longer lives with the in-laws. This can lead to psychological stress due to the daunting aspect of new obligations and fear of social stigmas from completing masculine tasks (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 57). In other words, while women may have financial access, they risk social exclusion and being the subject of gossip (de Haas and Van Rooij 2010, 59). Generally, women report it to be difficult to raise children without a father figure (Lenoël 2017, 8).

Additionally, despite being the recipient of the remittances, women are usually not given the leverage to make major financial decisions. Instead, they are given only a small sum of money while male relatives handle the larger investments (Lenoël 2017, 8). Moreover, because of women's devalued position in society, if the migrant loses his employment, she will find herself in a precarious position regarding obtaining access to loans or an immediate source of income (Sadiqi 2004, 74). When the migrant returns, women lose this position of power. The resentment for the loss of financial access often leads to tensions which may result in emotional distance and even divorce (Lenoël 2017, 8; Sadiqi 2004, 73). Finally, the often large age difference between the wife and husband makes young widowhood somewhat common. As a result of insufficient public services, women can experience "an abrupt descent into poverty...and they may be forced to move back with relatives" (Lenoël 2017, 9). In other words, remittances and migration do not remedy the difficulties of gender inequality or poor government services. While remittances grant access to greater income and social status, it is worth questioning whether the ramifications women experience are worth such benefits. This is the work of development that the Moroccan state must take on as the neoliberal approach of encouraging remittances inherently perpetuates the positions of men.

Additional literature contends that the wives of migrants may experience the opportunity to enter the labor force. Once again, this argument overlooks the realities of gender dynamics. In Morocco, research indicates that wives of migrants are more unlikely to enter the labor force due to a greater reservation wage (Lenoël and David 2019, 127). Furthermore, the high rates of unemployment and strict gender norms do not make job opportunities immediately accessible to women, regardless of their husbands' migratory status (Lenoël and David 2019, 146). While individuals may have a higher income, structural barriers remain. The experience of women with remittances in Morocco illuminates that far more is required by the Moroccan state in order for women to experience greater agency. This is not to discount the power that some women feel upon receiving remittances. However, it is important to consider how the complexity and implications of culture and religion distort neoliberalism instead of assuming experiences are

equal across households and that remittances automatically generate agency. Perhaps women's perception of the Moroccan government further loses legitimacy as it promotes remittances that embed gender inequalities.

Moroccan Return and Pendulum Migration: The Straddling of Transnational Space and Developmental Ramifications

The promotion of neoliberalism and migration inherently requires citizens to form and capitalize on ties abroad. The NELM theory postulates that migrants will return home once they have earned a satisfactory level of income (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 543). However, this assumes that the migration experience is uniform and migrants are not influenced by their experiences and economic access abroad. Professor Jacques Lévy (1999) instead proposes the notion of 'access by places' as a means to accommodate for how resources, networks and identity determine one's connection to the outside world (Agoumy and Tamin 2009, 1686). Newly acquired transnational identities as a result of migration influence Moroccans' willingness to remit, invest domestically and return to Morocco. By placing development into the hands of its citizens, the Moroccan state has little to no control over the influences of identity and connections formed abroad.

Initially, when France introduced temporary labor regimes, all migrants returned home at the end of their employment (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 545). Today, as a result of decades of encouraged migration, decisions to return to Morocco are less common and more complex. Some Moroccans return home from difficult conditions abroad – not being able to find employment, marital problems, a sense of social isolation and depression, for example (de Bree et al. 2010, 496). Other reasons for return migration include the fear of one's family experiencing racism, becoming 'Westernized' or losing piety (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 547). However, with increasing border restrictions and the continuation of limited employment opportunities, not all Moroccans continued to practice return migration. An increasingly popular strategy is 'pendulum' migration. Moroccans will travel home for extended periods of time but their residency remains in Europe (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 542). Pendulum migration is popular because the stricter immigration policies disincentivize migrants from relinquishing their European residency (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 555). An alternative approach is 'relay' migration, or when the migrant reunifies a select few family members in Europe (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 549). The intent behind this technique is for the new family members to take over as the migrant thinks about retiring (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 549). Finally, some migrants choose to simply settle abroad because of better opportunities, the migration regulations and/or a preferred lifestyle. These varying approaches to return migration emphasize how decisions are influenced by maintaining connections with Europe to preserve the economic access it has to offer. In other words, Moroccans are not economically incentivized within a neoliberal framework to permanently return to Morocco.

In addition to the prospects of economic access, Moroccan migrants are influenced and socially rewarded by their emotional attachment to Europe. All return migrants encounter the difficulty of negotiating their transnational identity in Morocco (de Bree et al. 2010, 490). For example, it is common for return migrants to want to disassociate themselves from Moroccan traditions in order to appear more modern (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 552). For all return migrants, it remains important to reclaim space through displaying expensive consumer goods such as cars,

domestic appliances and furniture (Salih 2001, 667). The desire to present oneself as modern through consumer objects redefines notions of success and development so that such achievements are inherently connected abroad. For migrants whose return to Morocco was planned, relationships and high social status were preserved through the sending of remittances (de Bree et al. 2010, 500). In other words, a dependency on Europe for social success is instituted.

For migrants whose return was unplanned, due to difficult circumstances abroad, they are more likely to disassociate themselves with Morocco and cultural traditions. Firstly, unplanned return migrants were less likely to send remittances because they had intended to stay abroad (de Bree et al. 2010, 496). Secondly, because they had to return to Morocco unexpectedly, they possessed a negative association with Morocco and were deeply nostalgic of their migration location (de Bree et al. 2010, 497). These migrants therefore focused their energy on ways to remain tied to their migration location, such as through television, in order to continue to feel connected (de Bree et al. 2010, 498). Additionally, the wives that lived abroad with such migrants felt upset due to a lack of power in the process and unfulfilled desire for their children to live abroad (de Bree et al. 2010, 501). Migrants that are forced to unexpectedly return may be further ostracized because they do not possess the same material and social prestige as planned returnees to justify their migration (Lacroix 2009, 1672). In such scenarios, there is little likelihood of the benefit of social remittances as communities are more likely to be socially damaged as a result of migration.

Migration inherently produces transnational identities. However, it is overly simplistic to assume that these identities do not influence or shape desires and relationships with Morocco. By encouraging Moroccans to obtain their economic security abroad, new ideas of success are intrinsically formed. The neoliberal model therefore makes it challenging for the Moroccan government to secure loyalty and significant return migration as individuals associate their success with their individual efforts, rather than governmental assistance, and Europe's opportunities. Return migration therefore becomes increasingly less attractive and transnational identities complicate one's sense of political belonging.

Conclusion

The entrenchment of migration as a result of colonialism and neoliberal forces has put Morocco in a difficult position regarding development. Morocco is tasked with managing and leveraging a widespread population in the face of economic instability. Since 1962, emigration of Moroccans has fluctuated between 257,000 to 655,000 individuals each year, indicating that migration is unlikely to cease any time soon (World Bank 2017). Europe continues to symbolize the solution to economic difficulties. While remittances have certainly raised the standard of living, there have been few other significant positive changes (de Haas and Fokkema 2010, 550). The prioritization of neoliberalism and migrants abroad has led to poor public services for non-migrants and the reinforcement of gender norms and fragmented priorities and motivations for national allegiance and therefore development.

Morocco illuminates how improved personal wellbeing from remittances does not eliminate structural inequalities or national dependency. However, the history of Morocco makes it

apparent that there were perhaps few other options but to embrace neoliberalism. Moving forward, scholars recommend Morocco finds a middle ground by continuing to leverage its connection with Europe without completely enforcing policies that are unbeneficial. In other words, formally complying with migration regulations recommended by the EU while making such implementation less of a priority and recognizing it is ultimately impossible to completely control (Kreienbrink 2005, 215). Although more challenging, the ultimate way for Morocco to ensure sustainable development will be to focus more on the production of desirable domestic opportunities that retain more of the population rather than comply with the political ease of neoliberalism.

PART III: Tajikistan's Poor Leadership and Dependency on Remittances

Located in Central Asia, Tajikistan is one of the most impoverished and remittance-reliant countries in the world. With a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of only \$826, it is considered to be the poorest non-African country after Afghanistan (World Bank 2017; Hemmings 2010, 10). Nearly 60% of its 9 million citizens fall below the global poverty line (Hemmings 2010, 10) of less than \$1.90 a day (World Bank 2020). As a previous member of the Soviet Union, Tajikistan has been historically dependent on its two industries of aluminum and cotton to spur economic growth. However, Tajikistan has struggled to stay globally competitive in these sectors due to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Tajik civil war in 1992 and the global recession of 2008 (Khakimov 2016, 80). Moreover, the high population growth during the Soviet era has created enormous pressure on the labor market today. In 2006, the median age of the population was only 21 years old and 57.7% of the population was of working age (Hemmings 2010, 10). The lack of job opportunities has resulted in about 30% of the working male population migrating and sending remittances (Hemmings 2010, 12). The Tajik government has utilized remittances as a feasible way to spur economic growth. However, the heavy reliance on remittances has had serious repercussions on economic growth, international relations and social realities.

Of the Tajik migrants, 83% migrate to Russia, 14% to Kazakhstan, and 2% to the Kyrgyz Republic (Clément 2011, 65). Russia remains a popular destination because of the historical legacy of the Soviet Union and an already established community of Tajiks abroad (Jones et al. 2007, 12). The majority of migrants work in lower-skilled construction work while 20% have official work contracts and 30% are shuttle traders, or migrate for short periods to bring home goods to sell (Kireyev 2006, 8). Moreover, most migrants originate from rural mountainous areas because there are more economic opportunities in urban regions (Kumo 2012, 104). On average, monthly remittances sent are only around \$4.67. However, this constitutes 32.5% of the recipients' income (Clément 2011, 64). In 2013, remittances accounted for nearly 44% of Tajikistan's GDP, one of the highest in the world (World Bank 2017). This paper argues that while the collapse of the Soviet Union and Tajikistan's civil war placed the country in a precarious economic situation, the government's poor leadership and promotion of migration has ultimately perpetuated economic stagnation and has been detrimental to long-term and sustainable development. What was considered an attainable solution ultimately worsens Tajikistan's development.

A Foundation for Failure: The Historical Legacies and Economic Reality of Tajikistan

The policies implemented by the Soviet Union created a poor foundation for Tajikistan's long-term economic development. While the Soviet Union sought to overcome economic inequality across Central Asia, efficiency and pragmatism were ultimately prioritized. In 1926, officials in Moscow deemed Soviet Tajikistan unworthy of modernization because they viewed it purely as an agricultural state (Nourzhanov and Bleuer 2013, 62). As a result, the production of cotton was heavily prioritized and viewed as a way for Moscow to achieve autonomy in a staple commodity (Nourzhanov and Bleuer 2013, 67). Although the mountainous topography of Tajikistan makes only 7% of the land suitable for agriculture, it remained the primary commodity produced during

the Soviet era (Hemmings 2010, 9). During this time, emigration was limited because of strict Soviet passport controls (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 7). However, in 1938, immigrants from Soviet Europe comprised 46% of the workforce population in Tajikistan to propel industrialization forward (Nourzhanov and Bleuer 2013, 62).

The cotton industry enabled Soviet Tajikistan to develop economically which supported a high population growth rate (Nourzhanov and Bleuer 2013, 68). Between 1926 and 1989, the population of Tajikistan increased five-fold (Laruelle 2013, 151). In order to cope with the increasing population and a high demand for employment, one of the largest aluminum plants in Asia was built in the 1980s (Nourzhanov and Bleuer 2013, 151). Ultimately, however, the Soviet Union's efforts to spread the division of labor across Central Asia meant that Tajikistan's cotton and aluminum industries "never presented a viable manufacturing entity capable of guaranteeing the republic's balanced independent development" (Nourzhanov and Bleuer 2013, 68). Therefore, the economic foundation of Tajikistan was formulated on the dependency of other states.

The heavy dependence on the other Soviet states for essential commodities and economic vitality caused the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 to be particularly difficult for Tajikistan. The extreme disorganization and political instability led to a civil war less than one year after independence (Laruelle 2013, 152). Because there was no migration regulation immediately following the fall of the Union, many immigrated to Russia for safety. Between 1992 and 2001, 1.6 to 2 million Tajik migrants were deemed refugees by the Russian government (Tetrushvily 2012, 54). The civil war resulted in over 100,000 casualties and seriously damaged infrastructure (Laruelle 2013, 152). However, after the peace agreement was signed in 1997, migration continued. Instead of individuals fleeing violence, Tajiks were seeking better economic opportunities as the civil war resulted in extreme poverty and food insecurity (Laruelle 2013, 156). The economy struggled to recover because the conflict forced production in all industries to stop and infrastructure fell behind, making Tajikistan's industries unable to compete globally (Hemmings 2010, 10). During this time, 86% of the population did not have sufficient food access which led to severe stunting across the country (Laruelle 2013, 162). Ultimately, the undiversified economy from the Soviet era contributed to Tajikistan's inability to provide a stable job market for its population.

The infrastructure of Soviet Tajikistan and the damage of the civil war have harmful repercussions on Tajikistan today. The Tajik economy remains undiversified as it is still highly dependent on cotton and aluminum exports. Such economic weakness creates a lack of incentives for local and foreign investment. In 2003, the aluminum smelter was only operating at a third of its capacity and yet this comprised almost 10% of GDP and 60% of export earnings (Jones et al. 2007, 6). Besides the bleak economic outlook, Tajiks are discouraged from starting their own businesses because of a combination of deterrents from the government such as poor tax regulation and excessive inspections (Jones et al. 2007, 25). Moreover, outsiders have remained reluctant to invest in Tajikistan because of poor infrastructure and a history of communism (Hemmings 2010, 9). Tajikistan has only managed to avoid severe economic collapse through a variety of international aid and loans from the International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank and US Agency for International Development (Hemmings 2010, 31).

Because of such serious economic stagnation and a history of migration to Russia, remittances have been a significant method employed by many Tajiks for survival. Tajik migrants in Russia often agree to work in dangerous working conditions that pay less than half of what Russians would earn because it remains more than twice what they can make in Tajikistan (Hemmings 2010, 24). However, remittances have not significantly contributed to the development of Tajikistan. Very few recipients can afford to save and 70% of households are not interested in starting a business or investing (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1125; Hemmings 2010, 15; Jones et al. 2007, 24). Instead, remittances are primarily used for essential consumption and health care (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1135; Clément 2011, 74).

There are many parallels between Tajikistan's membership of the Soviet Union with Morocco's colonialism. Colonialism established dependency for both Morocco and Tajikistan that continues to shape their economy and political power. Moreover, it is as a result of this relationship that migration was initially stimulated. While both countries are surrounded by other colonized states, Morocco's geographical location grants it a particular advantage. The close physical proximity to Europe is likely to be a challenge for diminishing the number of migrants in the future. Tajiks, contrastingly, must travel relatively far to Russia. However, the Tajik economy is less diverse and the country is comparatively much poorer, making the trek worthwhile. While Moroccans possess close access, the deeper entrenchment of poverty and unemployment will likely continue to make Tajiks desperate to emigrate. The dire economic situation caused by a history of instability, therefore, encourages individuals to migrate for basic survival. The remainder of the paper explores the ramifications of this dynamic and the poor governmental response.

Tajikistan's Relationship with Russia and Remittances: Power Imbalances and the Consequences of Poor Leadership

Domestic and international relations influence migration patterns. Russia, the most popular destination for Tajik migrants, has continued to maintain power over Tajikistan in the post-Soviet era. Tajikistan and other Central Asian countries have been an important source of low-wage labor due to a rapidly shrinking working population in Russia. Between 2011-2020, it is estimated that the working population will decrease by 9 million people (Gulina and Utyasheva 2016, 96). The World Bank has advised Russia that the only way to sufficiently resist such severe decline of its workforce is to permit migrant labor (Hemmings 2010, 12). As a result, Russia has had one of the most lenient immigration policies in the world; no visa is required for entry for all foreigners (Hemmings 2010, 12). Tajiks and other Central Asians have taken advantage of this to the degree that 7-20% of Russia's labor force is composed of migrants (Hemmings 2010, 12). In this way, there is mutual dependence for economic vitality between Central Asian countries and Russia. Even though mutual dependency exists and it remains relatively easy to enter Russia, it is a more complex process to gain legality and therefore state protection.

While remittances offer Tajikistan an opportunity for economic growth, a tradeoff of this method is that Tajikistan does not possess sufficient power to protect and advocate for its citizens abroad. After initial conflicts from the fall of the Union diminished, Russia implemented Federal Law No. 115 FZ in 2002 as an attempt to manage migration. This law established migration employment quotas which ultimately did not decrease the inflow of individuals but increased the

number of illegal migrants (Tetruashvily 2012, 55). Recognizing this repercussion, in 2007 and 2009, Russia implemented a set of new policies that attempted to make it more possible to obtain a work permit (Tetruashvily 2012, 56). However, this led to a rise in xenophobic attitudes from Russians as they believed Tajiks were taking their jobs, despite the fact that such Russians were unwilling to do such work for such low pay (Tetruashvily 2012, 57). The vast majority of Russians view immigrants from across Central Asia as excessive, the reason for increased crime rates and destroyers of Russian culture (Rogoza 2014, 83). While all Central Asians are targeted, Tajiks are particularly defenseless due to their extreme economic vulnerability. Therefore, Tajiks are easier targets for hate crimes and exploitative labor schemes. For example, many janitor positions, most of which are held by Tajik migrants, are controlled by fictitious firms which only pay migrants part of their salaries and force migrants to pay for excessive expenses while their living conditions are abysmal (Rogoza 2014, 85). Moreover, the police often force migrants to pay bribes, making them even further unprotected by the law (Rogoza 2014, 85). Finally, in 2008 alone, there were a reported 300 attacks on Tajiks in Russia of which a third resulted in death (Hegland 2010, 19).

The Tajik government attempted to alleviate such xenophobic attacks through political negotiations. In other words, the Tajik state recognized “the necessity of negotiating its interests on a political level in order to facilitate the employment and status of its citizens abroad” (Gulina and Utyasheva 2016, 99). However, attempts had already been made by Tajikistan that proved to be ineffective. In 2001, a ministry opened in Moscow to cease violence towards Tajiks and in 2004 an agreement was signed between Tajikistan and Moscow regarding the labor and social protection of migrants (Jones et al. 2007, 20). The inadequacy of these measures and the lack of more recent attempts demonstrates that Tajikistan is ultimately powerless to defend its citizens abroad. The Tajik government is forced to tolerate this relationship because of an economic dependence that arises from a lack of development. While Russia may also depend on Tajikistan for inexpensive labor, Russia maintains the upper hand because of historical power imbalances and the abundance of other Central Asian countries that supply Russia labor. Considering that Tajik migrants will continue to be vulnerable, it is important to consider the policies implemented domestically by the Tajik government that ultimately encourage individuals to migrate.

Historically, the government of Tajikistan has been authoritarian and corrupt. As a result, it is difficult to acquire access to jobs, higher education and healthcare without paying bribes or having a connection to the ruling elite (Zotova and Cohen 2019, 7). Because the primary industries of Tajikistan cannot meet the demand for employment, the encouragement of remittances and migration is a feasible way to elicit economic growth. For example, the government has implemented policies, such as the elimination of taxes on transfers and efforts to establish more secure banking systems, to incentivize the sending of remittances (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1125). Remittances are so significant to Tajikistan such that there have been low levels of government spending relative to the amount of remittances received. For example, in 2008, President Emomali Rahmon budgeted \$74 million for healthcare and \$201 million for public education while the level of remittances sent was equivalent to \$2.6 billion that year (Hemmings 2010, 15). In other words, remittances greatly exceed the level of social welfare and support provided by the Tajik government (Khakimov 2016, 86).

The government has failed to trigger significant economic development through domestic projects. In 2009, the President promised Tajikistan 180,000 new jobs (Hemmings 2010, 30). In an attempt to bring this promise to fruition, the government initiated the construction of the Rogun Dam, which began in 1976 but was stalled upon the collapse of the Soviet Union (Hemmings 2010, 30). However, this project ultimately left families in worse economic conditions because, due to poor budgeting, the President mandated that each family purchase shares of the construction for at least \$690 each (Hemmings 2010, 30). There have been very limited supportive resources for Tajiks as the government has continually repressed NGOs attempting to support economic and social difficulties because they represent the values of freedom and democracy (Dar and Mohd 2012, 151). These failures exemplify both the repercussions of historical legacies and authoritarian rule.

Due to the dire economic situation and poor leadership by the government, Tajiks have been forced to take their well-being into their own hands. For example, people survived through the 2008 financial crisis by relying on their social networks and migration, knowing the government would not provide viable assistance (Hemmings 2010, 31). This sentiment has continued today. Because of a lack of trust in the government's ability to promote development and the success of remittances for recipient families, migrants are unlikely to invest in Tajikistan. However, remittances relieve societal and economic pressures without solving the root of the problem completely (Ellerman 2005, 62). Therefore, remittances are a survival strategy and not a sustainable solution for development (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1136).

A possible way forward is for the government to more seriously invest in public health and education. Due to the poor health systems in place, health care is one of the first areas where Tajiks spend their remittances. If better health systems are in place, Tajiks may be more incentivized to utilize remittances for longer-term investments (Clément 2011, 76). Similarly, a higher quality of education will improve human capital and is, therefore, more likely to retain citizens (Jones et al. 2007, 26). Finally, it may be suitable for Tajikistan to follow the model of the relationship between Slovenia and Moldova, another impoverished former Soviet member. A select number of blue-collar workers were selected to spend six months in Slovenia learning industrial and technical skills (Ellerman 2005, 625). Moldavians returned home after the six months to apply their new skills. If Tajikistan could implement a similar program and thereby enforce temporality, migration can be reframed as a short-term solution and encourage investment at home. While Tajikistan may ultimately be powerless to negotiate how its citizens are treated in Russia, it possesses the power to implement strong leadership for its domestic population. Without the trust of the Tajik population, strong development is unlikely.

Migration as a Rite of Passage: The Social Repercussions of Remittances in Tajikistan

The high dependence on migration and remittances has radically changed the social sphere of Tajikistan. By encouraging remittances, the Tajik government enables its citizens to obtain a higher standard of living, yet social notions of success are channeled abroad, making it difficult to retain human capital. For example, remittances have brought about an increased awareness of social status and material goods. Commodities such as cars, property and home appliances have become important signals to others for middle-class status (Zotova and Cohen 2019, 4). Remittances have also been utilized to finance elderly people to go on the prestigious journey of

the *hadj*, the Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 9). Additionally, it has become increasingly common to utilize remittances to fund elaborate weddings as a means to deem the migration successful and display a high social status (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 12). However, research indicates that the pressure to host such extravagant weddings has actually prompted more migration (Thibault 2018, 2812). In order to alleviate this tension, in 2008, the Tajik government implemented a law to regulate the size and expenditure of weddings (Thibault 2018, 2812). While individuals have followed such restrictions, this scenario illuminates how remittances influence how income is allocated and the necessity for tedious government intervention. Simply because there are higher levels of income does not mean there is development (Ellerman 2005, 623). Moreover, research indicates that recipient households are surprisingly less likely to be entrepreneurial. Between 1999 and 2007, recipient households' entrepreneurial activity only rose 6% while non-recipient households' activity rose 14% (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1130). Remittances, therefore, are more likely to be utilized to define value, worth and social belonging in a new light (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 9). This is not necessarily to say that the Tajik government should have unlimited power over how remittances are spent, but rather that an influx of capital does not automatically equate towards the development of a country.

The flow of remittances has also disrupted social norms and exacerbated inequality. In addition to the complexities that arise with a greater desire to display social status, recipients of remittances and return migrants are less likely to integrate themselves in the community. Return migrants often marginalize themselves from the community and form their own social groups (Hemmings 2010, 33; Zotova and Cohen 2016, 12). This is problematic because decreased social cohesion obstructs a sense of community, and therefore willingness to invest resources into such groups. Recipients are also simply disincentivized to work due to a greater reservation wage (Khakimov 2016, 89). These phenomena are particularly displayed in the disruption of the long cultural tradition of *khashar*, or when community members work together to complete agricultural or construction projects (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 11). *Khashar* is fading as a result of a heightened urgency to capitalize on the demand for work. Instead of participating in this type of labor for free, Tajiks are progressively creating contractual and monetary relationships (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 11). In other words, people are requesting that their assistance is paid for (Zotova and Cohen 2016, 11). This will exacerbate inequality and create an increased emphasis on the necessity to migrate. There are also other new behaviors as a result of remittances, such as the decreased likelihood to vaccinate children and send them to school (Laruelle 2013, 163). The devolution of *khashar* and other new practices demonstrate how migration and remittances have led to new mentalities that are ultimately detrimental for long-term development.

Finally, because migration has been proven to be a way to gain a higher income and social status, Tajiks are incentivized to invest abroad rather than domestically. Although it is common for migrants to utilize their higher incomes to purchase property, this is usually only to symbolize status (Zotova and Cohen 2019, 5). Most Tajiks aspire or plan to settle permanently abroad (Zotova and Cohen 2019, 7). This desire is echoed in a narrative of a Tajik mother as she discusses how she only lets her son watch Russian television because she wants to raise a Russian-speaking child (Zotova and Cohen 2019, 7). This woman sees no future for her child in Tajikistan so she actively prepares her son to migrate to Russia from an early age. This mentality

symbolizes how “migration is increasingly viewed as a rite of passage for young Tajik men” (Buckley and Hofmann 2012, 1126). This notion is important to consider because if migration is viewed as a career, it will be deemed a failure by society to return home (Ellerman 2005, 618). While it is not impossible for migrants to successfully return home, to simply retire or start a small shop does not provide substantial leverage for development (Ellerman 2005, 618). Moreover, it is difficult to maintain national pride when the majority of the youth desires to leave the country (Ellerman 2005, 620). The social implications of remittances reveal the complexities and challenges that the Tajik government must consider in order to implement policies that effectively retain individuals in the future. Families may have the capability to survive but do so by leveraging resources abroad. Once again, the feasible solution from the government’s perspective has lasting ramifications that leaves Tajikistan worse off.

Tajik Women ‘Left Behind:’ Polygamy and Remittances for Survival

The process and consequences of migration are highly gendered. During Soviet rule, Central Asian women were perceived to be enslaved and Islam was considered to be oppressive (Dar and Mohd 2012, 152; Urbaeva 2019, 208). By framing the situation in such a way, the Soviets capitalized on the labor of women and fueled the war against religion (Dar and Mohd 2012, 152). While Central Asian women gained positions of power from these efforts, they ultimately sacrificed their identity and traditional values as a result (Chenoy, 1996, 157). Therefore, in Tajikistan, the fall of the Soviet Union reinstated patriarchal values and a resurgence of Islam. However, this meant that women were devalued and the first to lose their positions of employment and power (Dar and Mohd 2012, 154). The devaluation of women explains why men continue to be the economic providers and migrants today. In Tajikistan, nearly 90% of migrants are men (Thibault 2018, 2810). Because of women’s significant dependence on men for economic stability, abuse is a common phenomenon. Half of Tajik women have suffered violence from men and 42.5% have experienced spousal rape (Dar and Mohd 2012, 165). The combination of such physical and psychological cruelty with high economic stress has resulted in many women committing suicide or becoming the victims of uxoricide (Hegland 2010, 22). However, the policies implemented by the Tajik government regarding the gendered repercussions of migration actively work to disempower women.

Women in post-Soviet Tajikistan lack economic and social power. Compounded with the stagnant economy of Tajikistan, there are very few socially-acceptable formal economic opportunities for women (Urbaeva 2019, 209). As a result, women typically rely on marriage to achieve economic security and social status (Urbaeva 2019, 213). The prevalence of the patriarchal system makes the wives of migrants particularly vulnerable. The lack of sufficient public services increases the likelihood that wives live with the migrants’ parents. When women live with such older generations, they typically possess less autonomy (Urbaeva 2019, 208). This is because the parents are often only comfortable with a wife that adheres to traditional customs and values (Hegland 2010, 23). Wives cannot rely on their husbands to mitigate such situations as they rarely receive visits from their migrant husbands. Because it is expensive to fund, only 10% of Tajik families receive a visit from their migrant relatives (Thibault 2018, 2811). Moreover, 48% of migrants engage in sex outside of marriage in Russia and 37% use prostitutes, exemplifying that men feel little obligation wives (Thibault 2018, 2811). The long periods of time spent apart and the extramarital relationships make divorce common, despite Tajikistan’s

conservative nature (Thibault 2018, 2812). Women are typically powerless to these decisions as it is not unusual for a divorce to be initiated over text messaging (Thibault 2018, 2813). This is particularly dire because due to the civil war, high unemployment, migration, and alcoholism, there are very few single men available (Hegland 2010, 20). Considering the dependence on migrants for economic survival, divorced women are exceptionally vulnerable to poverty (Thibault 2018, 2813; Zotova and Cohen 2019, 8). These dynamics exemplify the extreme precariousness of women in Tajik society.

In order to combat their disempowered position, women have employed a variety of strategies. A growing number of women have entered the informal sector of the market by selling livestock products such as milk and yogurt or engaging in sex work (Hegland 2010, 17). However, a more popular and socially acceptable method to gain economic security is to participate in polygamy. While it has been framed as a revival of Islam, polygamy is more likely a strategy to overcome economic barriers (Thibault 2018, 2815). Polygamy diminishes the tension that there is an insufficient number of available bachelors. While women are motivated for economic security, men are primarily motivated by sex and a chance at love (Thibault 2018, 2818). Roughly 21% of households practice polygamy and the numbers are increasing (Thibault 2018, 2815). Considering these strategies for survival rely on the informal economy and social influence, it is apparent that there is no significant government assistance regarding gender inequalities.

The precariousness of the lives of Tajik women and the revival of polygamy exemplify the tradeoffs the Tajik government faces as remittances are encouraged. Despite the social acceptance of polygamy, it remains illegal. As a result, additional wives have no legal rights regarding property, inheritance or leverage during the divorce or death of the husband (Dar and Modh 2012, 156). This is additionally problematic because it makes it difficult for such women to be protected against abuse (Dar and Modh 2012, 159). Recognizing the problems that arise with illegality, in 2014, officials advocated for the legalization of polygamy and emphasized the need to be proud of Tajik traditions (Thibault 2018, 2814). While this effort did not come to fruition, it nonetheless exemplifies how encouraging remittances is only a temporary solution to a deeply structural problem. In other words, by protecting additional wives through legality, the Tajik government is essentially encouraging polygamy and accepting this new dynamic as a repercussion of increased migration. However, it remains a dilemma because to prevent people from migrating or keep women in vulnerable positions by not trying to legalize polygamy could cause more resentment towards the government.

While it is evident that if there was a simple solution to such structural problems Tajikistan would have already taken steps to implement such, the importance of women cannot be ignored in development. Philosopher Martha Nussbaum argues that space should certainly be given to religious tradition but that the ultimate priority of the state should be toward the protection of the capabilities of its citizens (Nussbaum 2011, 147). By capabilities, Nussbaum means a commitment to dignity for all people so they can fully realize their potential (McMichael 2017, 282). In other words, faced with abuse and highly reliant on migrant men, the women of Tajikistan are unlikely to be significant actors in development. Therefore, the mere protection of polygamy is a poor solution to the hardships Tajik women face. By protecting polygamy, marriage to migrants will continue to be one of the few viable economic options for women. Ideally, the government should focus on ways to empower women to maximize their capabilities.

This is once again challenging, however, because perhaps the only realistic and feasible solution is to continue with the present system of remittances. In other words, women may be worse off without them. One possible and perhaps attainable option for the Tajik government is to make it easier to report domestic abuse. Presently, the criminal system in Tajikistan makes it difficult for women to report violence (Dar and Mohd 2012, 159). If men are held more accountable for their actions, Tajik women can live in less fear. Afterall, strong and sustainable economic growth is only possible if capabilities are maximized.

Conclusion

The process of migration cannot be separated from its historical ties. Tajikistan's past membership of the Soviet Union and its civil war make it evident that it did not begin independence with a strong economy. The severe instability and previous ties with Russia provide clarity for why remittances have been encouraged by the Tajik government. Remittances, however, come with considerable tradeoffs. On one hand, remittances have allowed a significant proportion of the population to obtain higher incomes and standards of living. Simultaneously, Tajikistan has been unable to sufficiently protect its citizens experiencing xenophobia abroad, the population increasingly does not see a future for itself domestically and gendered power imbalances have been reinforced. Therefore, what felt like an attainable option to alleviate economic stress may have ultimately made the future of Tajikistan worse off. At the same time, there are limited options to overcome historically entrenched international power dynamics. Perhaps if Tajikistan prevented remittances and migration, individuals would be even more eager to emigrate. While it is clear that Tajikistan has been dealt a difficult hand, this does not mean that the country is inherently doomed for economic failure. The government must therefore find a balance between granting its citizens the best opportunities while also thinking critically about how to spur national economic growth. Leadership that builds trust and sparks hope for the future of the country is necessary for development and retainment of the population.

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