



The Moral Argument for Migration

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Abstract

This inquiry hopes to develop the moral argument for migration rights. It begins with the historical context of world poverty, that is, the unequitable distribution of global resources which is rooted in the economic as well as the structural injustices in the world. While weak internal structures are a determinant in the lack of human development in the Third World, political exclusion and economic domination are actually to be blamed for extreme poverty. The theoretical attempt to solve this problem through Rawls and the Capability Approach is also examined. Gaps are present. It is noted that Thomas Pogge's argument for a global difference principle is inadequate. The study distinguishes between economic migrants and refugees. The first should be dealt with from an economic point of view and the latter from a political vantage point. It is argued that economic and moral justifications exist in order to accommodate both. Migrant workers contribute to the economies of developed countries. Refugees, in contrast, may be allowed entry as a matter of negative duty to protect them from violence. The fear of the citizens of host countries that migrants are a security concern may be due to the unfair bias against people who are considered as outsiders. Justice, however, is a matter of fair treatment that all human beings deserve.

Keywords World poverty · Global justice · Negative duty · Fair treatment · Migration rights

1 Introduction

What is fair treatment? Fair treatment is a question of justice. It is something that every human being deserves as a matter of right. It is an issue that is amplified in the realm of human progress or the lack thereof. To be treated justly means that the human being is valued on the basis of one's humanity. But the reality in the world today is such that people are only respected on the ground of their status in society. Human beings are

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deprived of their entitlements because they are viewed as outsiders who have no right to become a part of a political community. This takes for granted the fact that affluent countries have attained their high level of progress at the expense of poor societies given the hegemonic nature of the past as well as the present global political and economic order.

According to Thomas Pogge, “freedom from severe poverty is among the most important human interests.”¹ Two billion people live on less than two dollars a day. Extreme poverty is about the cruel reality that millions do not have enough food to eat, lack access to health care and sanitation, and do not have decent homes to live. It involves, in this respect, a severe violation of human dignity. The obvious fact is that poor people lack access to better opportunities due to problems that are actually not of their own making. Unjust structures, exploitation and abuse, and political oppression, are evils that contribute to the injustices in the world today.

World poverty is a consequence of the prevailing hegemonic order in global politics and in international trade relations that favor rich and powerful countries. Uneven market forces deprive people of a fair share. Affluent societies enjoy a lavish lifestyle while the global poor have nothing to eat. Millions die from preventable diseases due to the lack of access to vaccines and life-saving medicines. It costs just ten dollars for a poor child to get all the necessary vaccines, the same price an American teenager pays for a new CD. But who is to blame for the misery of the global poor? How can global institutions and rich governments address the problem of poverty in the world?

2 Sen’s Critique of the Rawlsian Theory of Justice

John Rawls presents a theory of justice that is rooted in the distribution of resources or one in which “everyone benefits from permissible inequalities in the basic structure.”² For Rawls, injustice refers to those type of inequalities that “are not to the benefit of all.”³ While income or resource redistribution may not be necessarily equal, Rawls says that it must be to the advantage of the poor. Justice in the Rawlsian sense requires that the basic structure of society must ensure that the poor have access to primary goods without jeopardizing the basic liberties of others. In general, the difference principle guarantees a method of resource sharing that favors those who have less in life. By giving all equal access to opportunities, it is expected that people will be able to function well in society.

The Rawlsian conception of justice, however, does not extend beyond borders. For instance, Joseph Stiglitz has explained how global trade policies have caused destitution in the Third World.⁴ Rawls’s position is blind to unjust international arrangements. The reason for this is that Rawls believes that independent states must deal with their own problems internally. Justice for Rawls concerns the fair arrangements of citizens who possess equal rights and duties. Alan Thomas explains that “part of Rawls’s view is that the market, by its nature, decentralizes economic power and protects the freedom

¹ Thomas. Pogge, “Severe Poverty as a Human Rights Violation.” In *Freedom from Poverty as a Human Right*, edited by Thomas Pogge, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11.

² John Rawls. *A Theory of Justice*. 2nd edition. (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1999), 56.

³ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁴ Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 7.

of occupational choice.”⁵ It is this freedom that allows the citizen to attain the good life. But the good life is not limited to economic or material prosperity. Characteristically, the good life for Rawls is about the enjoyment of basic liberties, including one’s pursuit of happiness.

The Rawlsian theory of justice, while rooted in the fair distribution of primary goods (difference principle), also includes the opportunity to run for public office. Under the hypothetical ‘veil of ignorance’, the best alternative to utilitarianism is to remove the ability of the powerful to influence the choice of principles that is to govern the social cooperation of people in a well-ordered society. Translated into actual terms, it means that those who are in positions of authority should not influence the democratic processes in the state. Rawls’s original position, in this way, acts as a device that precludes the unfair positioning of people who might want to unjustly apportion a bigger share for themselves.

Amartya Sen, in contrast, questions the equality of income as a narrow perspective. He says that it does not really guarantee that individuals with distinct life-situations will benefit equally even if they possess the same amount of money or goods. For Sen, the equal distribution of goods or resources to individuals having unequal needs will not necessarily lead to human well-being. The problem with income redistribution is that it reduces the concept of human well-being to the acquisition of resources. The welfare-centered view tends to overlook the extent of the person’s deprivation. Sen argues that the analysis of poverty based on the income space of people is often cut off from real-life situations. Sen insists that human development is not reducible into pure economic terms. ‘Human’ is not synonymous to material well-being or economic satisfaction.

Sen’s Capability Approach, it is claimed, is multi-dimensional. For Sen, development cannot be equated to the accumulation of goods and the consumption of the same because there are unique attributes in individuals that need to be recognized. Sen criticizes the Rawlsian theory of justice as a form of transcendental institutionalism.⁶ Rawls’s ideal theory is a representation of the ‘perfect institution’. Sen writes that Rawls’s idea of fairness concerns a set of principles that is useful in the creation of just institutions. The success of social cooperation, in this way, is dependent on the efficient functioning of state institutions. People, so to speak, must comply with rules and laws so prescribed by the same.

However, the state-centric approach to justice is wanting. First, it does not account for the problem of pluralist values in society. It presumes that everyone act according to the precepts of liberalism or to its universal understanding of autonomy. Second, liberalism alienates individuals who are in the margins because their interests are not part of the best interests of the other members of society. For instance, in ensuring peace in the Muslim region of the Philippines, it is not enough that the state pour in funds for reconstruction and infrastructure development. It is also important to empower people, to put an end to political dynasties, and to protect the people from abusive officials and groups through transparency guarantees and a strong civil society.

It can be said that the Rawlsian paradigm puts state institutions at the center of all human progress. To realize justice in the world, Rawls proposes an ideal theory of

⁵ Alan Thomas, “Rawls, Adam Smith and an Argument from Complexity to Property Owning Democracy.” In *The Good Society*, Volume 21:1 (2012): 6.

⁶ Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice*. (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 11.

justice that uses a methodical device. The real world is not the starting point of the Rawlsian theory of justice. Rawls's original position is meant to achieve an imagined state of nature in society by suspending people's knowledge of their circumstances or background, things that might influence them. Rawls is saying precisely that unless the starting point is equal, justice as fairness may not be attained. Third World governments are weak because defective colonial systems are forced upon them. Elitism in society breeds a mentality in which those who belong to powerful clans or families would normally dominate the political scene.

What is Sen's alternative to the Rawlsian theory of justice? Sen's alternative is not a complete theory but nonetheless, it offers a broader framework since it is anchored on a pluralist conception of human freedom. Human capability for Sen refers to the ability to achieve particular functionings in life. Sen re-examines not only poverty but also the causes of the lack of freedoms of people, including their lack of access to food and water, poor economic opportunities, and the presence of tyranny in the state.⁷ The central attribute of Sen's human development paradigm is his rejection of the income-centered analysis of growth. For Sen, the economic concept of human well-being misleads in identifying and evaluating the nature of human poverty. Welfare economics focuses on the measurement of inequality but cannot account for the actual lived experiences of people who are deprived of the opportunities for a decent life.

Economism focuses on what people have or do not have. It does not say anything about what they can do or the other aspect of their existence – their dreams and aspirations, their hopes and sources of joy, or precisely, those things that make us truly human after all. Sen thus attempts to give this analysis a political function. Sen formulates his own idea of justice as a pluralist approach. For Sen, the idea of justice must not be identified with the existence of perfect institutions. For Sen, justice must not be equated with transcendental institutionalism in which justice is devoid of any practical sense beyond the beautiful elaboration of any theory.

The idea of justice that Sen proposes is one in which the notion of justice takes into consideration the necessary conditions for the flourishing of human freedom, one that takes into account the analysis of the existence of social and political injustices in the society. Sen says that the understanding of the problem of justice should not be idealized. It must be rooted in the people's ability to realize the meaning of their freedoms, not in the conception of perfect institutions. Sen does not deny the need for institutions in order to realize human development. In fact, he values the instrumental role of democratic institutions to human freedom. But he moves beyond procedures and highlights the intrinsic meaning of freedom.

3 Thomas Pogge on Negative Duty and Human Agency

While Sen provides a more concrete picture of the way society must be governed, his problem is that he does not make a clear account of the problem of human agency. People make judgments and as such, they can misuse their freedoms. Human freedom in this sense cannot also be idealized in the way Sen does. Sen falls into the same trap as Rawls. The former also abstracts from the meaning of freedom. David Crocker

⁷ Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 155.

criticizes Sen and refers to the latter's view as non-actual agency.⁸ For him, Sen's concept of human agency is broad but restricted since it does not really reflect actual conditions. Agency springs from the fact that man is an actor. In the ideal sense, man acts in accordance with the dictates of his rational judgment. Since Sen has failed to explicate the fact that individual agency is not transferable from person to person, his idea of justice is nothing but a form of moral individualism. For example, while people are in the position to realize their sets of goals, others are not. Human agency presupposes rationality but not everyone actually possesses such an attribute due to our differentiated circumstances, including political violence, disability, or the lack of access to good education.

The above elaboration makes Sen's "Equality of What?" problematic since it does not take into full view the differences in the capacity of people as moral agents. People do not only need equal freedoms; their capabilities must be attuned to their interests. For instance, a doctor clearly does not need strenuous physical exercise that a trained athlete might. A teacher might need the ability to be able to speak clearly, but engineers do not necessarily need to become orators. In the same way, carpenters and masons have different capability sets that they must develop that a writer need not possess. Thus, Sen's equality of capability has a weak notion of egalitarianism. Human beings have distinct attributes. Some people can also be creative in terms of giving meaning to their freedom.

For instance, a person with a form of cognitive disability can live a meaningful life since there are people who love him. This only requires effort and moral courage on the part of his family. Human commitment is immeasurable but it can be tangible. While the value of such is not observable in the same way as material goods, it is actually the driving force that makes people act for the sake of someone. Pogge thinks that Sen has presented an idea of the 'human' that is detached from the complexities of the real world. Sen, in this sense, has a limited notion of the character of 'being' in the human being. According to Pogge, Sen's conception of man is the *homo economicus*.⁹

Pogge argues that the Capability Approach does not have an elaborate account of the problem of global poverty. While Sen discusses why a rich country such as Singapore may have attained great economic progress, a thing is lacking somewhere since his analysis focuses on the domestic causes of poverty, e.g. rampant corruption, literacy, or the lack of infrastructure. Such things are not enough since they may not be able to explain the true extent of the sufferings of the global poor. For Pogge, the overemphasis of the positive duty to the poor has distracted humanity from their important duty of not harming the former.¹⁰ "In the modern world," Pogge argues, "the rules governing economic transactions, both nationally and internationally, are the most important causal determinants of the incidence of poverty."¹¹

Pogge argues that the only way to rectify unjust global structures is by means of what he calls 'negative duties'. Pogge still believes that doing one's positive duty is important for the emancipation of the poor, but the more important thing to do is to remove unjust policies in the international arena. Aware of Rawls's refusal to extend the

⁸ David Crocker, *Ethics of Global Development: Agency, Capability and Deliberate Democracy*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 154.

⁹ Thomas. Pogge, "Real World Justice." In *The Journal of Ethics* 9 (2005): 29.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹¹ Pogge, "Severe Poverty as a Human Rights Violation," 26.

difference principle into a global reach, Pogge speaks about a *modus vivendi* as an approach in international relations with respect to reforming global institutions. Pogge writes that rich countries in the world have “advantages in bargaining power and expertise enable the affluent states and their negotiators to deflect the design of the global order from what would be best for poverty avoidance toward a better accommodation of the interests of the governments, corporations, and citizens of the affluent countries.”¹² The World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank, are prime candidates. Pogge believes that it is incumbent upon the rich citizens of developed economies to act conscientiously by reforming the global economic order.

The fundamental claim of Pogge in advancing his notion of negative duty is the thought that the Global South possesses valid claims of justice. By sponsoring unjust global institutional schemes that have caused the persistence of global poverty, the Global North, according to Pogge, has a moral obligation by virtue of the fact that the latter has profited from the “enormous inequalities unjust institutions reproduce.”¹³ Pogge argues that in as much as the North is the cause of the reality of global inequality, then the North has an urgent obligation to “to do [their] fair share toward mitigating the harms they cause.”¹⁴ The United States, for instance, spends more than half a trillion dollars on its military every year but has only as little as 10 billion dollars of investments in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2016. Rich countries have actually limited their obligations to the global poor to ‘duties of assistance’. According to Kok-Chor Tan, Rawls believes that such is enough to help poor societies improve their situation.¹⁵ But in reality, such amounts to no more than a form of lip service. Pogge reports, using the data from the United Nations:

Most affluent countries have never gone anywhere near devoting 0.7% of their GNI to official development assistance (ODA) - a goal the UN adopted decades ago as a target to be reached by 1975. In fact, ODA shrank throughout the prosperous 1990s, from 0.33% in 1990 to 0.22% in 2000. In the aftermath of the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, ODA is back to 0.33% in 2005, but only about one-tenth of this \$106 billion in ODA is spent on basic social services.¹⁶

Pogge proposes a radical redistribution of the global resources which he refers to as (GRD- Global Resources Dividend). The GRD is about a fair redistribution scheme of global resources, one that “modifies the conventional property rights so as to give legal effect to an inalienable moral right of the poor.”¹⁷ The GRD, as proposed by Pogge, is not a form of aid from rich countries. Rather, the GRD is a form of re-channeling of the global resources to poor countries. This rechanneling of the global resources is anchored in the idea that the global poor have the right to the riches of the affluent countries in the North because the wealth of the latter has been unjustly accumulated throughout human history and by the hegemonic nature of global politics and international trade relations.

¹² Ibid., 34.

¹³ Ibid., 36.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Kok-Chor Tan, *Justice Without Borders*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 65.

¹⁶ Pogge, “Severe Poverty as a Human Rights Violation,” 26.

¹⁷ Ibid., 52.

A unidimensional perspective on human capabilities simply bypasses the root cause of global economic deprivation. Such approach overlooks the issue of domination and political hegemony that has caused misery to millions of people in the Global South. Sen's approach does not deepen the analysis of the structural reasons for oppression. The poorest of the poor have the desire to live better lives, but this is only possible if independent states are serious in alleviating the lives of the poor. Some efforts through international aid are done by means of diverse mechanisms. However, poor societies still need to capacitate the people and their basic structure.

Tan writes that for Rawls, the duty of justice is a question of who is entitled to what.¹⁸ It is therefore not just a matter of transferring resources but knowing what rightfully belongs to a country. The problem of justice is global in scale. The movement of goods, as well as the movement of peoples, have a tremendous impact in the lives of millions. Since the goods and resources of affluent nations remain in their territories, people from poor societies have no other means of escape except to take the risky route of migrating into foreign soil. The movement of peoples, in this way, should be seen as a component in the analysis of global justice.

4 Migration Rights: Economic and Moral Justifications

Tan explains that Rawlsian egalitarianism is limited to “distributing equality within the state.”¹⁹ The preceding analysis indicates that the lack of freedom in the world and the injustices experienced by people are a result of institutional failures and of unjust policies. Ryan Urbano, following Pogge, says that injustices are a result of the imbalance of global institutional set ups.²⁰ It can be said that expanding the freedoms of people globally may require moralizing the role of migration in human development and ensuring that migration rules and policy do not prevent the global poor from accessing opportunities in other parts of the world. To achieve this, a moral position on migration rights can serve as a basis for global justice. However, to make such a position clear, we need to distinguish the two types of migrant. The first refers to migrant refugees, who have been forced out of their country because of violence or political oppression; the second are economic migrants, who seek better employment opportunities in the labor market of developed economies.

Let us examine the idea of economic migration. Jeffrey Sachs says that people do not escape the poverty trap because of factors that are structural in nature.²¹ For him, the lack of economic growth in a country may be due to its demographic characteristics, poor health care, lack of infrastructure and scientific innovation, or the lack of natural resources and poor governance. “Economic development,” Sach explains, “requires a government oriented towards development.”²² However, colonial history also contributes to the weakness of Third World politics. Corrupt leaders who use political machinations are inimical to human development. Poor people become subservient

¹⁸ Tan, *Justice Without Borders*, 67.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 87.

²⁰ Ryan. Urbano, “Global Justice and the Plight of Filipino Domestic Migrant Workers.” In *Journal of Asian and African Studies*. Volume 47, Number 6 (2012): 605.

²¹ Jeffrey Sachs, *The End of Poverty*. (London: Penguin Books, 2005), 59.

²² *Ibid.*

to political overlords. This means, therefore, that states can stifle the chances of people to be liberated from the dungeons of poverty due to the rampant abuses perpetrated by public officials to whom power is entrusted. The same also results to a vast divide in society wherein the poor are denied access to basic services. This forces the people to take up arms against their government or go out of the country to find better opportunities. This is, for instance, the experience of Filipinos, eight million of whom are working as Overseas Contract Workers.

Progress is vital to the development of a nation and the realization of the potential of its people. Such is an important component of socio-political stability. Sen says that “the contribution of economic growth must be judged not merely by the increase in private incomes, but also by the expansion of social services, including in many cases social safety nets, that economic growth may make possible.”²³ However, under a corrupt regime, social services are often lacking. Worst, the aggregate national income is concentrated in the elite segment of society. Inequalities, in this way, diminish the chance of citizens to get decent paying jobs. Thus, the gap between rich and poor widens. The elite in society will only use and take advantage of the capabilities of the educated sector to advance their own selfish economic interests.

Des Gasper thinks that “besides the huge scale of absolute poverty in a world of vast wealth and inequality, nearly all of the suffering is undeserved. It is borne by people – half of them children – who have no chance of anything better.”²⁴ This suffering need not be experienced because the world as a whole has enough for everyone. One of our problems is the restriction on the mobility of peoples. For instance, bright scholars are often welcome to study abroad but low-skilled workers are not. This implies that affluent societies only want productive outsiders who can contribute to the development of novel and innovative ideas crucial to the growth of modern industries. Gasper believes that this type of discrimination may be viewed as a conscious sacrifice of human well-being.²⁵

In fact, the jobs in which migrant workers are employed are those types of work that local citizens of affluent states often shy away from. This is usually the case in the Middle East, Singapore, and Japan. One reason is that the welfare system, if we talk about countries such as Great Britain, pays more than the rates earned by those who are employed in menial jobs. While there is a restriction in terms of what poor economic migrants are entitled to, they feel contented because the money they earn in their host countries are far bigger compared to what they can get back home. In this sense, economic migrants actually help in two ways: One, by accepting the jobs that locals in host countries do not want, they ensure the competitiveness of certain industries, for instance, agricultural jobs in the US; second, by sending money to their home countries, migrants help the local economy and provide decent lives to their families who otherwise would have experienced economic difficulties. It should be noted too that the moment the migrant worker establishes a level of economic stability for a family back home, one can become part of what is called ‘return migration’.

Now, let us analyze the problem of migrant refugees. Human development is most difficult, or even almost inconceivable, if we think of countries such as Iraq, Syria, and

²³ Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 149.

²⁴ Des. Gasper. *The Ethics of Development*. (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2004), 3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

Afghanistan. The reality of violence in these states makes it very hard for the human development agenda to push through. Interventions by the United Nations prove futile due to the lack of harmony between the Western democratic paradigm and the radical politics in these nation-states. So, perhaps one way forward is to open borders to allow migrant refugees to settle in developed economies. There is a historical basis for this. Past events, including the condition that preceded the Second World War, have seen the relevance of providing vulnerable peoples under difficult circumstance the chance to migrate. The arrival of geniuses from Europe into American universities, for instance, has ushered the tremendous growth for the United States in the areas of science and the humanities, both superlative engines of the New World Order.

The moral argument in favor of migrant refugees is rooted in the idea of respecting outsiders as human beings. From a moral point of view, people should be allowed to settle temporarily in order to protect them from harm. The great divide in the world implies that affluent societies must recognize the negative duty to help refugees. The violence migrants have experienced in their country of origin necessitates a moral obligation on the part of powerful nations to ensure that the human rights of migrant refugees are recognized. The role of the United Nations is to be able to provide global security and this involves measures that save lives and as much as possible, prevent the escalation of wars. A fair global order demands that rich nations embrace their moral duty to help the peoples in countries oppressed by evil regimes.

The problem, it appears, is that many citizens in some societies are wary and anxious because of the reality of terrorism. The concern for personal security and the well-being of the members of their families are paramount. In recent years, the world has observed violent attacks that target civilian lives in countries such as France, Germany, and Turkey. Such a situation gives rise to xenophobia, and specifically, islamophobia. Terrorists have random targets and terror organizations and individuals seek to sow chaos under the guise of ending global hegemony. In reality, terrorism also victimizes migrant refugees. Because of the fear felt by locals, migrants seeking asylum face unfair treatment and are discriminated. The reason for the reluctance of some societies to receive more migrant refugees is fear. Many people are afraid that their normal way of life will be disturbed and threatened if migrant refugees are not vetted well by immigration officials. Brexit, for instance, is premised on this. Policies to this effect must prioritize the security concerns of locals more than the safety of refugees who suffer from decrepit facilities in refugee camps.

But the fear of the citizens of host countries may be differentiated from their feeling of economic insecurity. Studies indicate that locals think that jobs are being taken away from them by economic migrants since poor societies lack a well-developed labor market.²⁶ While this position is tenable, the more pressing moral position is that developed countries owe something to the global poor. Pogge is unequivocal in suggesting that past mistakes should be corrected by ending unfair practices in the global arena. It can be argued, however, that the issue of economic migration should be treated differently. Economic migrants should be evaluated from an economic viewpoint and migrant refugees should be screened from a political viewpoint.

²⁶ Douglas Massey, "The Political Economy of Migration in the Era of Globalization." In *International Migration and Human Rights*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 28

Pogge has argued that the transfer of resources from a former colonizer to its past colony is an important step in what may be considered as a rectificatory form of justice. But this may not be possible given that rich countries actually limit what they give to mere duties of assistance. Even development funds, for instance, have loan interests that are prohibitively high that in the end may not really help the economies of Third World countries. Given this, the point is that economic migration is one way of realizing Pogge's rectificatory justice. Allowing the poor in the Third World to work in rich countries can be seen as a form of just compensation that must be given to the victims of past colonial regimes. Goran Collste says that such measures are a form of a global rectificatory justice.²⁷

It is unfair if rich societies deprive migrant refugees of the safety and the protection that well-ordered societies may be able to provide. Rawls does not make any suggestion pertaining to the mobility of peoples. The freedom of mobility as a type of cosmopolitan justice system is one corrective measure that can give good opportunities to migrants. Should migrants be able to contribute to innovation and as such, become an integral part in the economic activities of a host country, then policies must recognize their contribution to economic development. Societies should not use as basis the mistakes done by a few who cause political turmoil in judging what migrants can actually do. While the moral obligation is clear in this respect, it is also important that societies value people equally. Nation building need not be hindered by the bias against people who are considered as outsiders.

Overall, the moral position is that globalizing human capabilities means that affluent states welcome the skills, talent and work ethic of migrants in their societies. Global justice, therefore, involves the fact that individuals can achieve for themselves better opportunities for human well-being by means of migration. The economic justification is the good that migration brings into the economies of host countries by addressing the demands of the labor market. While migrants mostly take unskilled jobs, many high skilled migrant laborers also work in high income societies and fill in jobs where no locals are available. Health professionals migrate and work in hospitals abroad to help improve the health services of the host nation. It is wrong to think that economic migrants take away from locals their jobs. The movement of peoples across borders will actually strengthen the power of local industries to hire people who are fit for the job without jeopardizing profitability which in the end is also good for the economy of host countries. The benefit to the host country is also tremendous. For instance, "one aspect which is not considered is the education and skill that is embedded in newly arriving immigrants and that has been financed in part by the country of origin."²⁸

Migrants will not deplete the resources of rich societies, whether in health care or in other types of social services. They actually enhance it by contributing their skills and other competencies to the local economy of a host country. The problem is not the availability of these entitlements for guest workers but rather the lack of policy that can systematize the benefits that migrants should also receive. Such types of services can be absorbed by the companies that employ migrants. It is a matter of recognizing the fact that economic migrants help local industries grow. They can fit into the system. Finally,

²⁷ Goran Collste, *Global Rectificatory Justice*. (London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2015), 115.

²⁸ Christian Dustmann, Tommaso Frattini and Albrecht Glitz, *The Labor Market Impact of Immigration*, (London: University College London, 2008), 99.

the budget allotted by host countries for migrant refugees should not be seen as a type of burden. This issue is not really about money, but the attitude toward outsiders. Instead of using resource depletion as an excuse, host countries should instead strengthen programs for the relief and if possible, the integration of migrant refugees in their society.

5 A Question of Fair Treatment: Toward a more Inclusive Global Order

Will Kymlicka expresses some problems in terms of how migrants can be integrated into the local culture. For example, immigrants have ethnic heritage that host countries need to accommodate.²⁹ However, while such may appear problematic for both the migrant and the local people, the cosmopolitan approach implies a moral duty to people beyond borders which means that locals must try to accept the differences with regard to culture, language, religion and tradition. From a communitarian end, political self-determination means that a people only have an obligation to those with whom one shares a strong sense of solidarity. This means that communitarians want to protect their sense of identity as a crucial element of nation-building. As a matter of fact, this means that the goods that a society must enjoy is often restricted to the members of the political community.

But migration is a question of fair treatment. While it may be argued that strengthening social and political institutions may require a strong sense of patrimony and national pride, it can also be argued that such may be self-defeating in the end. Political communities can still function well even with the presence of migrants as long as these people abide by local laws. This may be showcased in a strong multicultural society that opens itself to the contribution of migrant workers, including refugees. Countries such as the United States, Australia and Canada have achieved tremendous growth through the talents and skills of migrant workers and expatriates. CEOs of top tech companies like Google and Microsoft are foreign-born and 11% of Fortune 500 companies have non-native American CEOs. Such makes a strong case for the economic benefit and impact that migration brings.

Kymlicka argues for a pluralist position. While it may be the case that immigrants might insist in maintaining their old customs, this should not be treated as unpatriotic by their host countries.³⁰ Instead, the common institutions of the larger society should be able to accommodate and recognize cultural differences.³¹ Migrants can be assimilated in the cultural and political norms that prevail in host countries.³² This is the spirit of cultural and socio-political inclusion. The identity of local culture need not be sacrificed in order to attain an inclusive society. Kymlicka says that there is no evidence that migrants who practice their heritage are less loyal or unpatriotic.³³ In fact, Filipinos and other nationalities often feel as sense of gratitude to host countries that have provided them with better opportunities to live the good life.

²⁹ Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 354.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

Communitarians think that society is a matter of political membership.³⁴ This form of membership rests upon the idea of family and love.³⁵ States draw a line separating peoples and their way of life by means of borders. But borders also mean that two societies do not belong together. While border walls can prevent crimes, these are meant to exclude others. Strong border rules are rooted in a sense of insecurity. As a result, the strong control of borders actually divides peoples and endangers society by alienating others. The problem, however, is that well-meaning people are refused entry because of this sense of insecurity felt by the citizens of developed economies. This simply exacerbates the suffering that migrants and refugees go through. Terrorists want people to feel that Western societies are non-inclusive. They want to project the United States and its allies as the enemy of freedom. Opening borders is not just about fighting global poverty or spreading global wealth. It is about the fair and equal treatment of a human being who deserves it as a matter of right. The basic point is that accommodating refugees is the best defense against the evils that come as a result of the reality of socio-political and economic exclusion in the world.

6 Conclusion

Borders separate people, but it is our humanity that unites us into a common ground. As such, realizing the negative duty to help outsiders is a potential remedy that can address the problem of migration. Solving poverty is a moral burden that affluent societies must carry. The Global North have benefitted for the longest time from the imbalance in global structures and international trade policies. Poverty, in this respect, is not just a local phenomenon. It is linked to colonial history and the hegemonic nature of world politics. Rawls and Sen have attempted to provide approaches in order to address the problem of poverty but these have been mostly state-centric and lack the appropriate analysis that considers the historical backgrounds beyond the abstraction of any particular theory.

The non-actual or ahistorical nature of the Rawlsian theory of justice is reversed by proposing how justice as fair treatment may be able to respond to real world situations. An ideal theory of justice is envisioned to guide societies in terms of policy making so the same can function to improve the well-being of peoples within and across borders. In order to do this, Pogge proposes a way upon which the idea of freedom can be substantiated. But while Pogge proposes transferring resources from rich countries to poor countries as a form of historical rectification, this may not be easy. Any citizen of an affluent state simply thinks as paramount the duty to one's fellow citizen but not that to outsiders. The courtesy extended to a fellow is not something that one can immediately extend to a stranger.

Recognizing that poverty is a global phenomenon, the paper argues that it is to the benefit of host countries to allow economic migration and from a moral end, it is an obligation on their part to let migrant refugees find a temporary shelter or home away from violence. The problem is the unfounded fear that grips the minds of people in

³⁴ Michael Walzer, *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*, (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 52.

³⁵ Ibid.

affluent societies. The citizens of developed economies feel a sense of insecurity due to the reality of terror. If rich societies could overcome their political and social anxieties and hence, allow the mobility of peoples across borders, then two things can be easily achieved – greater socio-economic benefit to host countries and the protection of refugees. If terrorism must be addressed, the only way forward is the moral path which is to embrace pluralism and recognize difference in society. To discriminate against others due to religion or nationality is against the basic principles of fair treatment. Borders imply restrictions and for this reason, the opening of borders can show the ethical significance of sharing the goods of society to outsiders and valuing the lives of those whose very freedom is under constant threat.

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