

THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS JOURNAL
SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY

Engendering the Public Sphere

» Adan Falcon

Case Study on Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

» Len Chernock

Green Building and Development

» Vera Glavova

International Migrant Remittances

» Alexander Arevalo

Bolivarian Glocalization:

» Megan Denkers

Preventing and Combating Sex Trafficking

» Kristie Miller

A YEARLY PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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OVERVIEW

THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS JOURNAL at San Francisco State University strives to exhibit the diverse range of undergraduate and graduate research interests that flourish in our department.

Each semester, the *Journal* is offered as a course in which students participate as writers or editors in a peer review process, or as administrative staff members who assist authors and editors as well as guide the *Journal* through its production.

The goal of the course is to expose students to the peer review process, focusing on academic standards of argumentation and factual accuracy, citation formatting, and collaborative editing using Microsoft Word's "track changes" feature. More broadly, the *Journal's* executive editors aim to help students develop writing/editing skills applicable in other courses and promote a deeper understanding of the discipline of international relations as a whole.

SUBMISSIONS & PROCESS

The *Journal* encourages all students pursuing a B.A. or M.A. in International Relations to submit completed works (incomplete papers and abstracts are not accepted) at the beginning of each semester. From these submissions the *Journal's* executive editors assign students to positions on the writing and editorial boards as well as a number of administrative-level appointments.

The course curriculum includes a number of informational workshops and at least three rounds of structured editing and revision. All editing is anonymous and each submission is reviewed by three different editors.

The structured peer review is as follows: ^[1] a submission is first edited by an undergraduate or graduate “peer expert” who has conducted prior research on topics and/or regions relevant to the paper and can thus provide fact checking and citation suggestions; ^[2] second round editing focuses on clarity and academic tone by pairing the manuscript with an editor unfamiliar with the paper’s subject; ^[3] finally, the paper is edited for proper citation formatting and technical aspects.

At the end of the semester, authors participating in this process are expected to submit a final manuscript for consideration by the *Journal’s* executive editors and the faculty advisor.

PUBLICATION OF ARTICLES

Only submissions that have gone through the peer review process and meet the content and formatting requirements, will be considered for publication. The *Journal* is published yearly.

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ABSTRACT » *The world of international institutions and global networks has historically been spaces dominated by men and masculine perspectives. As a result, women's rights and issues have been cast aside in favor of masculine perspectives domineering the public space. Yet the Internet has provided an alternative "public sphere" to address abuses and a call for action in the name of woman's rights. With the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, this has been especially true as it provided an essential tool in not only addressing those concerns, but as a rallying point to help spur new movements in the region. This paper will explore how Feminist scholars have addressed the field of International Relations to bring out women's voices and how the Internet has provided a "virtual public sphere" that has allowed further democratization of global networks and perspectives, giving women a more powerful tool in the MENA to use against patriarchal forces.*

Engendering the Public Sphere:

Women and Online Activism in the Middle East and North Africa

»By *Adan Falcon*

Introduction

In examining civil society and the public sphere, feminist scholars have historically pointed out both fields to be cast as male-dominated. Yet, with a growing international women's suffrage and women's movement, these fields have expanded, democratized, and feminized through the course of the twentieth century.¹ For better or worse, globalization has helped transform this sphere. For better, a "global space" has emerged that has helped justify debates, and associational activities as well as collective action have taken place from and because of it. Globalization has introduced new lines of communication and technology, like the World Wide Web, that have fundamentally changed our patterns of life. With this development, we see an emergence of new global networks and literature on subjects such as transnational public sphere, transnational social movements, transnational advocacy net-

works, and transnational feminist networks.² For worse, Western countries have been increasing pressure for governments in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to take diplomatic actions that have resulted in severe co-optation by, such as increased financial and political support to strengthen democratic institutions that fit a strict Western model of democracy and political participation.

With women having a growing role in this process, the public sphere is said to be "engendered and feminized" as women have emerged as political actors and agents in civil society who are challenging the relationship between state and society and challenging the "monopoly of the state and men over the public sphere."³ This paper will explore how women in the MENA are using strategic means to challenge institutions and global networks through the use of the Internet. As access to the Internet has grown amongst women in the MENA region, their voices have managed to accom-

plish extraordinary outreach to rally citizens to stand against repressive regimes. This was especially prevalent when Asmaa Mahfouz created one of the greatest rallying calls in Egypt in a video she made through Youtube in February of 2011. In the video, Mahfouz called for women and, especially, men to come out to Tahrir Square to protest Mubarak's regime after four men had burned themselves alive in front of the Parliament's offices.⁴ Thousands showed up, birthing a movement that would eventually cast Mubarak out of office.

In exploring the topic of engendering the public sphere, this paper will cite works from Feminist scholars that have challenged scholars within the international relations field to change their approach, and it will also cite readings on critical theory as it has been applied to online activism. This paper will then analyze the case study of Saudi Arabia, where women are legally prohibited from driving and are currently demanding the right to drive.

Gendering International Relations

There were contending issues within the field of International Relations (IR) when feminist IR scholars began referencing each other's works in the late 1980s.⁵ Several scholars and feminists already had pre-existing hesitation in embracing the term "IR," as it signified relations among states and ignored the multitude of actors and issues that make up world politics.⁶ They also stood against the favored positivist approach of "realists and liberals, and favored hermeutic, historically contingent, sociological, and/or ethnographically based methodologies to those influenced by the natural sciences and economics."⁷ Attempting to avoid falling into the positivist pattern of trying to find some way to explain the behavior of states, feminists are motivated to move towards emancipation through the investigation of the lives of individuals on the margins of society who have never been the focal subject matters of IR. This bottom-up approach contrasts with the top-down approach of positivist IR scholars, bringing to light the everyday lived experiences of women and how they exercise political and economic power at both state and global levels. This untraditional approach may have been, or continues to be, one of the main reasons why feminism remains on the outskirts of the discipline of IR and why several mainstream international relations scholars have stayed critical of the theory.

In positivism, according to J. Ann Tickner's examination of the Feminist methodological contribution to IR, there is no distinction between the social and natural world, as the "social world has regularities like the natural world...distinction between facts and values, and the way to determine the truth of statements about the external world is by appealing to neutral facts."⁸ Yet, the foundation of the IR discipline may be threatened if gender is taken seriously; the field's foundation consists of primarily men that adhere to rational choice theory. Rational choice theory is

an ideology rooted in the generalized view in which the behavior of states reflects the highly individualist competitive behavior of Western men.⁹ This has especially been prevalent in the United States. IR fields such as neoliberal economic policies have become embedded in governments and major institutions, making it difficult for alternative approaches—ranging from Marxism to critical theory—to have a strong presence in the mainstream of IR, particularly in the Western hemisphere.¹⁰

Constructivism has turned out to provide a greater window of opportunity for feminism and IR to intersect, as the theory focuses “on the ideational processes that construct the world rather than on given agents and material structure typical of conventional IR.”¹¹ Existing states and international institutions cannot be constructed and then analyzed as given entities when examining international politics. Understanding different actors’ identities, the identities they serve, and how they are important is crucial before we can delve into understanding states or international institutions.

So when placing gender in this framework, as seen in Prugl’s text, *The Global Construction of Gender*, the rules set up are distributed unequally. The world exists under rule that is persistent of asymmetric social relations.¹² This pattern carries into institutions, including international organizations, constructed “when people talk, follow rules, and engage in various social practices. This interaction spurs a dialectic between people and societies co-constructing each other.”¹³ Prugl uses Onuf’s Wittgensteinian language-based constructivism that focuses on rules acting as precedents in society, giving it meaning; gender concepts’ meaning makes society out to be unequal. It is then useful to examine how the language existing in a society uses it to create subordination of one sex over the other. The practice of gendering constructivism disrupts the focus of IR by shifting the focal point to gender. Gendered constructivism uses sex as a central issue for analysis and carries itself out in social practices with codes of power that are inter-subjectively constituted with categories such as gender, race, and class. Prugl proposes a specification in term for such practices from constructivism to “feminist constructivism.”¹⁴ As opposed to the realist point of view of there being an anarchical international system, the world is made up of international institutions and social movements. Gender politics distort global politics and international politics become another set of practices; gender is constructed via international institutions. Within these institutions, a space is created for emancipation from intense negotiation between the different actors. One way in which these spaces can be harnessed by actors is through online activism.

Expression of Identity

Variations in identity associated with gender may impact the understanding and consequences of actions taken by different forms of mobilization. In using the Internet, instead of the “public sphere,” which is a concept originally conceived by Jürgen Habermas to explain the environment for bourgeois consciousness rising against dynastic rule through access to education and circulation of printed books, pamphlets, and letters in the 18th and 19th century, a “virtual public sphere” has taken its place.¹⁵ In the “virtual public spheres,” people “freely attempt to create and negotiate understandings, consensual truths and critiques,” that propose alternative imaginaries and explore various strategies to spur fruition of these goals.¹⁶ The style of networking that could be fostered through the Internet differs from traditional kinds of social movement leadership structures that would stress more masculine notions of organizations.¹⁷ This development could potentially create a transnational network that would offer an alternative to male-dominated political organizations, express the political awakening of women through their engagement in information exchange, empower women to reach equality as well as social justice and democratization within society at large.¹⁸

Counter-hegemonic actions take place to fight against the dominant paradigm.¹⁹ One powerful way this type of action could take place is through communicating inter-subjective knowledge.²⁰ The communicated message would convey a notion in their lived experience that would be easily relatable, that could communicate what it is like to be them, and to live their life through content posted online.

Ideological Reproduction

In the desert areas of Saudi Arabia, women can be seen driving around occasionally; in a major city, however, it is virtually unheard of. In late May of 2011, a Youtube video was posted with Manal al-Sharif, an Internet Security Consultant with Saudi Aramco, wearing sunglasses and an *abbaya* while driving around Khobar, one of the major cities in Saudi Arabia where Aramco is located, with her friend Wajeha al-Huwaider filming her. The two of them discussed with one another their frustrations with women not being allowed to drive in Saudi Arabia, the position they were placed in society, and what kind of inconvenience it provides for them. “God forbid, her husband is with her and he has a heart attack or anything else,” describes al-Sharif. In response, al-Huwaider tells her, “A woman is not just for an emergency.”²¹

The frustration both were facing stemmed from the constructed influence of Wahhabism, which forbids women in Saudi Arabia from driving, and prevents them from having an active role in politics and society. The root of Wahhabi Islam is in a fundamentalist interpretation of Islamic teachings from the second half of the eighteenth century.²² The presence of Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia had originally maintained its position in higher standings through the royal family being dedicated followers. In 1992, its legitimacy was further validated by the passing of the Basic Laws of Saudi Arabia in response to the Persian Gulf War. In Article 23 of the country's Basic Laws, it is deemed that the "state protects Islam; it implements its *Sharia*; it orders people to do right and shut evil; it fulfills the duty regarding God's call."

Al-Sharif's frustration arose from a night she was unable to get home to her son. As she kept hailing for a taxi, men on the road "heaped abuse" on her as she struggled to find a way to get home.²³ Rather than proceeding to be docile about her treatment, she posted a video not too long after calling for a protest on June 17th, 2011 for women everywhere in Saudi Arabia to drive their cars in protest. She used Facebook to create an event called "Women2Drive," with the intent of informing and getting women to sign up for the protest. Another group promptly emerged, threatening to beat women caught driving.²⁴

Women have also been in opposition of any groups in general that fight for reform, as it opposes their traditions and identity. Rowda Yousef had gained international attention when her campaign, "My Guardian Knows What's Best For Me," had called out against women fighting for "liberal reforms." In two months, the group had managed to gain 5,400 signatures in a petition that demanded "rejecting the ignorant requests of those inciting liberty" and called for "punishments for those who call for equality between men and women, mingling between men and women in mixed environments, and other unacceptable behaviors."²⁵ With the rise of non-profit groups and non-governmental organizations coming into Saudi Arabia, as well as other Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) countries since 9/11, there has been an increase in campaigns for women's rights and issues to be on the forefront. The group has looked at this campaign, along with other Western-influenced campaigns, as a protection of their identity as women in Saudi Arabia from Western influences that would otherwise have no real understanding of women in the country.

The Saudi King had for a long time promised to do away with the ban. The royal family has control of various and powerful components of the government, but it is split between those who actively call for reforms and those who want to maintain stability in the country through Sharia law. Yet to maintain legitimacy in the country, they have to adhere to Wahhabi clerics, who have acted as another branch of the government with a vast network of institutions, universities, schools, and specialized centers. As these components constitute their government, the royal fam-

ily has even sculpted its international and regional alliances to protect its power, especially with its alliance with the United States to help maintain stability in the country since the discovery of oil in 1938. Even with the recent introduction of change in the country by allowing women to vote and participate in municipal elections, this would only provide a very minor role for them, as elections and municipal electorate members are seen to only have limited power in the government. Critics of the ruling al-Saud family have described the elections as a charade since “elections are for only half the seats on councils that have few powers.”²⁶ Since the Arab Spring of 2011 has reached Saudi Arabia, the priority for reform and women’s rights has been relatively low, as increasing protests from several groups demand for an end to the absolute monarchy. Human Rights Watch group had described the situation there as turning adult women into “perpetual minors.”²⁷

Reproduction of ideological Islamic gender roles has been accompanied with the dramatic transformation undergone in the region such as the rise of modern state systems, Western colonial intervention, and various reform and nationalist movements. These processes have yet to have a significant impact on the patriarchal values, which flow underneath and impair the capacity of the state.²⁸ Colonial authorities in the MENA have left existing gender relations largely intact, along with middle-class reform and nationalist movements. Even secular legal codes adopted in many countries in the region have generally deferred to religious authority for family matters or personal status laws. Plus, nationalist and Islamist discourses have done a great deal to invoke the ideals of Islamic morality and “cultural authenticity” to control and channel change.²⁹ To gain support of this, the elite deploy both secular and Islamic discourses.

The region has seen an increase in economic and educational opportunities for women and the redefinition of the nuclear family, away from the patriarchal family structure (for example: arranged marriages being discarded for romantic attachment). Yet gender norms are to be followed and adhered to, resulting in deep internalizations of abuses. In Egypt, for example, a recent study found that rural Egyptian women viewed female circumcision as a form of beautification, not of violence.³⁰

Even with the Arab Spring movement where “women have taken leading roles in many of the democratic uprisings in the Middle East” that have been calling for democracy in Yemen, Egypt, Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia, women are still under scrutiny. In Egypt, women were required to take virginity tests in Tahrir Square. The government’s explanation for this? Decent (meaning virginal) women would not spend their nights in the public square.³¹

The type of treatment given to al-Sharif was not far off from what typically happens in this region, but in taking that drive in her car, she stood against the ideological reproduction

of Islamic ideology and the general treatment of repressive regimes committing abuses against women. Despite this, she was later arrested and kept in jail for a little over a week. The incident had caught international attention, as the viewership of the video had risen on Youtube, and the number of people who said they would participate in her proposed protest had risen to 500,000 on the Facebook page. After she was jailed, more than 4,500 Saudis had signed an online petition to the king to free her. Critics of the action had come from both within Saudi Arabia and abroad, as many of them cite that what she had done was not a moral or criminal offence, but “it merely violates a long-held but divisive custom in the kingdom.”³²

Worldwide attention had turned to her and what she had incited in her country that went along with the Arab Spring. Malcolm Smart, Amnesty International’s director for the MENA Program, had described her action as “following in a long tradition of women activists around the world who have put themselves on the line to expose and challenge discriminatory laws and policies. As such, we consider her a prisoner of conscience.”³³ In what she incited, her friend, al-Howeider, who had filmed her, described the action as such:

When I saw Manal’s initiative of launching a ‘Women Drivers’ day on June 17, I immediately decided to help her. The fact that she uses new technologies like Facebook and Twitter means that she is capable of reaching a much bigger number of people. I remember in 2007 trying to rally my friends by email and over the phone: it was a much longer process. In just a few days, Manal had already alerted thousands of people and even gotten local media’s attention.³⁴

Al-Sharif was not the first one to incite this type of action, as many women before her have gained international attention when they were detained for driving without a man. How this action stood apart though from the other women who continue to be punished by police was that the international attention given to al-Sharif had sparked several other women to use the same medium of the Internet to air their concerns, carry out different campaigns, and have it brought up to the international community to put pressure on the king to allow women to drive.³⁵ Through this “virtual public sphere,” women are able to construct campaigns with videos, testimonies, and other mediums to address abuses more easily. Even the mobilization carried out is not limited to only gaining local support, but support from abroad who feel connected to the movement, creating a transnational mobilized force.

Conclusion

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 Saudi Arabia, and the rest of MENA, may see new changes spur, but these changes may not mean much without women in both the public sphere and the “virtual public sphere.” To exclude them would mean further inequality and never a creating a revolution that would allow a more positive space to exist within the international institutions and global networks. Yet the grip hold of Islamic ideology may prove to make this reality questionable as it continues to play an active role in the movements of the Arab Spring. What this could result is a further homogenous identity rather than a diversity of groups being represented in an open democratic forum. Prugl’s statement, which claims that international organizations play a role in global processes including negotiations between varieties of actors, would then be pointless if the spaces do not provide openings for alternative interpretations. They would no longer serve as sites of emancipation.

With this paper, I hope that there will be further research in the ways in which women are using the Internet as a forum for activism in International Relations and its further challenging of major systems. There is also a greater need for research in IR in how LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) groups in the MENA region are utilizing these tools to address their abuses and progress as well. A blog recently written from a member of the site, *Gay Middle East*, on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s site in the United Kingdom has portrayed an already dismal view of the exclusion already being felt by LGBTQ groups in the MENA. There are no guarantees for improvement in the wake of the demise of many authoritarian rulers. Ben-Ali’s regime of terror and corruption may have collapsed in Tunisia and its security apparatus vanished, but new forces have quickly stepped in, like the Islamist En Nahdha Party, calling for the protection of “traditional values” that link or align themselves with demands to reform the “state”. Egypt is currently facing this too as the Muslim Brotherhood is attempting to usurp the revolt instigated by the youth and urban population by using populist and often homophobic messages.³⁶

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ABSTRACT » *This paper discusses the implications of the influx of Palestinian refugee on the Maronite Christian population in Lebanon. They perceived it as a threat to their way of life because throughout history, the Maronites have guarded and protected their community from invaders and from religious discrimination. Through extensive research on the effect that the refugee problem had on the Maronites, it is evident that citizenship, solidarity and religious violence played a massive role in not only how the Maronites dealt with the Palestinian refugees, but also the violence on both sides that followed.*

Case Study on Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon

» by *LEA CHERNOCK*

Introduction

The Maronite Christian community existed since the 7th century. They have a very strong and influential community and have guarded and protected their community for hundreds of years from foreign invaders. In fact, during Ottoman rule, the Maronites refused *Dhimmi* status—a non-Muslim subject in a Muslim state—granted by the Muslim Caliphs to Jews and Christians.¹ Because they refused the *Dhimmi* status, under Islamic rule, the Maronites have kept themselves distinct from any other Christian group in the Middle East. This is because they were keen to protect the Maronite culture and country. However, the battle to secure their heritage and religious freedom is ongoing in present day context. This case study will discuss the implications of citizenship, solidarity, and religious violence, and will illustrate the perceived threat that was

created by the mass influx of Palestinian refugees in 1948.

Literature Review

The term “refugee” has many implications. Scholars Idean Salehyan and Kristian Gleditsch define a refugee as anyone who flees their country of origin or residence for fear of politically-motivated harm, those who flee conditions of general violence – such as civil and international wars – as well as the breakdown of political structure, and those who are escaping direct government persecutions.² The Organization of African Unity’s (OAU) definition of refugees incorporates population movements caused by external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order.³ Within the legal definition, the Immigration and Nationality Act considers a refugee as any person who is outside any country of such person’s national-

ity or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided.⁴

In order to better comprehend the Palestinian refugee situation in Lebanon, the term “spillover” must be defined; it has two meanings. When refugee presence causes regional instability, a “spillover” is said to occur, affecting the broader framework of international relations.⁵ The nature and consequences of refugee spillover have been contemplated in various realms. One theory contends that countries that experience an influx of refugees from neighboring states are significantly more likely to experience civil wars themselves.⁶ Scholars Ragnihild Ek and Ahmed Karadawi argue, “Refugees often appear to develop their political awareness and engage in activities which aim to influence the situation in their countries of origin.”⁷ They add that refugees “are either actively involved in the conflict that caused their exodus, or they act as a broad constituency for political groupings challenging the territorial shape or the power structure of the state of origin.”⁸

These contending theories are pertinent to understanding the underlying issues that occurred in Lebanon among the populations of incoming Sunni Palestinians and existing Lebanese Christians. Other authors, like Rami Siklawi, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of North Texas who has a doctorate in Middle Eastern Studies, demonstrates how the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) had a significant effect on the demographics of Lebanon and how a state was effectively created within a state, leading to the 1975-1990 Civil War.⁹ The theories that have been proposed so far, especially the one by Salehyna and Gledistch, are on par with the issues that occurred in Lebanon. Therefore, Salehyna and Gledistch’s theory, regarding the impact of refugees on a receiving state, can indeed escalate conflict between local communities within a state, is supported in the case of Lebanon.

Building on Salehyna and Gledistch’s theory, this case study will focus on the effects of the influx of Palestinians into Lebanon had on the Maronite population from 1948 to 1983. Also, it will discuss the overarching issues of citizenship, solidarity, and religious violence, as well as illustrate the perceived threat that the Palestinians had on the Maronites.

Background history on Lebanese Christians

After the French left Lebanon, further issues between Christian and Muslim groups became apparent. The National Pact, which was agreed on in 1943 by Sunnis, Shiites and Christians, allowed for the coexistence of the three groups and for a three-tiered system between them, excluding foreign involvement.¹⁰ Simultaneously, the Pact spurred distrust among all parties, especially among the various Christian sects, particularly the Maronites. Originally, the Maronites

wanted their own state within greater Lebanon. The fight to keep a distinct Maronite culture separate from a Muslim Arabized culture threatened the 1,400-year-old Muslim community in the heart of Lebanon. When the Arab League was created in 1945, it signaled the solidarity of the Arab Nationalist world; however, for Maronite Christians, the reforms that the pan-Arab Lebanese policy created escalated the fears of the minority. The Maronite Bishop of Beirut—who constantly attacked the government—openly denounced the government’s attempts to eliminate the presence of the Christians in Lebanon and the Middle East.¹¹

Starting in the 1940s, the Lebanese government instituted pan-Arab reforms that escalated the fears of the Christian minority, especially throughout the 1970s. Specifically, these reforms reflected Lebanon’s greater role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, imposed a unique type of socialism, increased Muslim power in government, and decreased Christian power in Lebanon.¹² When the Palestinians began arriving through southern Lebanon in 1948, Christian Maronites feared that the Sunni-majority Muslim Palestinians would further marginalize the Christians in Lebanon. Therefore, the question of citizenship for these newcomers arose.

Lebanese Citizenship

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A wave of about 100,000 Palestinian refugees arrived in Lebanon, the majority of which came from the countryside and the coastal cities of Galilee.¹³ Some planned to temporarily reside in Lebanon while they waited for a time that they could safely return home. Unfortunately, this time never came. Lebanese governmental policy towards the new immigrants was contingent on religion and keeping the balance of power. Since a majority of incoming Palestinians were Sunni Muslims, and Christian Palestinians comprised merely 15 percent of the population in Lebanon, this gave comfort to Lebanese Christians who feared a decrease in their own population.¹⁴ The Christian Lebanese government would not grant citizenship to the majority of the population. Successive Lebanese governments refused to integrate the refugees into Lebanon’s own population due to a Christian opposition to such an increase in Lebanon’s Muslim population.¹⁵

However, the Lebanese Christian populations made exceptions allowing Palestinian Christians to become citizens during a time when the Christian minority in the Levant felt insecure; if all the Palestinians were naturalized, it would change the demographics of power in Lebanon, making Muslims the majority and the Christians a further minority.¹⁶ By granting citizenship to the Christians, it gave the Maronites more security among a majority Muslim population. While accepting citizenship for Christian Palestinians into Lebanese society, it allowed for more Christians in Lebanon to compete with the high birthrates from the Muslim population. As Kamal Salibi, a prominent Lebanese Historian said, hardly anyone doubted that the balance of

numbers in the country had long been tipping increasingly in favor of the Muslims.¹⁷ This was a concern that could potentially disrupt the National Pact's policy of equal access to all Shiites, Sunnis and Christians in Lebanon. In 1932, a census put the Maronite population ahead of the Muslim population, but in 1970, the Muslim population exceeded that of the Christians.¹⁸ Muslims became the majority in Lebanon, causing further issues among the minority Maronites. The real point of contention began when the Palestinian Liberation Organization came into existence.

Palestinian Solidarity

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In the 1960s, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was created, which acted as the sole representative of the Palestinian people. Within Lebanon, this group allowed for and encouraged a growing Palestinian power and played in to a Palestinian self-awareness.¹⁹ After becoming a strong entity in Lebanon, the PLO motivated much of the Palestinian people to take a stand against Israel. The PLO's military efforts first began in 1968, when they established bases in Southern Lebanon in order to attack Israel from the border. While the formation of the PLO and its resistance efforts were notable for the Palestinians, its creation escalated further tensions between Muslims and Christians who perceived a Muslim takeover.²⁰

The Shiite Muslims were the first group to truly support the Palestinians during their time of hardship. In 1948, when the Palestinians came into Lebanon, they were received with sympathy from the poor community of Shi'a in the Southern tip of the country.²¹ Several Shi'a families took in Palestinian refugees. Among the Palestinian refugees, not everyone was as lucky upon their arrival into Lebanon, but those that were stayed with the local Shi'a families of the town.²² Also, in the late 1960s and 1970s there was also solidarity among Muslim groups supporting the PLO actions in Southern Lebanon, because of their joint effort to fight against Israel.

After Arabs failed to counter the 1967 war in Israel, the PLO started preparing for an attack on Israel. There was an escalated tension as the leadership of the PLO gained more power and fraternized with the socialist and Muslim groups in Lebanon. In 1969, due to pressures from within Lebanon, Syria, and Egypt, the Lebanese government signed the Cairo Agreement. The Maronites fell under immense pressure from the Arab world and had no choice but to sign the agreement.²³ The Cairo Agreement gave the pro-Palestinian guerrillas autonomy in the camps and in the southern border region of Lebanon.²⁴ This freedom of operation allowed the PLO to form their strong offensive against Israel from the Lebanese-Israel border without interference from Lebanese forces. Furthermore, the resistance movement had widespread support among the Lebanese in coastal cities, especially the poor and middle class who were conscious of their Arab identity,

within a diversity of religions. Sunnis, Shi'a and Greek Orthodox Lebanese all felt solidarity with the Palestinian resistance movement. This support legitimized the PLO's actions.

Although the larger Arab communities sympathized with the Palestinian cause, the solidarity for the PLO in the Levant upset the Maronites who were not looking for a consolidated Islamic state but rather a greater Christian Lebanon.²⁵ The Maronite leadership viewed the Palestinian movement with increasing consternation and anger, fueled by their government's inability to curb the resistance and the hypocrisy of neighboring regimes that were egging on the resistance.²⁶ The majority of Maronites became upset that their ruling government could not do anything to stop the resistance that was altering Lebanon. The Maronites saw the solidarity of the Lebanese Muslims with the Palestinians as a potentially dangerous and destabilizing factor for their community and country.²⁷ Epitomizing the fear that Arabism would replace the Lebanese identity, the traditional Maronite leader, Chamille Sham'un, predicted the Palestinians might catalyze a movement for change within the Lebanese population.²⁸ The unity among the different sects within Lebanon further angered the Maronites. Violence broke out among them, leading to a civil war.

Maronite and Palestinian Violence

Similar to Lebanon's predicament with the Sunni Palestinian refugee influx, in the 1970s, Jordan was dealing with the threat of the PLO towards the Hashemite Kingdom. The PLO had created a new state within Jordan, barring the Jordanian authorities from the refugee camps through the Cairo Act and challenging King Hussein's rule.²⁹ The PLO had control of the camps, which enabled the violent activities that took place between the Jordan and Israeli border. Further chaos ensued after Palestinians hijacked four airliners in Jordan, provoking King Hussein to launch Black September, of 1970.³⁰ Black September had great effects on the PLO transnationally, particularly in Lebanon. Phares states that, "King Hussein's regime crushed the Palestinian apparatus in Jordan, pushing thousands of civilians and fighters to seek refuge."³¹ Therefore, Maronites feared Lebanon would have the same fate as Jordan. Jordan's civil war in September of 1970 "intensified Maronite fears of the Palestinians considerably. According to one study, during the five years after Black September 1970, the Christians armed themselves by smuggling in M16 rifles and other small weapons and by spending their evenings in arms drill."³² The Maronites prepared to protect their country from the same fate as Jordan. In early 1974, 6,700 AK-47 Kalashnikov assault rifles cosigned to Camille Sham'un's militia arrived at the port of Jounieh.³³ In fact, both sides received small arms from foreign governments. For example, Syria, Libya, and Iraq poured in enormous financial and material aid to the Palestinians; Maronites received weapons from Bulgaria, Greece, West Africa, and Germany.³⁴

In 1973, the Lebanese Christian Army was seething from the PLO's resistance. It felt this resistance was intertwined with Israel's involvement in Lebanon, so the Lebanese Christian Army began bombing within its own borders. Moreover, the Lebanese Christian Army used their air force to shell the refugee camps of Beirut and its suburbs, where the PLO worked.³⁵ This violence led to the Civil War of 1975.

Lebanese Civil War 1975

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Civil war broke between the Lebanese militias and the Lebanese who supported the Palestinian guerrillas. The war officially began on April 13th, 1975 in the Christian district of Rumaniyeh, where the right-wing Maronite-supported Phalange party held considerable power and influence. As one Derouen recalls:

The Phalange party was attending a consecration service and outside, members of the army were diverting traffic away from the front of the church when a vehicle carrying half a dozen Palestinian militiamen firing their rifles into the air came on to the scene. The Palestinians refused to divert...The Phalanges halted their progress and attacked them, killing the Palestinian driver and three of their own.³⁶

The Christian Lebanese militias became very active during this time, where the Right's militias were recruited by either the Phalangist Party or by Camille Chamoun, former president of the republic. Overall, the Christian Lebanese ties were with Western powers. Meanwhile, the Left was more aligned with neighboring pan-Arab sentiments, as the Nasserist Lebanese parties recruited the militias of the Left.³⁷

Those who were in solidarity with the Palestinian cause fought against those who were not. In January of 1976, the Phalangists created a blockade around the Tall al-Za'tar Palestinian refugee camp, responding to the refugee camp's placement in a Maronite region near Beirut.³⁸ The PLO could no longer avoid involvement in the fighting, because the attack was directly against the Palestinians. Yasser Arafat, head of the PLO, declared that the organization could no longer stand on the sidelines.³⁹ The PLO knew that it had to fight among the left against the Maronite right-wing, but their willingness to fight exacerbated Maronites' fears. Threatened by the PLO's involvement, the Maronite leadership met at the Presidential Palace to declare that the struggle was now between Christian Lebanese and Palestinian—it was prepared to defend the Lebanese homeland from this perceived threat.⁴⁰ On January 23rd, during some of the most brutal fighting, head of

intelligence for the PLO, Abu Iyad, declared that President Franjiyyah and the rightist command was “cooperating in a plot to liquidate the Palestinian Revolution.”⁴¹

Syria soon intervened to facilitate peace in the area, which was welcomed to a degree. Contingents of the Sa’iqah pro-Palestinian guerrilla force and the Palestine Liberation Army were more obedient to Syria’s President Assad than to Palestinian Chairman Arafat.⁴² While the PLO welcomed mediation in principle, the organization remained suspicious.⁴³ It feared that Syria was allied to the Lebanese Right. Syria intervened for the Maronites in their struggle against the Muslim populations in Lebanon. The Syrian mediation proposals were endorsed by President Franjiyyah and constituted a return to the old Lebanese model. They attempted to achieve a peaceful return to Lebanon’s structure prior to the war. After the Syrian peacekeeping mission, there was severe division among the Palestinians. Corruption grew rapidly “within the Palestinian political body, even as PLO’s influence began to decline in the wake of the 1982 Israeli Invasion.”⁴⁴ The corruption and division ultimately led to the PLO’s defeat within Lebanon.

The Effect of the War on the Maronites

Due to the war, the Maronite population was severely weakened and many lives were lost. The aftermath of struggling against an alliance of traditional Muslim power, tied to the PLO, caused the Christians of Lebanon to shrink to a smaller minority group within the country. However, they were still relatively successful in retaining military and economic power although the price for this autonomy was very high.⁴⁵ In spite of great losses in life, the Maronites maintained some land, although the civil war destroyed a great portion of this land: Between 1975 and 1982, dozens of Christian villages and towns outside the central enclave were attacked, razed, and ethnically cleansed.⁴⁶

Conclusion

Since Syria invaded Lebanon in 1990, it has controlled the central region.⁴⁷ The expelled Muslims were allowed to return, but the Christians who were driven out have not been allowed to return to their homes.⁴⁸ This has been a predicament for the Maronites, who once had a strong hand in control over Lebanon. Maronites blame the spillover of Palestinians and the effects that it had on Lebanon. Moreover, the issue now is not so much the Palestinians but rather, the Syrian

occupation of regions of Lebanon; there are 7,000 Lebanese refugees in Israel while many have fled to the United States and Europe.⁴⁹

The Maronites in the us and Europe have reemerged in fighting for rights to return to Lebanon through human rights organizations.⁵⁰ Through media involvement and the promotion of their cause, they hope to illuminate the alleged illegal occupation of Lebanon by Syria. Furthermore, a growing student movement has bolstered the Christian opposition to Syria, resulting in demonstrations against the regime that have attracted media attention.⁵¹

Ultimately, the Palestinian spillover into Lebanon had great effects on the demographics and religious populations in Lebanon. Refugees from neighboring countries can have strong connections to their homeland, which can lead to militarization in part of the host country to fight against the opposition in their homeland. Although refugee spillovers do not always cause contention, in the case of the Maronites, the Palestinian refugee spillover was a major development in a number of Maronites becoming refugees themselves.

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ABSTRACT » *The purpose of this paper is to examine the link that exists between environmentally conscious or “green” building practices in Japan and the United States. This is a general comparison of the expansion of green technology in the two countries, with a specific focus to green architecture practices, household appliance regulation, and environmentally conscious cities. The methodology used was an empirical method based upon case studies of existing and future practices. In conclusion, I found that both the United States and Japan have implemented similar practices, but the altering forms of implementation have resulted in varying degrees of success.*

Green Building and Development:

The Japanese and American Perspectives

» by *JILLIAN MORRISON*

Introduction

Since the conceptualization of nation-states, development has been a major goal for all actors in the international arena. However, development is a far-reaching and broad concept. It seems to be common knowledge that all states require development, but what exactly does that development entail? Infrastructure? Economics? Job markets? In the traditional context, development frequently falls into the discourse of economics. Within the context of the Industrial Revolution, many deemed rapid economic growth and urbanization to be of prevailing importance, consequently little attention was paid to environmental concerns. Regardless of the reasoning behind why environmental factors were ignored, the results were detrimental. Even centuries after the Industrial Revolution, businesses practices continue to be unchecked in favor of economic

growth, and the environment continues to be neglected. Yet, economic growth and environmental sustainability do not need to be mutually exclusive concepts. They can work in symbiosis to provide positive results in both the environmental and economic arenas. However, historically this was not believed to be a viable possibility, as experts and many economists commonly assumed that the only way for economic growth to persist was at the expense of the environment.

This attitude toward environmentalism and paradigm of development persisted until the late 1980s, when the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), released a book in 1987 titled *Our Common Future*, or the “Brundtland Report,” formally introduced and defined the term “sustainable development.”¹ The WCED defines sustainable development as: “Development that meets the needs of the present without

compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”² This is the most widely used and accepted definition of sustainable development. The role of sustainable development makes perfect sense when one looks at the definition of sustainability. Sustainability by definition integrates natural systems with human patterns and celebrates continuity, uniqueness, and place making.³

Economic growth is integral for a country’s development. Yet, unhindered economic growth—without any concern for environmental damage or consequences in the long term—has been shown to have damaging side effects. How can a country stimulate both its economic growth as well as maintain environmental integrity? There are many avenues that can be explored in terms of sustainable development. This paper seeks to examine green technology as a means of supporting both economic as well as environmental growth. By utilizing green technology in economic practices, both the United States and Japan have been able to reap environmental and economical rewards.⁴ Green technology is a broad concept, and it crosscuts different areas of focus. For this paper, I have examined green technology as it pertains to green architecture practices, household appliance regulation, and the advent of environmentally conscious cities. Both Japan and the United States have implemented different components of these aspects of green technology, albeit with varying degrees of success based upon the strategies and tools used.

The release of “An Inconvenient Truth” in 2004 caused an increase in the discussion and awareness of green technology. Even though this may have caused a re-awakening among the masses, the study of green technology existed far earlier. Green technology came into the modern vernacular with the push for developing alternative energy resources and conservation measures, after the instability and price shocks of the petroleum industry in the 1970s. Green technology is a systems-level approach to produce and process design, where environmental attributes are treated as primary objectives or opportunities, rather than simple constraints. Moreover, these practices emphasize the legitimacy of environmental objectives as consistent with the overall requirements of product quality and economy.

There are a variety of different fields of study within green technology, including green energy, green building, environmentally preferred purchasing, green chemistry, and green nanotechnology. All of these fields of study adhere to the goals of waste reduction, materials management, pollution prevention, and product enhancement.

Japan & Green Technology

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Many view Japan as being on the forefront of green development. Per a report assembled by the Federal Environmental Agency of Germany, the market for environment-oriented businesses has been rapidly growing in Japan in recent years, with a forecasted growth of 50 percent is forecasted in the field of recycling and energy efficiency technologies. Furthermore, the Japanese Ministry of Environment is expecting a doubling of the environmental market regarding pollutant control and energy efficiency.⁵ Presently, Japan is viewed as an example of effective green development; however, this was not always the case. Reaching the compromise between economic development and environmental protection has been a challenge for the Japanese government.

The Japanese government has indicated desires to continue encouraging economic development and advancement, but the issue of environmental safety remains a pressing issue.⁶ The role of green building as a tool of green development has been incorporated into Japanese ideology since the end of World War II. After World War II, Japan underwent a massive nationwide rebuilding effort, and during the following decades, large-scale urbanization and construction ensued.⁷ Since so much of Japan required reconstruction in World War II's aftermath, Japanese urban planning had the opportunity to incorporate green practices into their actual building processes—rather than going back into preexisting cities and communities and trying to incorporate green practices, as many other countries have done.⁸

Within the past sixty years, Japanese urban green architecture has flourished thanks to new federal mechanisms in place. The current green building guidelines that exist in Japan are called CASBEE, or the Comprehensive Assessment System for Building Environmental Efficiency.⁹ CASBEE developed according to the following policies: 1) The system should be structured to award high assessments to superior buildings, thereby enhancing incentives to designers and others; 2) The assessment system should be as simple as possible; 3) The system should be applicable to buildings in a wide range of applications; 4) The system consider issues and problems unique to Japan and Asia.¹⁰

Centering on the belief that green building and sustainability should be incorporated throughout the entire building process, from idea to implementation, rather than being casually “tossed” in as an afterthought in the final process, CASBEE synthesizes the pre-design, design, and post-design phases together. Thus, at the pre-design stage, CASBEE assists in assessing the basic environmental impact of the project, selecting a suitable site, and evaluating the environmental performance of the project.¹¹ At the design stage, concepts and policies are further examined to define their ecological, technical, social, cultural, esthetic and economic concepts, as well as a self-

evaluation process that seeks to integrate the design that is the best practice.¹² Finally, once the design manifests as a building, it is subjected to an overall verification to evaluate its sustainability. The results of this verification are then reflected in improvements to the implemented design and concept.¹³

Ever since its development in 2002, CASBEE has proven to be influential and important in the spread and implementation of green building in the Japanese construction industry. Since its inception, 15 major local governments across the country have mandated the use of CASBEE or have created incentive programs to help promote its adoption.¹⁴ For example, the cities of Osaka and Nagoya will subsidize projects that obtain a high sustainability score; Kawasaki provides lower interest rate home loans, and other cities provide some flexibility in the building permit and review process. As of January 2009, more than 3,600 buildings have been submitted for CASBEE evaluation.¹⁵ By measuring how the construction of a building will impact the surrounding environment, as CASBEE has done, a more holistic and harmonious view of the environmental and societal impact is created. Thus, CASBEE's system is conducive with the Japanese goal of harmony in daily life, as demonstrated by the country's traditional Shinto-asceticism.

"Eco-model cities" is another tool Japan is using in its quest toward green building and planning. Eco-model cities began in 2008 as a means of modeling a low-carbon society.¹⁶ It promotes a multi-sector approach that integrates transportation, energy waste and forest conservation. The project includes a total of 13 cities of varying sizes that will meet a goal of 30 percent reduction of GHG (Greenhouse gas emissions) by 2020 and a 50 percent reduction by 2050.¹⁷ Eco-model cities combine both the ideas of green building and energy efficiency under the same umbrella. While this is certainly a big challenge to tackle, these new types of cities seem to be producing positive results. Each of the cities within the eco-model program chooses a different focus as a means of becoming more "green." For example, Kitakyushu, a city located in the Northern part of Kyushu, Japan, has taken on the title of "A Green Frontier City." It is located in one of Japan's four largest industrial zones, and was a key producer and supplier of steel and chemicals. Indeed, its role in these industries played an important role in the modernization of Japan in the 20th century.¹⁸ However, the rapid economic and industrial growth led to environmental damage to the area. By implementing the tools of urban development, green planning and green construction, the city of Kitakyushu has worked to negate these effects. The city is known as an "advanced low carbon model district," which means that they are implementing urban development projects that will hopefully become the model for a low carbon society based on the practice of environmentally-conscious urban planning.¹⁹ They are building energy-saving houses that utilize advanced technology and increase the concentration of public transit within the city²⁰. Additionally, Kitakyushu has promoted the construction of eco-conscious buildings, making it a requirement for building

owners to evaluate their existing buildings and any future building plans using the CASBEE guidelines, then reporting their results and findings to the city planning department.²¹ Although the concept of “green” cities is not exclusive to Japan, the governmental implementation of green cities on a national basis is. If the eco-cities are successful in their goals of encouraging green living and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, hopefully their concepts and structure will be copied by other nations. The national eco-cities model piloted by Japan could prove to be an essential tool in green technology and development.

Another program that has been used as a means of encouraging green planning and sustainability is the idea of Eco-Points. The Japanese government started the “eco-points” program in June 2009 as part of a package of measures aimed to keep the economy from collapsing in the wake of the global financial crisis.²² The program offers points for buying energy-efficient products. Those points can then be redeemed for other goods and services.²³

While this program was initially set up to encourage people to purchase greener appliances and stimulate the Japanese economy through the purchase of goods—like televisions, air conditioners, and so on—it has since been incorporated into green building on a larger scale under the “Emergency Economic Countermeasures for Future Growth and Security.” Under these new expanded guidelines, points for goods may be earned through new construction, or through eco-friendly and energy-efficient remodeling.²⁴ Points are also awarded for energy efficiency and improvements of thermal-insulated windows, such as double-sash or dual-paned windows. There are also points awarded for installing exterior walls, ceilings, or floor heat insulation.²⁵

The success of this particular program remains debatable as far as sustained economic success is concerned. However, it has been successful in encouraging Japanese citizens to make environmentally conscious purchasing and building choices, not only because it is good for the environment, but also because it is good for their wallets. Since the tsunami and nuclear incident in Eastern Japan in March of 2011, the Japanese government has been working to refocus its goals in terms of green energy; however, the focus behind green architecture and households on the individual level remains the same. Only time will tell how the Japanese government, private sector, and public respond to these new challenges.

The U.S.A & Green Technology

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While the United States does not necessarily draw the same parallels of environmental sustainability that Japan does, the two countries do share some similar institutions in regards to environmental sustainability. While Japan has CASBEE, the United States has the LEED pro-

gram, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, which is an internationally recognized green building certification system. LEED promotes sustainable building and development practices through a suite of rating systems that recognize projects that improve health and environmental standards.²⁶ The goal of LEED is to promote building and planning approaches that incorporate the goals and ideas of sustainability.²⁷ There are many different LEED systems available that are all tailored to their particular sector, including LEED for new construction and major renovation, existing building maintenance, neighborhood development and home construction.²⁸

When examining a site, LEED examines multiple factors: sustainability, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, locations and linkages, awareness and education, innovation in design, and regional priority.²⁹ Each of these different factors have a point level attached to them, and the total score for all of the factors constitute what LEED level that specific building or project is assigned. These underlying factors give the project one hundred possible base points and an additional six points for innovation and design and four for regional priority. Depending on how the project scores, it can receive one of the following ratings: platinum at 80 or more points, gold at 60 to 79 points, silver at 50 to 59 points, or certified at 40 to 49 points.³⁰

Currently, the private industry and public sectors both use LEED regulations. State and local governments nationwide are adopting LEED regulations for public-owned and public-funded buildings, and federal agencies, including the Departments of Defense, Agriculture, Energy, and State, have LEED initiatives.³¹ While the push for green technology and development has taken a backseat in the last few years following the economic crisis in 2008, many see LEED projects as the future. Within the American building industry, some feel that the construction crash could be attributed to economic practices which were not geared toward sustainability.³² Hopefully, through the implementation of LEED, this can be avoided in the future as LEED incorporates both economic and environmental sustainability.

Although Japan's government-sponsored program of eco-model cities is unique, environmentally conscious cities exist globally, including in the United States. Even though they are not funded on the federal level, they can still act as an example to other cities on how to live "greener" and more efficiently—both through their building and planning processes, and their consumption levels. Even if they have unique differences, most eco-cities have the following commonalities: their geographic area is compact, there is a focused attention on sustainable landscaping throughout the city, they use renewable energy resources, and they have strong incentives not to use cars.³³ All of this, in conjunction with green building practices, makes for cities that are more economically and environmentally efficient. One of the leading examples of eco-cities within the U.S. is Arcosanti,

Arizona. Arcosanti is designed according to the concept of arcology (architecture plus ecology), developed by Italian architect Paolo Soleri. According to Soleri's definition in arcology, the building and the living interact exactly as organs would in a highly evolved being.³⁴ This means that many systems work together with efficient circulation of people and resources, multi-use buildings, as well as a solar orientation for lighting, heating, and cooling.³⁵ While the vision of Arcosanti may be more concept-driven than its Japanese eco-city counterparts, the underlying goals are the same. Construction of the city began in the 1970s, and it has remained famously unfinished, in part due to financial constraints, as well as internal building issues.³⁶

Continuing with the concept of eco-cities, San Francisco's Treasure Island is another example. Treasure Island is a man-made island that was created to host the US Naval Base and house their families. Unfortunately, mass environmental problems and issues have plagued its existence. In fact, Treasure Island is classified as a "superfund" site. Superfund is the name given to the environmental program established to address abandoned hazardous waste sites.³⁷ It is also the name of the fund established by the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980, which was enacted in the wake of the discovery of toxic waste dumps in the 1970s.³⁸ It allows the U.S. government's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to clean up such sites and to compel responsible parties to perform cleanups or reimburse the government for EPA-lead cleanups. This classification is the result of massive environmental damage that was caused by the naval base.³⁹

However, Treasure Island is in the process of changing; it is going to take some time for this project to develop—the estimated date of completion is in 2022—but when completed, it will include numerous sustainable features, such as green skyscrapers, a wind farm, an organic farm, and incentives for the area to remain car-free.⁴⁰ Arup, a global consulting firm in San Francisco, is pioneering the project. Streets will be angled in order to maximize solar energy for heating, cooling, lighting, and protecting residents from the wind. Within this vision, every single building constructed on the island will have LEED gold certification. About half of the island's 400 acres will be set aside for open spaces, including an urban farm to supply organic local food to the residents, constructed wetlands to purify storm water runoff, and a restored natural forest ecosystem.⁴¹ All food scraps and grass clippings produced on the island will be composted and used by the local farms. Electricity will come from a combination of solar (drawn from solar panels on the island's buildings), wind, biogas, and possibly tidal energy.⁴² The plans for Treasure Island are certainly big, and some say, too idealistic. The project was originally supposed to start in 2009 but had to be pushed back to 2012 in order for the US Navy to transfer land ownership. However, if the Treasure Island redevelopment is successful it will serve as an example for other American cities to follow.

One of the main differences between the U.S. and Japan is that the Japanese government is taking existing cities and transitioning them over to eco-cities whereas the U.S. government often feels the need to work from the ground-up. In addition, much of the push for eco-cities comes from the private sector in the U.S.⁴³ In Japan, it comes from the public and private sector.⁴⁴ Hopefully, the success of Japan's eco-cities, as well as the (anticipated) success of environmental redevelopments, like Treasure Island, will show the United States that environmental sustainability and economic growth can work together to promote true development.

Even though the United States does not have a redemption credit program like eco-points in Japan, the EPA and the U.S. Department of Energy do support green technology and building processes through the Energy Star program. Energy Star is a voluntary labeling program designed to identify and promote energy-efficient products to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Computers and monitors were the first labeled products.⁴⁵ In 1995, the EPA expanded the label to additional office equipment products and residential heating and cooling equipment.⁴⁶ In 1996, EPA partnered with the Department of Energy for particular product categories.⁴⁷ The Energy Star label is now on major appliances, office equipment, lighting, home electronics, and more. EPA has also extended the label to cover new homes and commercial and industrial buildings.⁴⁸ The transition from appliances to the home building sector is similar to the transition made by the Eco-points program in Japan. In order for new homes to meet Energy Star EPA guidelines, they must have a combination of energy-efficient improvements. These improvements include effective insulation systems, high-performance windows, tight construction and ducts, efficient heating and cooling equipment and Energy Star-qualified lighting and appliances. Additionally, to ensure that a home meets Energy Star guidelines, third-party verification by a certified Home Energy Rater (or equivalent) is required.⁴⁹ In order to encourage consumers to purchase Energy Star appliances and build Energy Star homes, the U.S. government offers both rebates and tax refunds. This may be more conducive to the lifestyle of Americans compared to the point's redemption system offered by the Japanese. Even though the rewards system is different, both of these programs have the same concepts: through economic incentives, people are encouraged to build and buy in an environmentally friendly manner.

Green technology is resurging in popularity in recent years, and this renewed interest is well-founded. Many proponents of green technology believe that sustainable development is the most effective strategy to long-term prosperity, and the only way to lay the foundation for sustainable development is through practices that reward environmentally-conscious building and purchasing decisions. Even though the actual implementation of such programs is different between the United States and Japan, the underlying concepts of the two countries' programs are the same. Both have guidelines in place to encourage green building and development, both are trying to

reward consumers for building and purchasing “green,” and both are attempting to encourage green urban planning through the development of eco-cities. However, Japan appears to have been more successful thus far, in part due to their strategy of rebuilding existing cities and incorporating both the private and the public sector within the implementation process. Hopefully, Japan can serve as an example to the United States and other countries and demonstrate that the implementation of green technology is necessary for all countries wishing to further their economic growth and development.

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ABSTRACT » *The driving objective of this study is to broadly examine the impact of remittances at household and government levels in developing countries, then to apply and determine whether remittances are an effective strategy for household poverty reduction and state-led development in El Salvador. In brief, this paper argues remittances should not be considered an alternative to sound economic policies, and instead the Salvadoran government is urged to establish effective policies to stimulate economic growth. A primary state strategy to ease poverty and advance the economy should not depend on loosely collected individual efforts from Salvadoran citizens fleeing the country. Further, remittances should not be used as a chief, long-term solution to stimulate the economy, but should be encouraged to provide a supplementary role.*

International Migrant Remittances:

The Effects on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development :The Case of El Salvador

» by *Alexander Arevalo*

I. Introduction

The 21st century is in part characterized by the scope in which the world is interconnected. One feature of this entails the high frequency of migrants from developing countries seeking progressive economic opportunities in developed nations. According to the United Nations, world immigrant stock from 2000 to 2010 increased by 35.5 million, soaring from 178 million to over 213 million people.¹ One factor fueling this process is the failure of developing countries to promote and establish effective economic policies that alleviate poverty and stimulate economic development. As a result, an increasingly important dynamic has emerged, one whose impacts are felt from the smallest unit of a national economy, the individual, to the largest, the government. The particular issue of attention here is international migrant remittances sent from the developed

to developing world. Internationally, remittance flows continue to grow, and as globalization deepens, so does the movement of people. The flows of remittances not only strengthen relations between migrants and their countries of origin, but also contribute enormously to economic levels in recipient countries.² Although most studies in this field examine migration in depth, the discussion of migration is limited and observed only when necessary. Most literature today agrees that remittances contribute positively to income levels of the poorest households in the developing world. However, critics argue it is not sustainable. Tailoring remittances as a government strategy for economic development “should not be considered a panacea or an alternative to sound economic policies.”³ As the region of interest for this study, the relationship between Latin American countries and remittance transfers are quite significant:

The dramatic increase in remittances observed at the global level over the past few years has been mirrored in Latin America. In fact, officially recorded remittance flows to the region have increased more than twentyfold since 1980, when remittances amounted roughly \$1.9 billion, to nearly \$50 billion in 2005. As a region, Latin America ranks highest in terms of total and per capita remittances.⁴

This paper first aims to explore the impact of remittances in developing countries in order to establish a foundation for the case study. The driving objective of this study is to argue that remittances are an effective strategy for localized poverty reduction in the short term, but should not be applied as a long-term approach for economic development in the absence of effective government policies. Continued research on this topic will allow for precise evaluations on the costs and benefits of remittances as an alternate tactic to reduce poverty and improve national economies. It is important to recognize the existence of benefits and costs associated with poverty alleviation at micro-economic levels, as well as contributions and limitations of the same on macro-economic development. In order to understand, explain, and achieve this paper's argument, questions such as, "What factors best explain the varied results (of remittances) in poverty reduction and economic growth at both micro- and macro-economic levels?" and, "How do these factors unfold in El Salvador?" will be used to guide research in this study. Further, a model constructed by Conway and Cohen will assist in examining these questions.⁵ Their model bears extreme relevance to research in this field, as it explores remittance strategies and outcomes for recipients at household and governmental levels. This document will expand with II. provide the reader with background material, III. examine contending debates, IV. apply factors and develop case study, V. generate an analysis, and lastly VI. draw conclusions for final remarks.

II. Background

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The global magnitude of remittance transfers may cause one to believe it is a new form of international capital flow, however the transfer of money across international borders for this purpose has existed for centuries. Only recently have they garnered greater attention from economists and international financial institutions.⁶ Two of the largest and most influential institutions promoting and studying the effects of remittances around the world are the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. One reason for their increased focus dates back to the 1990s, when remittance totals to developing countries surpassed official development assistance (ODA) from members of The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).⁷ Official records from 2009 reveal global remittance receipts reached U.S.\$307 billion, with 2011 figures expected to reach U.S.\$340 billion.⁸ These cash flows are exceedingly significant for developing

countries with low economic growth, where data suggests remittances comprise a larger percentage of national income. Not only are the effects of remittances noteworthy at national levels, but also play a direct role in the daily livelihoods of many recipients.

WHAT ARE REMITTANCES?

Prior to 2000, the definition of remittances, as used in this paper, held no consensus among the international community primarily due to inadequate mechanisms that recorded money transfers and few studies that analyzed their impacts.⁹ Today, remittances are clearly defined as the “currency that migrants earn abroad and then send home to their families or communities.”¹⁰ Some studies use international migrant, international worker remittances, or remittances to express the same concept, and this study will interchangeably use all three. Terms such as abroad, back home or migrant’s-home may also be used interchangeably when referring to remittance destinations. In some cases, cash or capital flows may replace remittances.

WHO REMITS AND HOW?

Cash flow transfers result from individuals migrating, in most cases, from developing to developed countries. It is presumed emigrants have established a position of employment, whereby money can be allocated and sent to their country of origin. Extensive literature covers a global spectrum of migrants who send money back home. Most research conducted on who remits analyzes migrants of “legal/illegal; permanent/temporary; upper-class/lower-class; middle-age/young; married/single; and male/female”¹¹ status. In all cases, the decision to send money back home begins far before the funds are actually transferred. The movement of money is only one component of a broad and general process.

First, the decision to migrate is made, although the migration itself does not occur until sufficient funds have been gathered to finance the journey. Once the preceding step is achieved, the following consists of successful relocation and employment. Depending on the migrant’s effectiveness in obtaining disposable income to send abroad, the individual may then seek a money transfer method. Services range from formal providers like banks, credit unions, and money transfer operators (MTOs), to informal systems like retail shops, unregulated couriers and personal transfers by third party individuals visiting family members abroad.¹² The final stage ends with a successful transfer to family or intended recipients back home. In fact, most remittances are intended for family households, for which they “are a significant source of income.”¹³ While the former is true, some money is captured by various actors involved in the transfer process or by receiving governments.¹⁴

WHY STUDY THESE EFFECTS?

The goal is to contribute to existing literature on remittances and their impacts on poverty at micro-economic levels (household) and economic development at macro-economic levels (national economy) in Latin America. Because the magnitude of international worker remittances has gained tremendous attention since the 1990s (perhaps more so than any other time in modern history), the impacts on poverty reduction and economic progress are continually being interpreted. As a result, data and research are frequently growing as the volume of cash flows increases. Not enough time has elapsed and in-depth research conducted to accurately evaluate the true costs or benefits remittances have on the micro- or macro-economic levels in recipient countries however. Any further investigation on the preceding is likely to build on existing and growing literature and provide yet another variant to this field.

III. Contending Debates

BENEFITS OF REMITTANCES AT MICRO-ECONOMIC LEVEL

Discussion begins by exploring the positive contributions remittances produce on poverty at a local, or micro-economic, level. This study defines micro-level analysis on poverty as affecting the smallest unit of an economy, the household level. Literature advances the notion that living standards significantly improve the lives of cash flow recipients. Scholars suggest, “Migrant remittances have made possible a drastic improvement in the living conditions of millions of households.”¹⁵ Researchers who subscribe to this notion assert that remittances have a positive impact on poverty, particularly in Latin America.¹⁶ Studies aimed at the effects of remittances in developing countries find that, “when remittances are included in household income, the share of people living in poverty in a country falls, on average, by 3 to 5 per cent.”¹⁷ These cash flows are important in poverty reduction in the developing world as they typically account for 30 to 40 percent of household incomes.¹⁸ For the population of Latin America’s poorest nations, this means that remittances may more than double their incomes.¹⁹ Families struggling in poverty often face difficulties in acquiring basic consumption goods such as food and clothing. Supplementary income from remittances critically improves the recipient’s purchasing power to meet basic necessities and mitigate other financial burdens.

Literature suggests remittances are sometimes used for more than just basic provisions nevertheless. According to Conway and Cohen, remittances contribute to fixed or location specific capital.²⁰ These capital ventures consist of “self-building of homes, family land maintenance,

house and land improvements, investments in water, sewage, and electricity services, and even elaborate and ornate construction of modern residences.”²¹ Cash flows help facilitate these forms of investments in many poor regions of Latin America. Many studies cite a significant amount of remittances are spent on housing and land.²² According to the 110th House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services, “improved housing becomes physical evidence of the improved welfare achieved through migration remittances.”²³ Cash flows evidently enable economically deprived recipients to undertake projects that would not be conceivable on conventional income alone. Combined with other sources of income, they allow for land purchase or housing enhancements.²⁴ In all, remittances remain a significant contribution to location specific capital in developing countries.

In addition to fixed capital, cash flows positively impact flexible capital, otherwise known as human resources. Educational levels, health, and overall good welfare measurements are some components of human resources. Literature claims, “Scores of academic and policy-oriented papers have evaluated the impact of remittances on developing countries in such areas as poverty, health and education.”²⁵ Adams encompasses the link between human resources and remittances by revealing, “households receiving remittances tend to spend them on investment goods (for example, education), and these patterns of expenditure can help build human and physical capital in developing countries.”²⁶ Investing in children’s health, education, and welfare is arguably productive by any international standard. Conway and Cohen reveal, “Investments in flexible human capital stock are progressive because such incremental effects endow human energies, expand human capabilities, and develop human flexibilities.”²⁷ However, the extent to which human resources can contribute to poverty reduction is likely to depend on socio-political conditions of the state.

Lopez claims remittances “tell a promising story” in relation to children’s health and school enrollment.²⁸ Recipients in Latin American households are “far more likely to have children who are enrolled in school.”²⁹ Intensive research and studies conducted by scholars contribute a great deal of knowledge when observing remittances and health impacts throughout Latin America. Studies cite an improvement in infant mortality rates and child health, as mothers are allowed greater economic flexibility in providing for their children.³⁰ For instance, “remittances reduce infant mortality by improving housing conditions (provision of tap water in the house and refrigerator acquisition) and by enabling the mother to stay at home” to care for her children.³¹ A study led by Hildebrandt and McKenzie confirm that households receiving remittances were able to reduce infant mortality in rural areas.³²

Research also finds a positive correlation between remittances and school attendance. In urban areas of Latin America, “the average level of remittances lowers the hazard that a child will

drop out of elementary school (grades 1–6) by 54 per cent.”³³ Cox-Edwards and Ureta validate this relationship by asserting “remittance income has a large and positive impact on school retention rates because households receiving remittances have a higher propensity to spend on education out of remittance income as opposed to other sources of income.”³⁴ The former arguments suggest cash flows facilitate the development of human resources in poor nations. This dynamic becomes another way of measuring and indicating the positive impact of remittances on poverty reduction.

The discussion of beneficial impacts on poverty alleviation closes with an assessment of insurance motives. Remitting individuals or families serve as an insurance mechanism for family members back home.³⁵ Capital flows sent from overseas help mitigate the impacts from natural disasters or unfavorable economic conditions. Most empirical studies find that remittances are in part motivated by insurance motives,³⁶ and thus “family can function as an insurance company that provides members with protection against income shocks.”³⁷ Furthermore, savings made possible by remittances serve as “major strategies to guard against uncertainty” for recipients.³⁸ Rapoport and Docquier provide further confirmation by revealing motives for remitting, such as insurance, help “insure family against adverse risks and shocks.”³⁹ Subsequently, remittances serve as an insurance mechanism for many recipient families living in developing countries.

Additionally, transfers continue to raise recipients’ material and social welfare.⁴⁰ The positive impacts on poverty suggest they generate “a set of progressive effects that outweigh the negative aspects when people’s relations and interactions are examined at the micro scale.”⁴¹ Ralph Chami, an IMF staffer studying remittances, claims the relationship between migrants and their family is characterized by altruism, which refers to the “immigrant’s concern over the income or consumption levels of the family members left behind.”⁴² Numerous studies draw on basic family necessities such as food, health, housing and consumer goods as primary recipient expenditures.⁴³ The additional income helps mitigate the burden of consumption costs to all recipient households. In general, literature ensures remittances “reach low-income families, especially those in rural areas, and significantly increases their purchasing power and standard of living.”⁴⁴ For beneficiaries, it seems difficult to suggest that remittances create negative impacts, though scholars cited in the next section argue just that.

UNINTENDED EFFECTS AT MICRO-ECONOMIC LEVELS

The following segment will identify negative impacts on poverty at micro-economic, or household, levels. De-Haas argues, “there is a tendency to overestimate the sheer magnitude of migration and remittances. The much-celebrated micro-level at which remittances are transferred is not only their strength but also their main weakness.”⁴⁵ Scholars in this domain suggest that

negative impacts of remittances on poverty include various dependence-deepening mechanisms, unintended costs to local labor supplies, and unforeseen human costs.⁴⁶

Dependence-deepening mechanisms are described as conditions where recipients become increasingly dependent on remittances. A study conducted by Eckstein uncovers, “success in eliciting remittances hinges on the wealth (and presumed disposable income) of overseas family or on relatives’ recent emigration.”⁴⁷ While capital flows do provide an additional and substantial form of income for recipients, beneficiaries become contingent on an unsustainable form of income. If families cannot finance the venture to migrate to a perceived opportunistic nation like the United States and find employment, remittances become a useless strategy to reduce poverty at any level. As previously referenced, one way to understand dependence-deepening mechanisms is to view families “as a bank that finances migration from some members. The borrowers (migrants) remit funds in order to repay the loans (costs of migration), which are put toward more loans to further the interests of other individual family members.”⁴⁸ This method is conventionally applied in Latin America, where family members who have already migrated lend money to those interested in future migration. The logic behind this motive is simple: diversify the source of income for poor families back home. However, this process assumes the outcome (sending money) is possible without interference. It is assumed family members are successful in emigrating, finding employment, setting cash aside for transfer, finding a reliable outlet to send money, and effectively get the funds into the hands of intended individuals. Disruption in one or more phases of this process typically renders remittances unsuccessful.

A second cost linked to remittances and poverty includes its impact on local labor supplies. Evidence indicates “remittances can reduce labor force participation by increasing the reservation wage (lowest wage rate at which worker accepts a job).”⁴⁹ Individuals anticipating capital from migrant family members have a tendency to pull out of local work forces or reduce their participation in it. Remittances are often used as a substitute for labor income, which lead to a reduction in labor effort.⁵⁰ As a result, critics claim they will continue to have a negative effect on work effort and labor supplies as more families become dependent on remittances. Arguably, nations suffering high unemployment rates are not on track to reduce poverty rates. Funkhouser and Kim confirm that “households receiving international remittances are likely to have members with higher reservation wages, leading them to be less enthusiastic about finding jobs in the labor force” while non-migrant households are more likely to contribute to a labor force.⁵¹ A loss in labor participation will potentially have a negative impact on local production.⁵² As discussed, remittances have a tendency to reduce labor participation and create less willingness among laborers to work.

Human costs are yet another negative consequence on poverty at the micro-economic level. This paper associates human costs with the process of migration, whereby individuals migrate, often leaving their families behind, in search of better economic opportunities.⁵³ Not only are children typically fostered to relatives as parents move abroad, but traditional family units are broken and reshaped overtime. Although human costs are closely linked with migration costs, these consequences merit equal attention under the study of remittances. Eckstein finds, “remittances may generate consequences recipients do not envision or necessarily even desire.”⁵⁴

While scholars have found that migrants intend for remittances to be used by recipients in the event of extreme difficulties and not to reduce recipients’ labor effort, research in this field has demonstrated remittances have limitations to reducing poverty rates.⁵⁵ Some researchers find that cash transfers are largely spent to meet basic family needs as outlined in previous sections and do not necessarily play a fundamental role in the macro-economic context.⁵⁶

Applying the same compare and contrast format used to discuss the impact of remittances on poverty at household levels, the following will survey the contributions and limitations of remittances as a strategy for national economic development. The main actors advocating the use of remittances for macro-economic policies include the World Bank, development NGOs and governments who proclaim remittances as the newest “development mantra.”⁵⁷ Their role in influencing the use of remittances at state levels has increased as the magnitude of cash flows continue to grow. While these actors declare remittances are suitable for state development, some scholars criticize their use as an alternative to effective economic policies.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

At state level, remittances contribute to an increase in national income. They too increase the size of financial sectors and encourage economic activity. Aggarwal provides evidence suggesting remittances stimulate economic growth by increasing financial activity.⁵⁸ Recipient governments acknowledge the power of these cash flows and therefore modify or create policies to attract potential benefits. As formal transfer services become more influential, they continue to expand across Latin America, contributing to the formal economy.

Official figures from 2000 indicate remittances infused more money into Latin America than foreign bilateral or multilateral aid, and in some countries, more money than direct foreign investment and bank loans.⁵⁹ In 2001, they accounted for double the amount of foreign aid, and ten times the total of private capital transfers.⁶⁰ Durdu and Sayan lend confirmation to this trend by suggesting the growth of remittances has been evidently faster than the increase of “private capital

flows and official development assistance.”⁶¹ Figures from an article in the *Journal of International Affairs* estimated that in 2003, “remittances amounted to some \$38 billion, or about 2 percent, of [Latin America’s] gross national product (GDP) and more than triple the \$10 billion they comprised”⁶² in the late 1990s.

Reporting exact figures remains a challenge, particularly with widespread use of informal channels, and thus most figures only represent data from official outlets. Records from the World Bank claim that international remittances to the developing world amounted to U.S.\$239 billion as of 2007.⁶³ In that same year, the level of international remittances was about 50 per cent larger than the level of official development aid to developing countries.⁶⁴ By increasing GDP, remittances provide an unconventional and complimentary way to fund development in less financially developed economies.⁶⁵ Prakash and Hart contribute to this notion, agreeing that remittances play a positive role at the state level.⁶⁶

Beginning in the twenty-first century, transfers became one of the key issues in economic development for large recipient countries.⁶⁷ Remittances facilitate government import financing while directly and indirectly stimulating economic growth.⁶⁸ They also create large economic prospects in low-growth, borrowing constrained economies.⁶⁹ Orozco finds, “remittances generally have important effects on economic growth, trade, and the distribution of wealth in the recipient countries.”⁷⁰ One effect on economic development is what De-Haas considers a bottom-up development. Remittances may in fact be a more practical alternative to conventional forms of development as “remittances play a crucial [and] potentially positive role.”⁷¹ Massey and Parrado provide insight into the potential cash flows have in stimulating the creation of small businesses.⁷² Scholars have cited a positive correlation between cash flows and business formation as an important contribution to state economies.⁷³

Governments embrace the magnitude of remittances and have since adopted policies that attract the continuation of flows. To sustain frequently high receipts, governments enact changes in policies and institutions. Historically, developing countries have depended on foreign funding, such as loans or official development assistance, to stimulate sluggish economies and generate economic activity.⁷⁴ One way governments benefit from the flow of remittances is by creating greater accessibility to banking. An article published in the *Third World Quarterly* finds, “in the recent past, many governments and banks in sending countries have successfully attempted to attract remittances through special fiscal policies, the establishment of foreign bank branches, and giving migrants the opportunity to open foreign currency accounts.”⁷⁵ By creating policies that engage migrants in banking, governments attempt to capture more remittances through formal passages.

The preceding can be achieved by reducing transaction costs. Eckstein encompasses the essence of this dynamic by stating:

Both society's and the state's stance toward remittances must be understood in the context of alternative revenue sources. In the absence of sufficient aid, investment, and trade, remittances may become essential not only to provide for peoples' well-being, but also to address the state's own institutional demands. While recipients can use money from family members' abroad to raise their material living standards, state institutional interests are best served by maximizing the hard currency it appropriates.⁷⁶

The final positive impact on economic development that will be discussed is the expansion of formal services for remittance transfers. Literature identifies the main transfer actors as banks, money transfer agencies such as Western Union, and informal middlemen.⁷⁷ Less influential methods include postal services and credit unions.⁷⁸ One example of a government service that modified its operation to include remittance transfer is the United States Postal Service (USPS). Competition drove the U.S. Postal Service to launch Dinero Seguro (Safe Money) in August 1996, a service which permitted the transfer of up to U.S.\$3000 from any post office to any branch of Mexico's Bancomer Bank.⁷⁹ This collaboration allowed individuals to send money through a large formal institution as opposed to small-unregulated couriers. Scholars positively assess the importance of emerging transfer services as one important dimension of economic activity.

LIMITATIONS TO ECONOMIC GROWTH

Just as scholars reveal positive impacts on economic development, literature also uncovers negative effects. Remittances that may prove beneficial for individuals "are not necessarily unequivocally good for states because states have their own institutional, economic and political, short and long term interests that may differ from the narrow self-interests of individual remittance recipients."⁸⁰ This section will look at two effects: unsustainability as a strategy for state development, and insufficient growth in a modern economy.

Scholars explore the degree to which remittances are unsustainable as an economic development strategy. Not only are transfers higher in low-growth countries, but these rates are also related with poor economic growth.⁸¹ The use of remittances as a development strategy is subject to failure for its very logic. The effect of remittances on macro-economic growth is a question of significant debate, as some studies find that "international remittances have a negative effect

on economic growth.”⁸² Instead of generating long-term sustainable growth, remittances serve as compensation for weak economic performance.⁸³

A second unintended impact at macro-economic levels is the lack of progress in a modern economy. Research explores the rise of a growing informal economy in Latin America to the extent that economic development in a formal sense does not ensue. Studies find remittances are typically spent on small consumption goods, which have slight positive effects to the larger economy, but are not sufficient to stimulate a thriving economy.⁸⁴ In addition, evidence suggests they do not help stimulate creation of small businesses.⁸⁵ Unmistakably, the degree of transparency from which a government operates will help determine whether remittances are channeled for productive uses.⁸⁶

Bringing the discussion of transfers and their negative impacts on economic growth to a close, the former has provided insight to contending debates in this specific area of research. Economists claim remittances are productive mechanisms for economic growth, whereas many scholars believe their sustainability is contingent on external forces. “Policies that are predicated on the presumption that remittances have similar uses and effects as other private capital flows may have unintended consequences.”⁸⁷ These cash flows are not a substitute for effective economic policies, thus should not be treated as such. In conclusion, there exists little to no significant link between remittances and economic investment, hence one can infer they are not considerable for macro-economic growth, but do play a powerful role at household levels. In effect, how do these factors unfold in the case of El Salvador? The following will observe the impacts of remittances as outlined in the literature review with the objective of analyzing micro- and macro-economic level effects for this Latin American nation.

IV. Case Study

A LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

Since the 1980s, remittance transfers to Latin America have continued to rise in terms of volume and frequency.⁸⁸ Despite criticism by some as a valuable strategy for poverty reduction and economic development, governments in the region are increasingly interested in these capital flows.⁸⁹ Regionally, after foreign direct investment, remittances comprise the second most vital source of funding for receiving governments.⁹⁰ By 2000, remittances had become a vital component of Latin American economies, and in particular Central America.⁹¹ In 2001, Central Americans in the United States remitted roughly U.S.\$3.6 billion, which exceeded foreign direct investment and official development assistance.⁹² This figure exploded to U.S.\$12.5 billion by 2008,

epitomizing the sheer magnitude of remittances to Central America.⁹³ The general upward trend demonstrates consistency and continues to benefit recipients in economically deprived communities. For many Latin America households, cash transfers have an enormous importance as a source of income.⁹⁴ As a “safety valve for Central American governments, which have proven incapable of generating sufficient economic growth or employment for their citizens,”⁹⁵ remittances have gained tremendous reputation.

EL PULGARCITO DE AMERICA (THE TOM-THUMB OF THE AMERICAS)

With a population of approximately 6.2 million in 2010, in a land area slightly smaller than the U.S. state of Massachusetts, El Salvador is the smallest, most densely populated country in the Americas.⁹⁶ Located in the Central American isthmus connecting North to South America, El Salvador has the highest proportion of its citizens living in the United States of any nation in the world; by 2007 “over 2.9 million Salvadorans resided abroad, 95% of them in the 50 states.”⁹⁷ The Salvadoran diaspora is particularly central to the flow of remittances, just as its neighbor’s diasporas’ (Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua) are to their respective economies. In the context of Central America, El Salvador stands out as one of the nations with the most dramatic growth in remittances, by transfers and per capital volume. From 2001 to 2008, remittances doubled from U.S.\$1.9 billion to U.S.\$3.8 billion, where they have since peaked.⁹⁸ In 2006, family transfers accounted for nearly 16 percent of El Salvador’s GDP, at U.S.\$3 billion.⁹⁹ Since 2000, the share of GDP consistently averages in the low- to mid-teens, further highlighting the magnitude of cash flows. El Salvador’s economy has come to rely on remittances from its population in the United States.¹⁰⁰ In order to understand why an overwhelming majority of transfers originate in the U.S., why remittances are so drastic in volume, and to what extent they impact El Salvador at a micro- and macro-economic level, it is fundamental to consider and discuss the Salvadoran experience.

THE SALVADORAN EXPERIENCE

The majority of this money is transferred from the United States for one simple reason: Nearly a quarter of the Salvadoran population fled their country during a lengthy and bloody civil war, which claimed over 75,000 lives between 1980 and 1992.¹⁰¹ A quick synopsis of the Salvadoran civil war reveals:

Decades of poverty, corrupt governments, and political repression in El Salvador led to a 12-year civil war fought on several fronts. The civil war [was fought] between the US-backed Salvadoran government and Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) rebels.¹⁰²

The out-migration of Salvadorans during this period was primarily motivated by political and economic factors.¹⁰³ According to the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), over half a million Salvadorans departed for the United States between 1980 and 1992.¹⁰⁴ Most official sources confirm these are conservative estimates and the actual number is quite higher.

Peace negotiations achieved in 1992 declared the end of the civil war, and El Salvador began its long and slow process to recovery. Coupled with mid-1990 enactments of neoliberal economic policies and few alternate ideas to reenergize a sagging economy, public dissatisfaction increased.¹⁰⁵ The relative decline in poverty following the civil war can, in part, be attributed to an increase in remittance receipts that directly entered the hands of Salvadorans.¹⁰⁶ This growing but informal strategy to counteract economic concerns did gain momentum however, as “the country’s immense dependency upon remittances was increasingly apparent as people replaced coffee as El Salvador’s most profitable export.”¹⁰⁷ By adding a source of income for poor households with family in the United States, remittances alleviated economic burdens.¹⁰⁸

IMPACT OF THE 15TH DEPARTMENT

Salvadorans have developed a familiar aphorism; The United States is El Salvador’s 15th department. While formally divided into 14 departments (the equivalent of U.S. states), the presence of *Salvadoreños* (Salvadorans) is so significant in U.S. communities that it is commonly referred to as “the 15th department.”¹⁰⁹ By 2005, it was estimated more than 1.5 million Salvadorans lived throughout the United States.¹¹⁰ Remittances are a fundamental feature of the Salvadoran migration experience, whereby billions of dollars are distributed across poor recipient households. *The New Americans: The Salvadoran Americans* shows “remittances play an important role because they are helping maintain the Salvadoran economy that has been struggling for many decades. The money sent from the United States back to El Salvador is the largest source of income in the local economy.”¹¹¹ Since 2005, an average of U.S.\$3 billion in remittances enter El Salvador annually, with family members as primary recipients.¹¹²

To reiterate, remittances introduce more cash to El Salvador than coffee, the nation’s most important and historical source of revenue. Despite a great segment of the population surviving on a minimum wage of U.S.\$4.80 per day, many towns and villages are able to survive on the basis of

cash flows from family in the United States.¹¹³ In 1991, remittance receipts reached approximately U.S.\$790 million. By plain contrast, 2004 figures reached U.S.\$2.5 billion or roughly 17 percent of the nation's GDP.¹¹⁴ More recent 2010 statistics indicate remittances entering El Salvador exceed U.S.\$3.44 billion.¹¹⁵

The country has transformed into a service and transit economy, relying heavily on imports of consumer goods while primarily exporting people. It becomes evident why agencies such as The World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank (IADB or IDB) and Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) express great interest in preserving continuous flows of remittances. In 2006, capital flows to the country compared to “133 percent of exports (including net maquila exports), 52 percent of imports, 655 percent of foreign direct investment, and 202 percent of the budget for social expenditures.”¹¹⁶ Coincidentally as remittance transfers increased, poverty rates in El Salvador decreased.¹¹⁷ As conveyed, the total amount of remittances to El Salvador make their importance felt at household and national levels.¹¹⁸ The present study will outline four factors affecting the micro- and macro-economic levels in El Salvador. Each level will examine two distinct factors that show the impact remittances produce. At the household level, factors will examine the impacts on living standards and their effect on local labor supplies. At the government level, factors will evaluate progress in government position towards remittances and a growing formalization of transfer services.

FACTOR 1. EFFECTS ON POVERTY AND LIVING STANDARDS

In order to assess how and to what degree remittances help reduce poverty in El Salvador, it is important to establish a functional definition. One method of describing poverty is through measuring how far households are from the poverty line.¹¹⁹ The Salvadoran Ministry of the Economy defines a family in poverty as “one whose income is below the level that would finance the purchase of the “expanded food basket” (housing, food, education, health, and miscellaneous).”¹²⁰ In 2007, approximately 48 percent of Salvadorans lived below the poverty line as outlined by the Ministry of the Economy, and of those 48 percent, 31 percent survived on U.S.\$1 per day.¹²¹ Salvadoran families living at or below this rate, on average earn, “\$129 per month in urban areas and \$96 per month in rural areas.”¹²² Therefore, the importance of additional income in the form of family remittances is major.

A subsidiary of the Inter-American Development Bank corroborates the claim that remittances are extremely important to recipient families at local levels.¹²³ Estimates suggest they provide recipients with up to one-third of their monthly income.¹²⁴ On average, 28 percent of adults in El Salvador receive money from the United States, ten times a year, at about \$170 each

time.¹²⁵ Millions of Salvadorans rely on this income to meet family demands such as food, clothing and other necessary expenditures.¹²⁶ In 2002, approximately 74 percent of remittances from the United States went to cover subsistence needs.¹²⁷ By 2011, that figure rose to 84 percent, making it among the highest in all of Latin America.¹²⁸

Daily consumption decisions of families living below the poverty line are made easier with cash flows. Recipients experience higher living standards in contrast to families who do not receive these cash flows.¹²⁹ The International Fund for Agriculture and Development found, “the money migrants send home provides a lifeline out of poverty for those left behind.”¹³⁰ As remittance receipts continue into El Salvador, the micro-economic benefits become more evident. Most Salvadoran households are in dire economic conditions, thus remittances allow for increased purchasing power and overall improvement of living standards.

FACTOR 2. THE DOUBLE EFFECT

The Salvadoran economy and its people have grown reliant on remittances from its diaspora in the United States.¹³¹ While beneficial in ways outlined in the previous section, remittances produce a double negative effect. In this case, the dual effect creates recipient income dependency, while impacting the localized Salvadoran labor supplies. In 2006, remittances affected 55 percent of the Salvadoran population and comprised 72 percent of regular family income, compared to only 17 percent in Guatemala.¹³² Evidence shows “remittances are significantly associated with lower labor force participation among males and females, in both rural and urban areas.”¹³³ In most cases, they are used as a substitute for conventional sources of income. The growing trend results in increased migrant income dependency and erosion of good work habits.¹³⁴ The following narrative is an effective way to illustrate the emerging trend: A typical monthly remittance transfer to El Salvador falls between \$100 and \$200 per month, which in most cases is greater than job earnings. The high levels of remittances to El Salvador have negatively affected labor market participation of non-migrants by decreasing willingness to work.¹³⁵ Although 2010 unemployment rates in El Salvador stood at 7.2 percent, research does not reveal data linking the relationship between remittance income and unemployment rates.¹³⁶

FACTOR 3. EMBRACING CASH FLOWS: A GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE

El Salvador is one of few countries in Latin America whose remittance receipts represent double-digit shares of its GDP.¹³⁷ The stable trend began post-civil war, where remittances were one-fifth greater than exports.¹³⁸ Today, remittance transfers achieve various objectives that have reinforced state-led development tactics for reducing poverty, expanding financial sectors,

and compensating for declining export prices.¹³⁹ Broadly, remittances can provide self-insurance mechanisms for the state “by enabling them to diversify their sources for external finance.”¹⁴⁰

Government records from 1995 indicate U.S.\$1.15 billion entered the country as remittances.¹⁴¹ Since 2003, remittance receipts to El Salvador have exceeded U.S.\$2 billion annually, and thus their importance at the state level is difficult to ignore.¹⁴² According to the IADB, “remittance flows have surpassed all main export revenues and equal about 80% of total exports.”¹⁴³ Despite a small decline in 2008, an increase in transfers in 2009 showed signs of recovery to pre-global financial crisis estimates; figures by the Salvadoran central bank verify this claim. Estimates totaled U.S.\$293 million in July 2009 alone, indicating a 2.3 percent improvement from the previous year.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, evidence shows a serious decline in remittances would severely hurt the Salvadoran economy.¹⁴⁵

The Salvadoran government has developed policies in accordance with financial organizations to encourage the continued flow of cash remittances.¹⁴⁶ The IADB and World Bank encourage government programs to “channel individual and collective remittances as well as convene conferences to generate knowledge about economic uses.”¹⁴⁷ The Fondo de Inversion Social para el Desarrollo Local (FISDL) is one state institution providing co-financing for Salvadoran communities with a focus on the diaspora beginning in the late 1990s.¹⁴⁸ Through embassies and consular services, the government seeks to educate and persuade migrants to maintain the flow of remittances to enlist economic projects.¹⁴⁹ One of its programs, Unidos por la Solidaridad (United for Solidarity), places efforts in promoting community collaborations, nongovernmental and Salvadoran organizations, and home-town associations in the U.S. to finance small infrastructure for health centers, communal recreation facilities, and schools.¹⁵⁰ By 2006, the program had collected roughly U.S.\$11 million for use in 45 projects in 27 municipalities throughout the country.¹⁵¹

Another example of how the Salvadoran government has redefined a state institution to maximize progressive use of remittances is the Dirección General de Atención a las Comunidades en el Exterior (Directorate General of Attention to the Communities Abroad-DGACE) established in the early 2000s.¹⁵² Its objective is also to launch a platform for development based on the potential of Salvadoran communities in the United States.¹⁵³ By gathering information about the diaspora’s remittance sending trends, the Directorate is able to outline steps that will strengthen links with Salvadoran communities abroad.¹⁵⁴ A third example of an institution created by the Salvadoran government with the intention of educating its diaspora in hopes of attracting continuous cash flows is the Vice Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Salvadorans Abroad. Created in 2004 with the goal of offering customary consular services, information on Salvadorans living

abroad, and legal assistance regarding U.S. immigration laws and regulations, it too shows efforts by the government to attract remittances.¹⁵⁵

One successful policy change the government sponsored was the Cooperative Financial System under the *Federacion de Asociaciones Cooperativas de Ahorro y Credito de El Salvador* (Federation of Credit Unions in El Salvador). Their objectives include promoting productive uses of remittances, provide institutional access for Salvadoran migrants abroad, and affiliate recipients with similar cooperatives.¹⁵⁶ As a credit union network of small savings and loan companies, with 29 member institutions operating in 13 of El Salvador's 14 departments, FEDECACES focuses on low-income households. The cooperative demonstrates the government's ability to form innovative financial services with a focus on remittances.¹⁵⁷ As a result of a 2001 alliance between FEDECACES and two international remittance outlets in the U.S., Vigo and Rapid Money, remittance transactions increased from 754 in 2000 to 52,946 in 2002.¹⁵⁸ In 2000, FEDECACES transferred U.S.\$175,000 and by 2002 swelled to more than U.S.\$22 million.¹⁵⁹

In 2002, the Multilateral Investment Fund (MIF) granted FEDECACES U.S.\$1.5 million with the goal of improving access to formal transfers and financial services for underserved communities.¹⁶⁰ Not only was FEDECACES able to introduce its remittance services, but also managed to reduce transfer costs. At present, the IADB claims FEDECACES' average cost to send \$200 from the United States to El Salvador is 5.2 percent.¹⁶¹ Arguably, FEDECACES and similar success stories were pioneers in moving remittances through big banks and financial institutions in El Salvador.¹⁶² Multilateral institutions like the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) also engage in supporting similar reforms in El Salvador.¹⁶³ One such reform aims to increase the country's financial structure by developing the potential of privatized and largely deregulated banks to capture remittances.¹⁶⁴ The formalization of services bears more relevance in the following section, and will be discussed in detail there. The shift to formal transfer services is beneficial for the Salvadoran state, as competition since 2000 has impressively increased.

FACTOR 4. INFORMAL TO FORMAL TRANSFER SERVICES

In El Salvador, transfer methods range from informal *viajeros* or *viajeras* (private couriers) to small and large formal agencies. Small companies such as Gigante Express and Urgente Express with offices throughout California, Texas, New Jersey, New York, Illinois, Miami and the DC-Metro area have lost influence with increased competition from larger financial institution banks.¹⁶⁵ Major institutional (formal) players in El Salvador include Banco Agrícola, Bancomercio, BancoSal, Moneygram, Viamericas, Vigo, Western Union, Banco Cuscatlan, and the Microfinance International Corporation.¹⁶⁶ According to the IADB, El Salvador is one of the most competitive

remittance transfer markets in Latin America.¹⁶⁷ Two factors lend support for this claim. One, El Salvador has a dollarized economy; meaning remittance sums are not lost in currency exchange rates as in other Latin American nations. Second, the establishment of Salvadoran bank branches in the United States generates aggressive market competition. “The four largest banks—Banco Agrícola, Banco del Comercio, Banco Cuscatlán, and Banco Salvadoreño—have branches in the u.s. that operate money transfer services.”¹⁶⁸ In 2003, six Banco Agrícola outlets operating in the United States recorded nearly 370,000 transactions estimated at u.s.\$120 million.¹⁶⁹ By 2006, Banco Agrícola captured about 12 percent of total remittance transfer shares alone.¹⁷⁰ However, many transfers are still made through smaller exchange houses, unregulated transfer agencies, extended social and family networks, and individual couriers.¹⁷¹

The competitive market in El Salvador causes lower transfer fees, better record keeping and greater activity in formal transfer services. The national economy profits from official transfer services by directing hard currency to finance projects. The IADB indicates average remittance transfer fees to Latin America are among the lowest in the world, “averaging between 5% and 6% - approximately a 75% drop since 2000.”¹⁷² Increased competition and introduction of innovative mechanisms to the remittance transfer market have become instrumental components of drastic price declines. Banking institutions are among the main actors today, adding to existing methods used by dominant agencies like Western Union, joint operations with postal services like USPS, and unregulated in-hand deliveries. The MIF “has launched approximately 40 pilot projects exploring various ways to “bank the unbanked” and enhance the development impact of the over 250 million money transfers made every year to families across Latin America.”¹⁷³

As mentioned, one primary way of transforming the remittance transfer landscape from informal to formal is to decrease fees associated with the transfer process.¹⁷⁴ Usual methods of sending money such as wire transfers and money orders are not cheap. Some migrants incur fees up to 15 percent of the amount they send, and in some cases losing an additional 10 percent of the entire remittance to currency exchange.¹⁷⁵ In the case of El Salvador, recipients do not experience the same consequences as non-dollarized nations, due to phasing out the colon and adopting the u.s. dollar in 2001.¹⁷⁶ In addition to lowering fees, proposals point to open more national bank branches in Salvadoran communities abroad. A significant formalization of transfer outlets may occur by creating greater access to banks and forming partnerships between u.s. and foreign banks or money transfer agencies.¹⁷⁷ Even today, transfers are only moderately included with financial services largely due to limited access to bank accounts in the u.s. and El Salvador. The MIF assures “linking remittance families on both sides of borders to banks and other financial institutions gives them the potential to access loans, build credit histories, securely save for the future, and insure themselves.”¹⁷⁸

Evidence from 2002 indicates that 66 percent of Salvadorans favored small courier companies and 10 percent used unregulated couriers who personally delivered cash.¹⁷⁹ That same year, Gigante Express reportedly handled 50 percent of the courier business to El Salvador, while Western Union took 20 percent of the entire market share.¹⁸⁰ In 2003, informal couriers accounted for 30 percent of all services with an estimated U.S.\$240 million.¹⁸¹ Because most recipients do not have a bank account, remittances are frequently saved at home or used immediately; seldom do they remain in banking systems.¹⁸² While informal outlets account for a decent share of the market, the state recognizes the potential for reinforcing this source of income. Until better mechanisms aimed to formalize transfer services are employed on a large scale, informal options including “visitors returning home, unregulated couriers and cash transfers”¹⁸³ will continue to escape state development potential. While the preceding factors suggest remittances can cause state-development, this study maintains they are unsustainable in the long term because continued flows depend on eliciting the success of Salvadorans in the United States. If the Salvadoran diaspora is unproductive abroad, then the strategy for capturing remittances to alleviate poverty and nurture the economy fails at home.

V. Analysis

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The driving objective of this study is to determine how remittances impact household and government levels of developing countries. After exploring and establishing a variety of effects at these levels, the study advances to determine whether remittances are an effective strategy for household poverty reduction and state-led development in El Salvador. Existing factors in El Salvador reveal a mixed record. Data supports the argument that remittances are effective for household poverty reduction since the early to mid-1990s. However, it does not provide sufficient evidence when observing for remittances as a long-term strategy for economic development in the absence of effective government policies. This hypothesis remains unanswered, as the data does not suggest a correlation between substantial economic growth and remittance transfers.

Evidence suggests an inconclusive evaluation of whether remittances are generally productive or consequential for El Salvador. A better and more accurate investigation narrows inquiry to observing whether remittances are useful or costly for controlled factors at different points of micro- and macro-economic levels of analysis. In effect, this research formally begins to understand these dynamics. Various factors explored here show that remittances produce both positive and negative consequences in El Salvador. Although remittances increase recipient living standards, they also reduce labor supplies. Households with economic limitations often struggle to consistently attain daily basic needs such as food and water. The additional source of income for many recipients is considered a blessing. Salvadorans have an easier time purchasing food or undertaking

necessary housing improvements with the flow of remittances. However, an unintended and growing cost involves recipient dependence. This study finds average transfers to households exceed monthly sources of income. Consequently, a growing trend of individuals reducing their participation in the work force is visible around El Salvador.

Although remittances have proven to be a lifeline for thousands of families in extreme poverty, Salvadorans in the u.s. fear the money is creating a culture of dependency back home. Word of mouth and few household surveys attribute to this growing reality. An accurate evaluation for this factor has yet to be achieved by researchers. While data does not reveal a cause and effect relationship between remittances and unemployment, the following general assumptions can be made. Negative consequences are emerging at various levels where, in extreme cases, El Salvador is increasingly finding itself in the position to import workers from its neighbors to counteract low labor participation. Some Salvadorans find no incentive to work and contribute to local labor supplies; instead they rely on frequent remittances from family in the United States. Remittances are an unsustainable form of income, which can potentially erode good work habits among the nation's recipients. Further, income from abroad is contingent on progressive economic conditions from the sending end. Because the sizeable magnitude of remittances to El Salvador is a fairly recent phenomenon, negative consequences are now beginning to emerge. These unintended consequences are noticeable to scholars and researchers, however receive little attention from those who benefit most, the recipients. For them, it is often the difference between feeding or clothing their family comfortably or paying for housing and transportation; the choice is between two difficult options. Remittances substantially mitigate these and comparable predicaments.

Similarly, although remittances provide additional income and benefits for recipients, some households contribute to excessive consumerism. Studies cite this evolving trend as non-productive. The u.s. is not only the primary hub for transfers, but also exports popular culture through mainstream media. Lavish products advertised by u.s. based companies permeate the desires of many Salvadorans. Increasingly, additional income from remittances provides greater ability to acquire excessive luxuries. Of course, for many households who truly cannot afford to spend income from remittances on nonessential consumer electronics or fashionable and expensive clothing, the transfers are still used for basic amenities. Growing consumerism prompts concern for some Salvadorans in the u.s., as their hard earned money goes to pay for novelty brand name items back home. Indeed, it is difficult to claim recipients are not using remittances productively, as any material asset likely increases their living standards. Nevertheless, studies indicate self-driven motives do not serve the community and instead leads to greater inequality. Because not every household in El Salvador receives money from abroad, poverty reduction does not manifest uniformly. When comparing neighborhoods, it is sometimes evident which households receive

remittances and which do not. Housing improvements, such as better construction materials or services such as sewage or electricity, identify households with additional income, commonly from remittances. This generates a more disproportionate community and further widens the poverty gap between neighborhoods. Moreover, critics argue remittances have the potential to fund state development, but remain largely unproductively used. Proponents cite a double-digit share of GDP to exemplify prospective uses for formal economic development. Rather, a burgeoning informal economy is taking place in El Salvador. This paper argues remittances should not be considered an alternative to sound economic policies, and instead the Salvadoran government is urged to establish effective policies to stimulate economic growth.

The dependence on remittances at local and government levels makes them unsustainable over time. Various conditions must persist for remittances to maintain consideration as a state strategy for poverty alleviation and economic growth. As this study reveals, successful migration, employment and disposable income are vital and necessary to continue the large volume of transfers. If families cannot finance the venture to migrate north, they remain under poor economic conditions in El Salvador. In the event that migration is successful against strict border enforcement, Salvadorans are faced with the burden of employment. As the U.S. endures an employment crisis, migrants struggle not only to make ends meet, but to remit back home. For Salvadorans who have permanent residency or citizenship status, the expectation to send money is perceived to be easier; that is not always the case however. In either circumstance, a primary state strategy to ease poverty and advance the economy should not depend on loosely collected individual efforts from Salvadoran citizens fleeing the country. These cash flows are not a substitute for effective economic policies, thus should not be treated as such. In the meantime, El Salvador should attempt to use remittances as a complementary approach, so long as the volume of remittances remains high.

VI. CONCLUSION

Remittances are productive for Salvadoran households, but data shows no remarkable impact on the national economy. Not enough time has transpired or data collected to accurately evaluate impacts of remittances at various levels presented throughout this study. In the short term, remittances are good for recipients, but as recent studies reveal, negative effects are developing. Cash flows are unequivocally beneficial for poor recipients, however dependence-deepening mechanisms deprive remittances as a concrete strategy to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth. In recent years, undesired consequences have evolved, and unforeseen effects likely lie ahead. Research must continue in this field to determine whether remittances yield greater potential in the short or long term. El Salvador should not depend on remittances as a strategy to generate economic growth, but instead develop worthy economic policies that affect the entire

population. The Salvadoran state should not structure its policies around the flow of remittances, where it increasingly depends on its diaspora to finance projects.

There exists little to no significant link between remittances and economic investment. They arguably fall short for macro-economic growth, but do play a powerful role at household levels. It is important to consider that Salvadorans are forced to migrate from a country whose economy does not provide progressive opportunities. Instead of exporting its people, the government should develop a productive domestic work force by reforming economic strategies. Although netting mechanisms are not fully developed, government efforts are best served by promoting fiscal policies. Remittances should not be used as a long-term solution to economic problems, but can provide a supplementary role. The next decade will be pivotal for determining how to maximize their use. It will reveal whether remittances can serve a productive instrument for the state and whether the Salvadoran government will further invest in modifying state institutions to capture cash flows. A steady incline after the 2008 global financial crisis shows that remittances are regaining momentum, though current unfavorable conditions in the U.S. create barriers. Further securing the U.S.-Mexico border resulting from anti-immigration policies may hinder future migrations and remittance transfers. A serious decline in remittance receipts, which constitutes the second most important source of revenue, will indisputably affect the Salvadoran economy at all levels. Perhaps then El Salvador will seek serious alternatives to reduce poverty and encourage economic growth.

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ABSTRACT » *Although the globalization of the world economy may facilitate economic cooperation and offer economic benefits to otherwise isolated economies, international actors increasingly voice concern for the impact globalization has on cultural diversity and state sovereignty. This paper demonstrates that Latin America has the capacity to select the most propitious aspects of globalization while rejecting the flawed. Specifically, this paper examines Bolivia and Venezuela's paradoxical opposition to and acceptance of foreign influence. These states vociferously oppose the ideology of the current global hegemon, the U.S.; at the same time, however, these states still enjoy the economic advantages of engaging in commerce with their ideological adversary. Analyzing these two nations, this paper shows that by overcoming ideological differences through transnational cooperation, trade, and open dialogue, Latin America has the ability to change international norms. Therefore, this study concludes that it is imperative for Latin America's constituent countries to accept globalization as part of the international system, while maintaining their unique ideologies and cultures.*

Bolivarian Glocalization:

» by *Megan Denkers*

Introduction

As the world hegemon, The United States is at the core of globalization, profoundly influencing social, political, and economic change through increasing global interconnection. Some celebrate u.s.-driven globalization as an agent of collective development and cooperation, while others resent the potential threat of cultural homogenization and class exploitation. A growing number of states recoil from the u.s.'s influence; however, scholars such as global economics expert Jagdish Bhagwati, contend that anti-globalization efforts are misdirected: "Capitalism is a system that paradoxically can destroy privilege, and open up economic opportunity to many—but this fact is lost on most of the system's vocal critics."¹ This study examines the conflation of globalization with Americanization, whose predominant influence is promoting neoliberal policies.

Since gaining independence from their respective colonizers, Latin American states have struggled to autonomously advance in the world system, evinced by the varied and oft-changing forms of government in states south of the Rio Grande, including: military dictatorships, technocracies, aristocracies, communism, republics, democracies, oligarchies, federations, and populism. Recently, leftist heads of state have opposed u.s. influence in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Venezuela. In 2005 a *New York Times* article branded this wave of populism as Latin America's "pink tide": "Three-quarters of the region's 355 million people are now governed by left-leaning leaders, all of whom have emerged in the past six years to redefine what the left means today. They are not so much a red tide...as a pink one."²

Perhaps the most outstanding faction of this leftist shift is the Bolivarian Revolution, the so-called "socialism of the 21st century."³

Bolivarianismo is based on the dream of early 19th-century South American “Liberator,” Simon Bolivar to unite Latin America in order to counterbalance Western superpowers. Today, Venezuelan president, Hugo Chavez Frias, is the self-proclaimed autocrat of the Bolivarian Revolution: “I alone shoulder the responsibility for this Bolivarian military uprising.”⁴ He defines the movement as “a new type of socialism, a humanist one, which puts humans and not machines or the state ahead of everything,” suggesting that the revolution employs a sense of patriotism, “solidarity, fraternity, love, justice, liberty and equality” in order to achieve socio-economic autonomy.⁵ Chavez further sees *Bolivarianismo* as an ideological revolution against the “immoral” neo-liberal, imperialist world system.⁶

This grassroots movement has resulted in the formation of the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas (ALBA), a nascent regional bloc sharing a common ideology of this “new socialism.” The eight member-nations of ALBA, including Venezuela, Bolivia, Cuba, and Ecuador, support *Bolivarianismo* as a “geopolitical, geo-economic, social, cultural and ideological organization” as a means to oppose U.S. influence and develop a multipolar world.⁷ In 1994 Cuban president Fidel Castro said of the movement:

Like never before we need the ideas of Bolívar... in this unipolar world our people are threatened by being devoured by the [U.S.] empire ... destroying our independence and popular sovereignty ... the imperialist strategy is very clear ... to impose a political and economic regime which is convenient to the United States ... [Bolivarianism] will lead to an end to injustice, the end of exploitation.⁸

This thesis, however, will demonstrate that Latin America can indeed benefit from the sole global superpower’s neoliberal ideology, while maintaining its unique socio-cultural attributes; in fact, this region has the capacity to select the most promising aspects of globalization while rejecting the flawed. An examination of Bolivia and Venezuela’s paradoxical opposition to and acceptance of U.S. influence will show that by overcoming ideological differences through transnational cooperation, trade, and dialogue Latin America has the ability to change international norms. Therefore, this study asserts that it is imperative for Latin America’s constituent countries to accept globalization as part of the international system while maintaining their unique ideologies and cultures.

Modernization, Dependency, and Globalization

Globalization has long been a controversial issue among international relations scholars; opposing theorists praise and condemn U.S. influence. In the mid-20th century modernization theory emerged as a way to explain Latin America's apparent stagnation, and has gained widespread acceptance. This concept maintains that states in the global periphery must inevitably follow the same path to socio-economic stability and advancement as Western powers, exemplified by the United States.⁹

In 1960, National Security Advisor to Lyndon Johnson, Walt Rostow, suggested that states necessarily evolve through five stages of development: (1) "Traditional Society" characterized by subsistence production; (2) the "Transitional Stage" wherein societies begin to specialize and trade; (3) "Takeoff," or industrialization; (4) the "Drive to Maturity" through product expansion and technological innovation; and (5) "High Mass Consumption," or consumer capitalism with a concentration in the service sector.¹⁰ Rostow's theory suggested that Latin America was simply behind the United States in terms of socio-economic development and, that through large-scale investment in capital, the opening of trade markets, and privatization Latin America could— one day—be as "advanced" as the United States.¹¹

In the early 1970s, dependency theory arose as a critique of Rostow's concept of modernity. Political economy scholar Andre Gunter Frank began to promote a Marxist theory of imperialism and its effects on socio-economic advancement by tracing 'traditional states' common historical foundation. In his 1970 article, *The Structure of Dependence*, Theotino Dos Santos outlines the residual dependency left in Ibero-America by her former colonizers. Dos Santos identifies dependency as an accurate interpretation of Latin American underdevelopment. He suggests that the imperialism of the late 15th through late 19th centuries was replaced with a neo-imperialism, wherein the U.S. controls Latin America not through occupation, but by controlling resources, means of production, and dictating the terms of trade.¹² He suggests the newly independent Latin American states were left with their regional-specialized economies hinging on monoculture, a small number of mined resources, and labor. However, Dos Santos says, the reliance of an economy on limited products is extremely risky. The prosperity of these nations depends on dominant countries' demand for the given product, the abundance or scarcity of the resource, and even a favorable harvest.¹³

Similar to the "pink tide" sweeping over parts of Latin America presently, in the mid-20th century, Latin American states began to elect populist leaders in reaction to the region's imposed dependence on the industrialized world. These progressive heads of state sought to gain economic

independence by enacting a series of nationalist measures, including implementing trade barriers, nationalizing privately owned means of production and infrastructure, and implementing import substitution industrialization (ISI).¹⁴ According to scholar Werner Baer, “ISI is an attempt by economically less developed to break out of the world division of labor.”¹⁵

Baer continues, “Import substitution consists of establishing domestic production facilities to manufacture goods which were formerly imported...ISI would bring greater economic independence to Latin American countries self-sufficiency in manufactured goods.”¹⁶ Economists also thought ISI would create secure employment for the working class.

Unfortunately, ISI proved to be unsustainable because machine parts were imported from the very states from which Latin America was trying to break free. Furthermore, states neglected the agricultural sector and the market became saturated as there were not enough domestic consumers.¹⁷ Proponents of the current neoliberal model of the global economy cite the failure of these nationalist policies as proof that Latin America must participate in market capitalism. These scholars suggest that each state should concentrate on their comparative advantages—a concept developed by the so-called “fathers of modern economics,” Adam Smith and David Ricardo in the late 18th century.¹⁸ Capitalizing on this notion of comparative advantage is meant to mutually benefit states through the trade of specialized goods and services made competitive by conditions in individual nations.¹⁹ Comparative advantage and free trade remain the basis for global economics and globalization today.

Smaller or less powerful countries often form regional trade agreements (RTA) in order to increase their bargaining power with an economic superpower. However, research contradicts the presumed benefits of regionalization; in effect RTAs often compromise individual countries’ interests for the good of the trading bloc. The National Bureau of Economic Research has found that RTAs benefit member-states differently: “gains may not accrue to countries forming a CU [customs union] since trade may also be diverted to higher-cost suppliers within the integrating area; that is, trade-diversion losses may outweigh trade-creating gains.”²⁰ Particularly, South America’s MERCOSUR has created trade diversion, making trade less efficient in the region than it would be without the RTA.²¹ Furthermore, RTAs can create obstacles to multilateral trade with non-members.

Conversely, the concept of comparative advantage holds that the greater the number of international trading-relationships, the better. Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman supports the liberal notion that states must participate in the global market in order to succeed. He posits that “international free trade is in the best interests of trading countries and of the world.”

²² Cooperating in international trade is, therefore, more beneficial than solely trading within a regional bloc.

In fact, *Bolivarianismo* does not completely reject neoliberal macroeconomics. Admittedly, Bolivarian states expropriate and nationalize privately-owned firms, redistribute land, and reject some neoliberal policies: “We declare ourselves in permanent mobilization against free trade, the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules and all the economic domination instruments imposed by the United States.”²³ However, *Bolivarianismo* does promote regional free trade, proposing a variation of the same neoliberal policies they claim to “mobiliz[e] against;” indeed, Chavez promotes a free trade alliance between all Latin American states and even a common South American currency, the *SUCRE*.²⁴ Moreover, Latin America’s leftist states contradict Bolivarian anti-imperialist policies by continuing trade with the U.S.

In addition to opposing neoliberalism, advocates of the anti-globalization movement suggest that the effects of U.S. influence are all-encompassing, not only impairing development but homogenizing diverse cultures and pushing societies towards American-style capitalism. John Tomilson, Director of the Centre of Research in International Communication and Culture, defines the concept of the erosion of cultural diversity caused by globalization: “the homogenization thesis presents globalization as synchronization to the demands of a standardized consumer culture, making everyone everywhere seem more or less the same.”²⁵

However, the liberal paradigm assumes that actors participate in the global market by creating a demand for products. Therefore, foreign exposure to U.S. culture is based on consumer demand. Sociologist Gary Hamilton notes, “What we witness with the development of a global economy is not increasing uniformity, in the form of a universalization of Western culture, but rather the continuation of civilizational diversity through the active reinvention and reincorporation of non-Western civilizational patterns.”²⁶ Since social interaction reaffirms cultural diversity, Latin American culture need not be threatened by U.S. influence.

Likewise, liberal scholars contend that these interactions will create global accord cooperation, not homogenization. Accordingly, if states seek progress, they will interact transnationally despite cultural differences or opposing ideologies. Stanford scholar Francis Fukuyama highlights the importance of transcultural collaboration; he asserts that interstate relations are “becoming increasingly anchored in self-interest rather than culture as countries modernize. Globalization provides the opportunity to expand markets far beyond the limits of one’s own cultural community.”²⁷ Using this liberal paradigm predictively, one can assume that Latin America will pursue economic relations with the U.S. despite their ideological differences.

Liberal theory also holds that transnational cooperation and interaction will positively transform international customs. The fathers of complex interdependence theory, Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, maintain that norms can only be influenced through open communication: “Transnational relations increase the sensitivity of societies to one another thereby altering relationships between governments...small changes in one state’s policy may have large effects on the system.”²⁸ Latin American states, according to Nye and Keohane’s theory, will continue to create transnational relationships with the United States in order to influence desired policy changes.

In his book, *Globalization In Question*, sociologist Paul Hirst concludes that globalization has increased poverty and disparity in developing states, especially Latin America and Africa.²⁹ However, in 2002 the World Bank published a report on GDP in developing countries which contradicts Hirst’s assertion. The report revealed that states which accepted foreign influence prospered relative to the states that resisted neoliberalism: “as [developing countries] reformed and integrated with the world market, the ‘more globalized’ developing countries started to grow rapidly.”³⁰ Clearly, globalization is a complex issue; while some aspects of socio-economic interconnectedness may have hindered Latin American growth, the region has also benefitted from it.

Professor of Latin American political economy Jeffery Webber, argues that the “pink tide” of leftist-populist governments in Latin America attempts to correct the domestic inequality that they perceive as being caused by Americanization. However, Webber notes that these leaders accept the benefits of global interconnection while rejecting the negative aspects of hegemonic influence: “At the same time that [Socialist President of Bolivia, Evo] Morales speaks about anti-capitalist ecological politics to the international media, his domestic policies reinforce a complex and reconstituted neoliberalism, based on the export of primary raw materials.”³¹ To some, the dissonance of Bolivarian rhetoric and the leaders’ cooperation in capitalist exchange with the U.S. may seem duplicitous. However, many scholars support the notion that these populist Latin American states selectively participate in the current global system while defending their distinctive geopolitical dogmas.

In *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Thomas Friedman describes the unique paradigm that populist Latin American states follow. He argues that these states have “develop[ed] multiple filters to prevent their cultures from being erased by the homogenizing pull and push of global capitalism,” an ability he refers to as “glocalization.”³² He adds, “The whole purpose of glocalizing is to be able to assimilate aspects of globalization into your country and culture in a way that adds to your growth and diversity, without overwhelming it.”³³ Therefore, it is imperative for Latin America to accept globalization as part of joining the international system while working to maintain their distinctiveness. Accepting globalization necessarily requires accepting the influence of

the current hegemon. Proponents of global integration emphasize the role of the U.S. in a successful global economy because the sole superpower boasts incomparable military and economic power. As globalization's powers of good and evil battle to define the world system, the U.S. is in the unique position to intercede.

The rejection of hegemonic influence and the inevitability of modern global interconnectedness place Latin America itself at a disadvantage. Friedman concludes his analysis of globalization with a moderate, but optimistic perspective: "America is not at its best every day, but when it's good, it's very, very good."³⁴ In the same way, while some aspects of globalization are horrid, globalization has the potential to make the world-wide standard of living "very, very good." Latin America's challenge is to demonstrate that it will not be homogenized or remain in the global periphery; to do so Latin America must continue to hone its ability to globalize.

Economic Influence & Trade

BOLIVIA

The U.S. is by far the world's largest consumer market; not only does the hegemon consume the most goods per capita, but Americans also consume the most energy per capita, worldwide.³⁵ In contrast, Latin America has a wealth of natural resources; however, instead of falling victim to the modern "resource curse" Latin American states have used the United States' consumer and energy markets to their own economic advantage, without compromising their ideological beliefs. Because Bolivia has the second largest reserves of hydrocarbons in the Americas, it is in the position to demand the terms of trade that optimize individual benefits.³⁶

In the past, The Plurinational Republic of Bolivia has accepted privatization in order to participate in the global market. For example, in 1999, US-based Bechtel purchased a 40-year lease on Cochabamba, Bolivia's water system, promising to provide greater access to clean drinking water.³⁷ However, water rates in the *pueblo* tripled, to a fifth of the townspeople's average income. The citizens were left with no option but to purchase water at these elevated rates since Bechtel's contract mandated the elimination of rainwater collection and personal wells.³⁸ However, in 2000 the mostly indigenous and impoverished population of Cochabamba rose up against Bechtel. After months of protest the population succeeded in expelling the multinational corporation and regained their water rights. The Bolivian government nullified Bechtel's water contract, despite the corporation's litigious objections.³⁹

Despite Cochabamba's rejection of u.s.-corporate control of their water, the United States continued to provide Bolivia with economic assistance. Indeed, just eight months after the ousting of Bechtel, the u.s. agreed to forgive Bolivia's debt.⁴⁰ Additional, in the same year, the u.s. granted Bolivia \$110 million for the development of alternative agriculture, to diversify their crop production.⁴¹

Notwithstanding the West's debt forgiveness, in 2002 the Bolivian *pueblo* again rebelled against foreign control. Then-president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, made plans to run a pipeline from Bolivia's natural gas fields, through Chile to the Pacific Ocean.⁴² Bolivia resented the hundreds of millions of dollars they would have to pay Chile for access to a sea port. Only 120 years before, Bolivia lost their littoral territory to Chile in the War of the Pacific (1879-1883).⁴³ Furthermore, Bolivia opposed the sale of its natural resources to North America, maintaining that only foreign economies and multinationals would benefit from the deal. The peasant revolt—since branded “The Gas War of 2003” resulted in months of nationwide protest, dozens of civilian casualties, and the loss of millions of dollars in revenues caused by the instability and blockades.⁴⁴ Finally, the plans to build the pipeline were abandoned and President Sanchez was ousted. The following year, the leader of the grassroots movement, Evo Morales, was elected president on the strength of his revolutionary, Bolivarian platform.⁴⁵

Since becoming a member-state of ALBA, Bolivia has rejected u.s.-driven privatization in the state, while still participating in the global market. In 2006 the Bolivian government further seized resource autonomy by renationalizing the gas industry, claiming, “The pillage of our natural resources by foreign companies is over.”⁴⁶ Yet, Morales promised that this shot at regaining resource sovereignty would not mean the outright expropriation of foreign-owned land or the expulsion of transnational corporations: “Foreign companies have every right to recover investments and make profits, but profits should be balanced.”⁴⁷ Nevertheless, the military began occupying gas fields, the government expropriated foreign owned businesses, and companies' contracts were redrafted, increasing taxes and reducing corporate profit.⁴⁸

Despite Bolivia's pursuit of resource autonomy, the u.s. continues to be Bolivia's second largest global trading partner, after Brazil.⁴⁹ Only after Morales expelled the u.s. ambassador from Bolivia in 2008 did the u.s. withdraw financial assistance and cancel the seventeen-year standing Andean trade pact. Unfortunately, the economy and the people of Bolivia suffered greatly with this decline in foreign aid. Bolivian authorities conservatively estimated that their country lost 20,000 jobs and \$300 million in annual exports to the u.s. due to this economic reprisal.⁵⁰ Undeniably, there is a direct negative correlation between Bolivia's GDP, its poverty rate and u.s. assistance.⁵¹ It seems that Morales took note of the importance of u.s. investment and assistance in his state;

in November 2011, Bolivia re-initiated diplomatic relations with the U.S. Even throughout this period of discord, the U.S. has remained the top contributor of aid to Bolivia through USAID.⁵² As a consequence of the diplomatic reconciliation, the OECD expects U.S. aid to Bolivia to increase in 2012.

Even with the warming of bilateral relations, Morales remains a staunch defender of indigenous rights and works to protect Bolivia's unique culture. Furthermore, he continues to work against the privatization of Bolivia's resources and health system. Morales demonstrates a mastery of glocalization; he accepts U.S. influence in his state, but only under his terms, and does so only for the good of his people: "The real issue is that the rich of the world come to Bolivia to take away what little there is that could pull Bolivians out of misery. We need to stop this abuse, whether it means defending water, gas, or the right to farm coca."⁵³

VENEZUELA

Latin America's most vocal anti-U.S. leader, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, has also selectively cooperated with the U.S. to his country's advantage. Chavez publicly denounces the U.S. as a neo-imperial power: "Capitalism will lead to the destruction of humanity ... [and the U.S.] is the devil that represents capitalism."⁵⁴ However, the Venezuelan economy has become ever-more entrenched in the global capitalist market since Chavez was first elected president. Venezuela's economy and its Bolivarian revolution depend almost entirely on the export of oil.⁵⁵ *The New York Times* noted Chavez's hypocrisy, "For Venezuela, as distaste for the U.S. grows, so does trade."⁵⁶ If Chavez so objects to what he views as U.S. neo-imperialism, why doesn't Venezuela sever economic ties with the U.S.? Simply, The United States is an invaluable trading partner for Venezuela. The U.S. purchases 40% of Venezuela's internationally-traded oil, making the U.S. the largest consumer of Venezuelan oil and making Venezuela the fifth largest supplier of oil to the United States.⁵⁷ Clearly, Chavez recognizes the leverage that his country's natural resources grant him: they represent "a strong oil card to play on the geopolitical stage. It is a card we are going to play with toughness against the toughest country in the world, the United States."⁵⁸ Despite its leader's militant rhetoric, Venezuela's oil exports have become more dependent on the U.S. market since Chavez came to power while the value of exports to other Latin American countries have decreased.⁵⁹

However, oil exports do not diminish the importance of bilateral trade relations; the U.S. is also the largest exporter of goods to Venezuela. The U.S. is a frontrunner in machine part, manufactured goods, and grain exports to Venezuela.⁶⁰ After suffering from a disastrous deluge in 2010, Venezuela imported 900,000 tons of corn from the U.S.⁶¹ Venezuela's National Confederation of Agricultural Producers (Fedeaagro) reported a 40% decrease in domestic grain production

since 2010: “Weather, price controls, legal and personal insecurity, land seizures, shortage of inputs and the steady increase in production costs hit agriculture.”⁶² Consequently, Venezuela’s entire purchase of us grain in 2011 is comparable to the combined sum of all of South America’s total projected 2011 grain harvest.⁶³ Despite its dependence on u.s. imports, Venezuela petro-economy maintains a trade surplus with the energy-hungry United States.⁶

Cultural Influence

While Latin American states benefit from u.s. influence, they remain distinctive. Bolivarian-President of Argentina and ally of Chavez and Morales, Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner recognizes that while Bolivarian states share a similar anti-imperialist ideology, the social-democratic governments of Latin America maintain individual approaches to relations with the u.s. In an interview with filmmaker Oliver Stone, Kirchner says, “we believe in integration, while respecting the morals, the identities of each individual country, the cultures, and the political processes which are never the same. We’re all different people with different societies and different histories.”⁶⁵

Correspondingly, Latin American heads of state balance international cooperation with the protection of each unique culture. Latin America is an exceptionally diverse region; it is home to over 400 indigenous groups, between 550 and 700 different languages, and 50 million indigenous language speakers.⁶⁶ Therefore, Bolivarian leaders empower singular cultures and indigenous groups.

Cultural autonomy is paramount in Bolivia, whose population is made up of 55% Amerindians and 30% *mestizo*, that is, people of mixed indigenous and European ancestry.⁶⁷ In fact, Morales won the presidential election—in part—because of his indigenous Aymara ethnicity and his grassroots support for cultural rights. In 2007 Bolivia was the first nation to legislate the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This declaration recognizes indigenous right to self-determination, and promotes the “principles of justice, democracy, respect for human rights, non-discrimination,” environmental sovereignty, and land entitlements.⁶⁸ In addition to Spanish, all thirty-six indigenous languages and dialects were declared official languages of Bolivia in the progressive constitution that the public endorsed in 2009.⁶⁹

The coca leaf has been used by the Indigenous Andean people in traditional medicines and cultural practices for thousands of years; it is most commonly chewed in order to combat the effects of the region’s high-altitude and resultant nausea, and as a mild stimulant similar to caffeine or nicotine.⁷⁰ However, the plant is also the key ingredient in the chemical process of cocaine production. Therefore, the u.s. opposes the growing of coca, going as far as invoking the United

Nations' 1961 International Drug Convention Treaty as prohibiting the cultivation of coca. President Morales has staunchly rebelled against the treaty; in a 2009 United Nations meeting Morales boldly chewed a coca leaf behind the center podium and proclaimed, "If this leaf is a drug, then you should throw me in jail."⁷¹

Remarkably, despite Bolivia's outward resistance to their influence, Washington continues to provide La Paz with aid for "The War against Drugs." As point of fact, in 2010 the U.S. granted Bolivia \$80 million for the sole purpose of combating the trafficking of narcotics.⁷² Moreover, the U.S. has shown Bolivia a degree of leniency, allowing the limited cultivation of coca. In 2006, in fact, the U.S. conceded to coca-farmers' entreaties to lift its prohibition; while continuing the fight to eradicate illicit drug trafficking and cocaine production through funding and the training of Bolivian officers, Washington has nevertheless recognized the importance of traditional coca agriculture for the region's poor farmers. John Creamer, officer in charge of business in the U.S. embassy to Bolivia, says, "We continue being an important partner of the Bolivian government and we support the rationalization programs of the coca harvests."⁷³

While indigenous peoples only make up 1.5% of Venezuela's population, Chavez similarly defends indigenous rights. Indeed, the Venezuelan Constitution pledges to consult indigenous leaders before extracting resources from their land, recognizes collective land rights, and defends indigenous intellectual property rights.⁷⁴ Furthermore, Chavez has created a nationalist cultural ideology in which the common people are central, and which fosters an affable civic-military alliance. Moreover, the state not only funds the restoration of art deemed as patrimony, but also sponsors thriving music and art programs in schools. Venezuela's key cultural official, the Minister of Culture meets with museums and community organizations in order to strategize cultural development and protection. Certainly, Latin America maintains a heterogeneous culture, despite pervasive U.S. influence.

Sucker for Rejection

Why, then, does Washington continue to pursue economic and political relations with the few Latin American states that consistently reject and publically denounce its influence? Clearly, the U.S. relies on imported oil and natural gas from South America and boasts myriad trade agreements with Latin American states, but at the same time, Bolivarian states are aligning with larger threats to U.S. interests. Specifically, Washington is wary of Bolivarian alliances with Iran: "Tehran has cultivated close ties with several leaders who share Iran's anti-American sentiment, including Venezuela's Hugo Chávez and Bolivia's Evo Morales, both of whom have called Iran a 'strategic ally'."⁷⁵

However, Bolivarian states cannot forsake their relationship with the United States because Iran is still a less economically and militarily powerful state. Like Venezuela and Bolivia, Iran is a resource-rich country; Bolivarian economies are highly dependent on exports to the u.s., despite sharing ideological similarities with enemies of the u.s.⁷⁶ Consequently, finding itself in danger of pushing Latin America deeper into the arms of the enemy, Washington is forced to maintain a certain level of diplomacy with their neighbors to the South, no matter the ideological dissonance.

Chinese investment in Latin America is on the rise; between 2008 and 2011 China invested hundreds of billions of dollars in Bolivarian states' energy and mineral markets. While China's recent interest in Latin America might seem to lessen the importance of u.s.-Latin relations, this is not actually the case. u.s. Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Arturo Valenzuela insists that although China's trade with the region has grown 10-fold since 2000, "it is certainly not a threat."⁷⁷ Although China's economy, middle class, and energy markets are quickly growing, the World Bank predicts that China's consumer market will not surpass that of the u.s. anytime soon.⁷⁸ Economists predict that while China's urban consumer market will almost double to \$7 trillion by 2025, the u.s.'s will rise to approximately \$15 trillion in the same period:

"Our optimistic scenario would see the total Chinese consumer market (including rural spending) grow by 2025 to a scale approaching total US consumer spending today (although still well below what the size of the US market would be by 2025)."⁷⁹

As the world's largest market, the u.s. will remain a top priority for Latin American states. Therefore, Bolivarian states may pursue glocalization without fear of the hegemon tiring of rejection.

Change as a Process

Historically, The United States and Bolivia have undergone periods of both cordial cooperation and strain. However, USAID continues to provide aid for development, counter-narcotics, environmental conservation, health care, alternative agriculture, improved food security, and institution strengthening.⁸⁰ Recently the u.s. and Bolivia signed a joint statement to restore bilateral relations. The statement pledges to respect geographic and government sovereignty, and strengthen bilateral ties. Though still dubious, relations are warming.

Since the beginning of George W. Bush's presidency in 2001, Chavez has vociferously denounced the u.s. as "imperialist" and immoral. In a 2006 speech to the UN Chavez referred to

Bush as “the devil” and the “biggest terrorist threat on the planet.”⁸¹ In 2008 Caracas followed La Paz’s lead by expelling the u.s. ambassador to the country; however, bilateral relations were briefly restored with the election of President Barack Obama. Chavez congratulated the American voters on their selection for “a new kind of democracy.”⁸² While Chavez has continued to vocalize his opposition to u.s. hegemonic influence in Latin America, he has maintained a dialogue with Obama. In 2009 during the Fifth Summit of the Americas Chavez told Obama, “I want to be your friend.”⁸³ At the same conference of the Organization of American States, Obama recognized the u.s.’s previous diplomatic failures when dealing with Latin America and pledged to cooperate with the region in order to influence mutually beneficial change:

It has not always been easy, but it has changed...It will take time...Nothing is going to happen overnight. But I pledge to you that the United States will be there as a friend and a partner, because our futures are inextricably bound to the future of the people of the entire hemisphere. And we are committed to shaping that future through engagement that is strong and sustained, that is meaningful, that is successful, and that is based on mutual respect and equality.⁸⁴

Indeed, the u.s. and Venezuela continue to collaborate in commerce and are actively seeking meaningful interchange. While much dissonance remains to be solved in the Americas, change for the better has slowly occurred. Only through open communication, cooperation, and engagement can any meaningful changes developments emerge.

Conclusion

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 American-driven globalization entails some daunting implications. Ideological conflicts arise between the u.s. and Bolivarian governments; however, Latin American states are increasingly taking a middle road, by glocalizing. Populist leaders reject harmful aspects of globalization while simultaneously allowing their states to profit from neoliberal trade and u.s. aid. Notably, Bolivia and Venezuela have publically aired the divergence of their ideology from that of the hegemon while maintaining their unique ideologies and cultures.

Bolivarian policies demonstrate an exemplary application of glocalization, balancing the attributes of neoliberalism and social autonomy. Morales is renowned for leading successful grassroots movements to eliminate u.s.-backed multi-national corporate control of Bolivia’s water and gas, and for representing the indigenous, poor, and underrepresented.⁸⁵ Similarly, Chavez promotes Venezuela’s militant socio-cultural revolution. He engages in trade with his philosophical adversary while forging ties with anti-American states and promoting an avant-garde nationalism.

Clearly, the Bolivarian Revolution's paradoxical opposition to and acceptance of u.s. influence demonstrates the power of globalization. Through transnational cooperation, trade, and dialogue Latin America has the ability to change international norms. Therefore, in order to succeed in the modern world system, it is imperative for Latin America to accept globalization and u.s. influence while maintaining its unique ideologies and cultures.

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ABSTRACT » *The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children was adopted by the international community in 2000 and subsequently implemented in 2003. Framed as a global public policy initiative to prevent and combat trafficking, the UN Protocol promises to eradicate human trafficking by addressing and ameliorating the root causes of trafficking. With an absolute intent to comply with the mandates of the UN Protocol, we would expect to witness the beginning of a revolutionary change in the ways the industrialized world responds to the trafficking and exploitation of women and girls, however, this has not been the case. In practice, we have seen western countries' anti-trafficking efforts manifest themselves through growing implementation of anti-immigration policies and a prioritization of state security over victim protection and rights.*

Preventing and Combating Sex Trafficking: A Critical Feminist Analysis

» by KRISTIE MILLER

Preventing and Combating Sex Trafficking: A Critical Feminist Analysis

In 2000, the international community adopted the *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children* (hereafter referenced as the UN Protocol) in an effort to create a normative framework for preventing and combating trafficking while protecting the rights of victims. As the world's first legally binding instrument to provide a detailed definition for human trafficking¹ (UNODC, UN Convention), the UN Protocol was formed out of an identified need for a "comprehensive international approach...to prevent such trafficking, to punish the traffickers and to protect the victims of such trafficking...by protecting their inter-

nationally recognized human rights² (United Nations, 2)." This protocol calls for cooperation among state parties and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in an effort "to alleviate the factors that make persons, especially women and children, vulnerable to trafficking, such as poverty, underdevelopment and lack of equal opportunity³ (United Nations, 6)." Although the UN Protocol is widely accepted as the most promising international regime to protect women and girls from sex trafficking, this paper advances a critical feminist approach that places the human rights of women and girls at the core of debates, policies, services and efforts.

A critical feminist analysis questions whether the UN Protocol's principal focus on state security and organized crime serves the interests of women and girls. Sex trafficking is not only a means of migration or a crime of opportunity for those desiring to generate

profit and wealth, but is an undeniable indicator of the extreme lack of opportunities for women and girls resulting from the creation, sustenance, and perpetuation of global structural inequalities. These inequalities are further compounded by race, class, ethnic and gender oppressions that profoundly impact the lives of women and girls. By utilizing a critical feminist methodology informed by a post-positivist approach, this paper analyzes the ways in which feminist strategies could be more effective than the current approach for preventing and combating sex trafficking.

The legal definition of trafficking in persons is “distinguished by the use of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, or abuse of power⁴ (Lobasz, 219). The preceding dynamics are seemingly negated when it is discovered that a victim may have provided consent⁶⁷(see Farley, 2006; Hua, 2010; Lobasz, 2010). By situating the question of consent within the larger social, economic, and political realities of women’s and girl’s lives, the boundaries between consent and force, fraud and coercion become blurred. The UN Protocol positions itself as a mechanism to garner state efforts in preventing and combating sex trafficking while providing protections for women and girls. However, when the mandates of the UN Protocol are played out at state levels, the attention becomes focused primarily on the traffickers, especially organized crime groups, as well as militarization and policing of borders. This unfortunately diminishes the protections of internationally recognized human rights and prioritizes the protection of the state. Originating from the realist school of thought that views “trafficking as a threat to the state and particularly to the control of its borders⁸ (Lobasz, 214),” mainstream anti-trafficking efforts have the effect of locating the security interests of the state above the human rights of victims⁹ (Lobasz, 215, 221). Although the UN Protocol is politically innovative in its calls for international cooperation between states and NGO’s, this paper posits that women and girls will continue to be treated as an afterthought if a critical feminist lens is not employed.

A Feminist View on the Global Anti-Trafficking Movement

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The global anti-trafficking movement dates back to the mid-nineteenth century as feminists began to petition “states and international organizations to fight human trafficking while challenging the established security approach to trafficking¹⁰ (Lobasz, 220).” Despite deep philosophical divisions on the practice of prostitution, the feminist movement has continued to play a key role in shaping the debates and policies for fighting human trafficking, especially efforts against sex trafficking. The 1949 enactment of the Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others institutionalized the international community’s approach to combating sex trafficking as a policy of abolition, that continues today¹¹ (Lehti, 134). Although the Cold War overshadowed prioritization of anti-trafficking efforts within the international domain, it gained urgency during the late 1980’s “as a number of states,

non-governmental organizations (NGOs), human rights activists, and various feminist and religious groups sought to publicize the issue ¹²(Lobasz, 217).” During this time, an increased focus targeting criminal enterprises benefitting from human trafficking emerged.

The 2003 implementation of the UN Protocol further institutionalized the international community’s focus on the role of organized crime within the human trafficking global phenomenon. Created specifically to supplement the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, the UN Protocol criminalizes the act of trafficking, providing that two specific conditions are first met. “The first is that the offense is transnational in nature...the offense must be *inter alia* (emphasis in original) committed in more than one state or in one state under certain criteria... the second element that needs to be present for the Trafficking Protocol to come into effect is the involvement of an ‘organized criminal group’ ¹³(Farka, 39).” This is where employing a feminist lens becomes most useful. A critical feminist analysis reveals how centering the role of organized crime and state security within the global anti-trafficking movement has actually had the effect of overlooking a large percentage of the women and girls who fall victim.

The human rights of women and girls need to be centered within anti-trafficking policies and efforts if the root causes of human trafficking are to be addressed. According to Martti Lehti, a researcher for the National Research Institute of Legal Policy in Helsinki, Finland, and Kauko Aromaa, Director of the United Nations’ European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, “the bulk of victims of trafficking usually come from the most economically depressed and politically most unstable areas in the world and from the most disadvantaged social and ethnic groups in those areas¹⁴ (150).” These disadvantages create unique and profound vulnerabilities for women and girls that in turn severely limit their social, political and economic options. We must ask why are women and girls so disproportionately affected? Is the change in focus from anti-trafficking efforts to state security and criminal gangs the most effective approach?

Women and girls are arguably impacted the most because “women are disproportionately clustered at the bottom of the economic scale,...the harsh effects of structural adjustment policies imposed by the International Monetary Fund on Third World debtor nations fall disproportionately on women as providers of basic needs [and because] social welfare programs in areas of health, nutrition, and housing are cut¹⁵ (Tickner, 78).” Women and girls are forced to seek alternative means of support with increasing limitations in available resources. These alternatives often place women and girls in harm’s way and at the mercy of those who abuse and exploit them.

Defining Victim, Mandating Legal Cooperation, and the Question of Consent

Under this approach, protecting human rights is not prioritized unless law enforcement's primary goal to capture and punish traffickers is first realized. The United States' Government Accountability Office (GAO) has cited Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) main anti-trafficking objective is "to disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations involved in trafficking, including intelligence gathering on these organizations²⁰ (Lobasz, 218)." Arguably states' priorities are with the perpetrators, and not the victims. This is a point of conflict for feminists who "argue that as an issue of ethics, human trafficking is first and foremost a violation of human rights²¹ (Lobasz, 215)." By employing a critical feminist lens we see the ways in which victim's rights are subjugated to the state's security ambitions.

Women and girls are often criminalized rather than provided with protections under the current state security and criminal justice model for preventing and combating sex trafficking. Feminists, who prefer a victim-centered approach, point out how "prevalent constructions of human trafficking...establish a standard for victimization that most trafficked persons cannot meet²² (Lobasz, 115)." Further complicating the issue is the question of consent, which makes it increasingly difficult for law enforcement to determine who is victim and who is not.

The question of consent profoundly complicates how trafficked victims are perceived and treated by law enforcement within the realm of a criminal justice approach. There exist a large number of women and girls who willingly migrate with the intention of working in the illegal sex industry, but then find themselves in unexpected or misleading situations. When horrific human rights violations occur, protections should not be contingent upon whether or not there was initial consent. Instead of seeking to prove that women and girls willingly put themselves in harm's way, a better strategy would be to first and foremost uphold their right to safety and well-being. It is difficult to place blame on someone for consenting to illegal migration for purposes of commercial sex when there are no other tangible opportunities available. We must contextualize the experiences and choices of women and girls within the global system that shapes those choices.

Although it is not uncommon for trafficking victims to have initially provided some degree of consent to their traffickers, victims often report they were unaware of the brutalities of the working conditions they would find themselves in or of the deeply exploitative nature

that working off their debts would entail (Staiger, 106)²³.” Data from the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute on Nigerian girls trafficked into Italy reveals that “90 percent of repatriated victims of prostitution-related trafficking admit that they knew when recruited that they might end up as prostitutes. However, they had little choice other than to accept, since they could not find employment and lacked funds to continue their educations at home ²⁴(UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, 73).” The UN Protocol was designed to “view trafficked women as victims, not criminals...[and] make consent irrelevant to whether or not trafficking has occurred (Farley, 140-141).²⁵” However, in practice, perceived consent continually contributes to a dichotomization between “victim” and “illegal immigrant” ²⁶ (Hua, 403-404). This dichotomization not only shapes how victims are perceived by law enforcement, but determines how criminal justice systems respond to their cases. Criminalization and deportation often become the response to their victimization instead of becoming legally defined as trafficked victims and afforded the opportunities a trafficked victim should receive under the UN Protocol.

Economic and Social Coercion

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 Although experiences of force, fraud and coercion have become the determining factors for whether prostituted individuals can be legally included under the trafficking umbrella, systemic economic and social coercion are yet to be considered as part of the legal definition. Commonly, these are the forms of coercion that serve as larger forces, which limit opportunities for women and girls. As such, illegal immigration, sometimes knowingly for the purposes of commercial sex, can feel as though it is the most viable option available for women and girls seeking to improve their situations. In practice, when the UN Protocol is implemented with a state security and criminal justice focus, any degree of initial consent invalidates women and girls’ ability to become legally categorized as trafficking victims. This is revealed through a feminist analysis, such as the “still too common treatment of trafficked individuals – especially women- as criminals rather than victims²⁷ (Lobasz, 220).” For this reason, many human rights activists, social service providers, feminists and survivors of trafficking themselves are now vocalizing the ways in which severe limitations of opportunity, compounded by larger structural inequalities including race, class, ethnic and gender oppressions, are the root causes for vulnerability to trafficking.

Global structural inequalities are profound forms of economic and social coercion that cannot be easily overcome by individual actors. Therefore, what may superficially appear to be consent can be considered irrelevant when employing a victim-centered, human rights prioritization. Real efforts at preventing the global human trafficking phenomenon from continuing must focus on front-end prevention in order to tackle the root causes of vulnerability to trafficking. Women and girls require an elimination of barriers to economic sufficiency and genuine alternatives to the sex trade

rather than a constrictive definition of victimhood that depends on factoring out any perceived degree of consent.

Trafficking Victim or Illegal Immigrant?

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When only the direst cases of victimization are legally permitted to fall under the definition of trafficking and all other instances become defined as illegal immigration, state security still remains the primary interest above protection of human rights. This has had the effect of creating a hierarchical order for what constitutes true victimization.

Specific victims of human trafficking (i.e. refugees, female victims of sex trafficking) are identified as worthy and in need of receiving the protection of the state, while others, even in the instances where violence at the hands of traffickers has been documented, are not considered in need of support or assistance, not only due to the fact that their entrance into the country takes place under unlawful circumstances, but increasingly on the basis of their origin.²⁸ (Sanchez, 127)

The UN Protocol was “specifically written to distinguish between voluntary and coercive migration, however, in practice, the coerced trafficking victims are often treated as voluntary undocumented migrants by border control and other state security apparatuses²⁹ (Lobasz, 220).” This approach fails to “recognize that migrants have been displaced by practices that have resulted in the loss of their land and/or livelihoods through international trade liberalization policies, mega-development projects, the loss of employment in capitalist labor markets, or war (Sharma, 89)³⁰.” These larger dynamics of displacement are also forms of economic and social coercion, as they help to shape and perpetuate larger global structural inequalities that create, maintain and compound vulnerabilities.

Another danger in a state security and criminal justice approach is the common misperception that women and girls experience trafficking purely by criminal gangs exploiting their desires to travel, live, and work in prosperous western states. Surprisingly, traffickers quite commonly are boyfriends, family members, family friends, and other persons in positions of trust to the victim, not just criminal gangs. By perpetuating stereotypes that traffickers are mainly mafia-affiliated or large criminal gangs, “an idealized notion of trafficking victims [is constructed] that is applicable to only a small subset of trafficked persons, effectively removing all who do not fit this construction from rights protection³¹ (Lobasz, 227).” Although human trafficking is the fastest growing criminal activity in the world, it is short-sighted to place the onus for the trafficking phenomenon on criminal organizations without critically examining why the dynamics of trafficking and exploitation occur in the first place. Vulnerable individuals will remain at the mercy of those

who abuse and exploit for profit so long as monetary gains take precedent over human rights and dignity. We must keep the focus of anti-trafficking efforts sustained on eliminating vulnerabilities to abuse, exploitation, and violence if helping victims is the primary concern.

A feminist approach to preventing and combating sex trafficking keeps the victim's human rights at the core of the conversation. The dynamics of enslavement, coercion, and exploitation are the primary concern. Many common stereotypes of trafficking victims construct naïve young women and girls who are lured from their homes with promises of a better a life, such as the images mainstream anti-trafficking efforts circulate.

The UN's informational website on human trafficking is indicative of this trope, describing enslaved young women who are beaten, raped, and forced to work up to 18 hours a day, garnering enormous profits for those who sell them....however, the kidnapping of women represents the least likely scenario of human trafficking, as many women willingly leave their homes to join traffickers; it is the subsequent enslavement or coercion that constitutes trafficking.³² (Lobasz, 226-227)

Since trafficking is widely recognized by international law as a form of enslavement, adapting a feminist approach within international efforts is paramount. For example, the International Criminal Court (ICC) defines enslavement in article 7(2)I as “the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children³³ (Farka, 46).” As such, states are expected to prosecute trafficking cases “because these crimes are denounced by the international community. The state accepts jurisdiction under the assumption that it is obligated to protect humankind from such criminal atrocities³⁴ (Farka, 45-46).” When primary attention is given to state security and the role of organized crime, it would seem that women and girls are being overshadowed by state security concerns. In reality, women and girls are being doubly victimized – first by their traffickers and second by the state.

Although counter-intuitive, most human trafficking does not involve a crossing of state borders. According to Martti Lehti, and Kauko Aromaa, 60-80% of sex trafficking occurs domestically, that is within borders, primarily from rural, less economically affluent areas into urban, wealthier ones³⁵ (Lehti, 133). International sex trafficking into industrialized nations comprises just 10-20% of the entire phenomenon³⁶ (Lehti, 133). Domestic sex trafficking is a consequence of the economic and social coercion of poverty and global structural inequalities including race, class, and gender oppressions. “Structural development programs run by the International Monetary Fund control developing economies, profoundly impacting women's lives. Poverty is one consequence of these IMF policies, which may also result in women's migration to cities for the purposes

of economic survival, including prostitution³⁷ (Farley, 120).” Knowing this, one must question whether the current anti-trafficking solution of surveillance and policing of wealthier industrialized nation’s borders is really meant to help the victims of trafficking or if it is more intended to ebb the flow of migration in the name of victim protection. With almost 90% of the world’s trafficking occurring within third-world and developing nations, true efforts at protecting women and girls need to focus on the women and girls themselves and not just on policing wealthier nation’s borders. Additionally, trafficking victim’s situations are further compounded by the legal instruments and efforts that are purportedly designed to help them, necessitating a complete rethinking of global efforts to prevent and combat human trafficking.

Feminist Strategies for Preventing and Combating Trafficking

Feminist strategies for preventing and combating sex trafficking call for increased access to social services, education, vocational training and other empowerment measures in order to eradicate the root causes that create vulnerabilities for women and girls. According to J. Ann Tickner, “feminists’ commitment to the emancipatory goal of ending women’s subordination is consistent with a broad definition of security that takes the individual, situated in broader social structures, as its starting point³⁸ (Lobasz, 216).” Without opportunities for economic sufficiency, women and girls will continually be forced to seek out alternative means of income elsewhere, whether legal or not.

Commercial sex can seem like an easy ticket out of poverty and oppression, but too often results in horrific human rights abuses. Feminists seek to increase opportunities for women and girls so they are not forced to turn to commercial sex. Force is not only a physical action perpetrated by one or more individuals, but can also be systemically embedded within global structures that do not allow for security or upward mobility for women and girls. Furthermore, force and coercion can be physical, psychological, social, economic and political. This is where a critical feminist lens affords us the opportunity to question which mainstream anti-trafficking policies are really focused on.

Feminists have shown that traditional security approaches to human trafficking are inadequate, not only on moral grounds, but on pragmatic ones as well. Perhaps the most significant issue feminists have raised is the question of who or what is being secured. If the referent object of security is the state, the counter trafficking will focus primarily on border control policies and therefore will consider trafficked persons to be criminals rather than victims... If the referent of security is broadened to include trafficked individuals, then countertrafficking would incorporate social

services and human rights protections, which should make victims less vulnerable in the future.³⁹ (Lobasz 228)

Framing the debate as a human rights issue, mainstream feminists' "regard female prostitution as a form of slavery, an expression of structural inequalities of modern patriarchal society, and a form of exploitation of women"⁴⁰ (Lehti, 135)." Social, political, and economic coercion as well as global structural inequalities cannot be ignored if any meaningful and long-lasting measures are to be taken to prevent and combat sex trafficking in a way that places human rights and dignity at the core. Women's experiences must be contextualized within the global system, as none of us are immune from it. It is this very system that constructs the daily social, economic and political realities of our lives.

Endnotes

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