Multilocality as an Asset – Translocal Development and Change among the Wakhi of Gojal, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The Wakhi community of the rural high-mountain region Gojal in northern Pakistan is characterised by high rates of mobility and migration, as well as by high levels of human development, in regional comparisons. Both characteristics are intertwined closely and have developed along a specific historical trajectory of translocal development over approximately the last three generations. Thanks to improved road accessibility and the cessation of restrictions to out-migration, rising numbers of people have started to move to regional centres, 'down-country' cities and abroad in search of labour, education and professional employment. Households, families and communities have turned into increasingly multilocal spatial configurations. Multilocality has become an important asset for their livelihoods, adding new opportunities and mitigating risks, while remittances, returning migrants and social capital embedded in multilocal networks have contributed to socio-economic change and development among the Wakhi of Gojal.

Keywords: Migration, returnees, remittances, social network, Gilgit-Baltistan, rural development

INTRODUCTION

The Gojal Region, a sparsely populated rural high-mountain area in the upstream section of the Hunza Valley of Pakistan-administered Gilgit-Baltistan, is characterised by very high migration rates. At the same time, it is well-known for its achievements in terms of human development. Gojal shows the highest levels of education within Gilgit-Baltistan. According to the latest available population census data from 1998, the Gojal Tehsil, with an adult literacy rate of 69 per cent, even surpasses education levels in the city of Gilgit (62 per cent literacy rate), the economic and administrative centre of Gilgit-Baltistan (GoP 2001:198, 204), and it is far above the 43 per cent literacy rate of Pakistan for the respective year (UNESCO 2013). In recent years education levels have risen further in Gojal. In the village of Passu, for instance, currently 86 per cent of the adult village population[1] is literate, and enrolments as well as the youth literacy rate have reached 100 per cent for boys and girls. Gojal also plays a leading role in female education, with the lowest gender disparities and highest female education levels in regional comparisons (Benz 2012b:99).

Both of these Gojali characteristics – high migration rates and high levels of human development – are interlinked closely and are the outcomes as well as central drivers of a comprehensive process of socio-economic change. Out-migration from Gojal to the cities started in the 1940s, when formerly rigid travel restrictions were removed gradually and massive road construction projects, particularly the construction of the Karakoram Highway (KKH), improved accessibility for the region, thus fostering mobility, increasing exchange flows to and from the region and bringing new livelihood opportunities. Increasing numbers of young men from Gojal, who left their home region to serve in the military forces or as unskilled labour migrants, sent back part of their earnings to their families. These remittances, expanding migrant support networks and consolidating links to the cities, particu-

[1] The village population, as used in this paper, is defined as all people who are part of a household based in the respective village, plus all people who reside in the village. A household here is defined as consisting of the head of the household, his or her marriage partner, all people living in their family home, all unmarried children of the household head and all married sons and married brothers of the household head with their wives and children, who themselves or their wives live in the household head's family home. A household based in 'Village A' here is defined as a household whose family home is located in 'Village A'.

larly to Karachi, provided the preconditions for a decisive development: the acquisition of higher levels of formal education by students migrating to these conurbations. In this way the youth of the region acquired educational credentials, knowledge, skills and experience which enabled them to take on good job positions in the private and government sectors or to establish their own enterprises. Most of the migrants returned – at the very least temporarily – to their home region and served their communities as teachers, medical specialists, engineers, financial experts, development consultants and entrepreneurs, and they became key figures for mobilising their communities and advocating change. Those who did not return (or had not yet returned) home usually kept close ties with their families and communities and actively contributed to their development through financial and social remittances.

It is well-known from the migration studies literature that migration and development are closely intertwined and interdependent processes (Bailey 2010; Castles 2009; De Haas 2010; Geiger and Steinbrink 2012; Piper 2009; Skeldon 2010; UNDP 2009). This also holds true for Gilgit-Baltistan in general and Hunza and Gojal in particular (Kreutzmann 1989:180-195; 1993, 2012), where migration, which has been identified as a "key livelihood option" and "the main livelihood story" of the last decades (Wood and Malik 2006:73), is linked to positive effects on education, income, investments and living standards.

In this paper, I will build on these insights and try to add a further dimension by accounting for the increasingly multilocal setups of social units, such as households, families and (village) communities, and the emergent translocal social spaces which are created through people's movements, interactions and exchanges. A theoretical and conceptual framing for this matter, based on the idea of translocal development, will be outlined in the subsequent chapter and applied in the remainder of this paper to the case of the Wakhi[2] of Gojal, for which three main questions will be followed: To what extent are households, families and communities of the Gojali Wakhi cur-

[2] The Wakhi of Gojal are an ethno-linguistic group of Ismaili Muslims speaking the Wakhi language, an eastern-Iranian dialect. They currently constitute about two-thirds of the approximately 20,000 inhabitants of the Gojal Tehsil (KADO 2007; Sökefeld 2012a:177), an administrative sub-unit of the Hunza-Nagar District in Gilgit-Baltistan, northern Pakistan. The Wakhi of Gojal originate from the Wakhan Valley located in today's Afghanistan and Tajikistan, and they migrated in subsequent waves into the Gojal region from about the late 18th century onwards.

rently organised in multilocal spatial configurations? How have the Gojali Wakhi established and expanded their multilocal networks over time? What kinds of outcome have been realised from mobility strategies and multilocal social configurations?

THE CONCEPT OF TRANSLOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Mobility and migration can be seen as actively pursued strategies in the context of households and families' survival strategies, in order to reduce risks through income diversification along sectoral and spatial lines (Ellis 1998, 2000, 2003; Steinbrink 2012). Ongoing mobility and migration in the context of diversification strategies lead to the evolution of translocal social settings and networks, with members located in a multitude of different and often geographically-distant places. As a consequence, social spaces are increasingly spread across and multilocally anchored in geographical space (Pries 2001, 2008), in which social closeness (propinquity) is detached from physical closeness (proximity) (Beck 1998:132; Faist 1998:215-216). Change and development are driven not only through bi-local linkages between place of origin and a migrant's destination(s), a perspective which dominates most accounts on the migration-development nexus in the literature, but also by linkages between third places in the context of multilocally-rooted social networks. The multilocal anchoring of social networks changes dynamically through the often intensive circulation and mobility of its members moving between established anchor points, establishing new ones and abandoning others. Some households from Gojal, for example, are no longer clearly localisable, since their members move constantly between two or three family homes in different places, creating ever-changing spatial constellations. Multilocality constitutes an important asset for households, families and communities, by which new places, resources, types of occupation, income opportunities and channels of support become accessible and new livelihood strategies viable. Development, understood as a human-centred and people-oriented concept (Nussbaum 2002; Rauch 2003; Sen 1993), refers to social units as bearers and subjects of development. This contrasts with territory-centred notions of development, which, for example, find their expression in those standard development indicators focusing on selected measurements of only the resident population of a defined territory, thereby artificially cutting off and ignoring a major part of the basic social units,

livelihoods and resource flows that operate across territorial units within multilocal social networks. Consequently, by recognising the increasingly multi- or translocal networked character of social units, and with the proceeding disentanglement of social and geographical spaces, the translocal aspects of development need to be taken into account more seriously. What is needed is a conceptualisation of development processes which pays more attention to the interdependent processes of change between and across the different anchor points of multilocal social networks.

Building on the insight that change and development in one particular place can only be understood by taking into account the network of interdependent dynamics and changes in a multitude of other, connected places, Zoomers and van Westen (2011) posit the need for a refined notion of 'local' development. Resorting to Massey's (1991) relational concept of space, in which "any locality [is conceptualised] as a specific node in which numerous networks of different nature meet" (Zoomers and van Westen 2011:378), they suggest the concept of "translocal development". The core idea behind this concept is to free the notion of development from its often strong territorial focus (as expressed in terms such as 'local', 'rural' or 'regional' development) and instead establish a relational conception of multilocally-interlinked processes of social change, stressing aspects of spatial interconnectedness and the importance of local-to-local connections (Zoomers and van Westen 2011:378). Established regionalisations and spatial dichotomy categories (e.g. rural-urban) are increasingly blurred by multilocal livelihoods and translocal social networks straddling rural and urban places (Greiner 2010; Steinbrink 2007, 2009; Steinbrink and Lohnert 2012). This does not mean that one should discard the idea of 'local' development; on the contrary, it is broadened by placing 'local' development into a pluralistic web of interdependent 'local' developments, where the "translocal links [...] generate additional perspectives for 'local' development" through a complex "interplay between local and extra-local influences" (Zoomers and van Westen 2011:380).

FIELD METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

This paper is based on three months' empirical research in Pakistan during 2011 and 2012. Following a multilocal field research approach, inspired by Marcus' proposal for a multilocal ethnography (Marcus 1995, 2009), the

research was conducted in Pakistan's capital Islamabad, in Gilgit, the main city of Gilgit-Baltistan, in Central Hunza and in the Gojali villages of Gulmit, Hussaini, Kamaris and Passu. The sites visited outside Gojal constituted important landmarks in the migration networks and translocal community of the Gojali Wakhi, where interviews with temporary education and labour migrants, as well as permanently resettled out-migrants[3] were conducted. Visits to institutions and organisations relevant to migrants (e.g. student hostels, educational institutions, community centres, NGOs with migrants as (part of their) target group, student organisations), and interviews with selected experts from governmental and non-state organisations, formed a major part of the research in the migration target destinations. Within Gojal, data collection focused mainly on narrative and oral history interviews with village elders and former migrants. In addition, comprehensive standardised village censuses in Hussaini and Passu were conducted in October 2012, revealing the migration biographies and educational and professional careers of all 1,283 members (including temporary migrants) of the two villages' 185 households, as well as more than 450 permanent out-migrants.

LIVING ACROSS SPACE

Multilocality has become a fact of everyday life for most Gojali Wakhis. Phone calls or letters from absent family members, semester break visits by children studying in the cities, summertime visits of permanently out-migrated brothers and uncles along with their families, seasonal out-migration, remittance flows and former villagers visiting at times of lifecycle rituals and religious festivities are aspects of multilocality in the common lives of the Gojalis. In total, 69 per cent of the households in Hussaini and 79 per cent of those in Passu have at least one member living outside Gojal.[4] In addition, 42 per cent of Hussaini households and 50 per cent of those in Passu have household members dispersed across three or more places and

[3] In this paper, a temporary migrant from Village A is defined as a migrant who still is member of a household which is based in Village A. A permanent migrant is defined as a migrant who had been part of a household in A in the past, but is now member of a household based in another place, B. For the conception of households based in a certain place, see footnote 1.

[4] In this paper, a migrant is defined as a person living for a period of at least three months in another place.

thus form multilocal households. Former migrants constitute a large proportion of the village population – 62 per cent of men and 20 per cent of women in Hussaini and 70 per cent of men and 19 per cent of women in Passu have lived for at least three months outside Gojal and Hunza. About every second man currently residing in the villages has spent a part of his life in Karachi. Currently, 38 per cent of the households in Hussaini and 30 per cent in Passu have a member in Gilgit; 39 per cent of the Hussaini households and 61 per cent in Passu have a member in one of the lowland cities, and 11 per cent of households in Hussaini and 13 per cent of Passu have a member abroad. Most of the migrants from both villages have moved to a small range of destinations only, showing a highly focused but also village- and gender-specific pattern of migration (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1: Places of residence for the village population of Hussaini, October 2012

Hussaini

Place of residence	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Hussaini	211	69.6%	233	78.2%	444	73.9%
Other places in Gojal	8	2.6%	19	6.4%	27	4.5%
Central Hunza	4	1.3%	16	5.4%	20	3.3%
Gilgit	27	8.9%	23	7.7%	50	8.3%
Other places in Gilgit-Baltistan	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	2	0.3%
Islamabad/ Rawalpindi	15	5.0%	0	0.0%	15	2.5%
Lahore	1	0.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
Karachi	16	5.3%	3	1.0%	19	3.2%
Other places in Pakistan	11	3.6%	2	0.7%	13	2.2%
States of the Arabic-Persian Gulf	5	1.7%	0	0.0%	5	0.8%
Other foreign countries	4	1.3%	1	0.3%	5	0.8%
Total	303	100%	298	100%	601	100%

Table 2: Places of residence for the village population of Passu, October 2012

Passu

Place of residence	Male		Female		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Passu	219	59.7%	231	72.2%	450	65.5%
Other places in Gojal	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Central Hunza	5	1.4%	21	6.6%	26	3.8%
Gilgit	33	9.0%	18	5.6%	51	7.4%
Other places in Gilgit-Baltistan	12	3.3%	8	2.5%	20	2.9%
Islamabad/ Rawalpindi	34	9.3%	17	5.3%	51	7.4%
Lahore	9	2.5%	1	0.3%	10	1.5%
Karachi	38	10.4%	17	5.3%	55	8.0%
Other places in Pakistan	9	2.5%	1	0.3%	10	1.5%
States of the Arabic-Persian Gulf	4	1.1%	0	0.0%	4	0.6%
Other foreign countries	4	1.1%	6	1.9%	10	1.5%
Total	367	100%	320	100%	687	100%

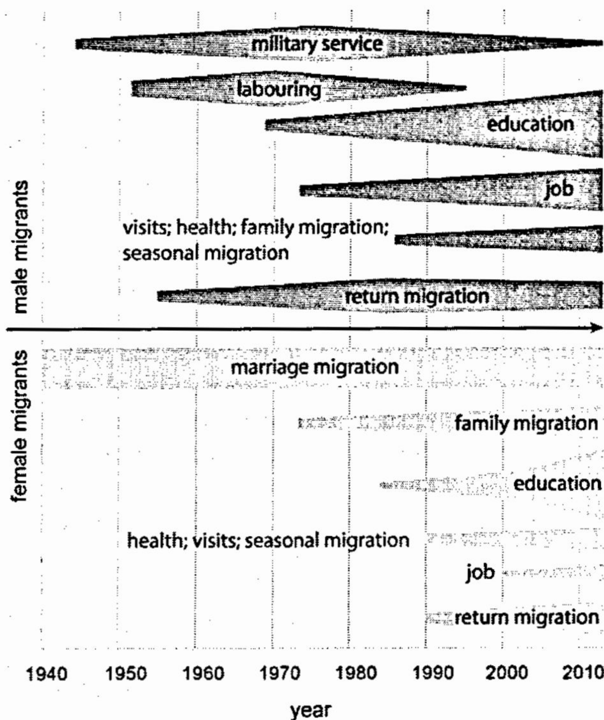
Over the last three decades, 45 permanent shifts of households from Passu and 21 from Hussaini could be traced. These households were shifted mostly to Karachi (16 from Passu and eight from Hussaini), Gilgit (nine from Passu and six from Hussaini) and Islamabad (12 from Passu and one from Hussaini). From Passu, two households moved to the USA, one to Canada, one to Australia and one to Tokyo in Japan. One household from Hussaini shifted to New York, USA. Since the early 1980s, when international visitors were allowed into the region and tourism became a major sector of the local economy, a number of international marriages between Gojali men and foreign women took place. For the village of Passu, one of the touristic hotspots of the area, international marriages exist between local men and women from Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Spain

and to the US-born daughter of a Pakistani immigrant. Two men from Hussaini have married women born in the USA, both daughters of Pakistani immigrants. Many of the permanently out-migrated households have not given up property in the form of land and houses, and among many permanent out-migrants, a strong feeling of belonging to Gojal and a renewed sensitivity towards their Gojali Wakhi roots can be seen. Also, return to the village always remains an option, which is seen not only as a potential means to take refuge in times of economic downturn, sectarian violence or crisis, but also as a way of spending one's retirement in a familiar socio-cultural and natural environment and enjoying, in the case of international migrants, the higher purchasing power of their savings and pensions.

Increasing numbers of households, which are still – at least partially – based in Gojal, have established a 'second home' in those places where some of their members live temporarily, particularly in Gilgit. Four Passu households and two from Hussaini mentioned that they owned a second house in Gilgit, which was a variable part of these households' lives. At least 12 Passu residents move seasonally to Gilgit, 14 to Karachi and 20 to Islamabad/Rawalpindi, so more than 10 per cent of the current resident population is seasonally absent from Passu, particularly during winter. The complementary flow is formed by about 87 per cent of the currently absent 237 household members of Passu, who move regularly to the village and spend either a few weeks or up to a few months of the year there. The high degree of mobility and multilocality among the households of Gojal is a rather new phenomenon and the outcome of a specific development trajectory over about the last seven decades. In the next section, the key stages of this trajectory will be outlined.

PATHWAYS TO MULTILOCALITY

Before the abolition of local feudal rule in 1974, Gojal served as a kind of internal colony for Hunza state and was its major grain and livestock supplier. Spatial mobility was highly restricted by the *mir* (the local feudal ruler) of Hunza, and leaving its territory required special permission and the payment of extremely high fees. This permission system virtually fully prevented outward mobility for a vast majority of the population. It was only in the early 1940s that travel restrictions were gradually eased and the tax burden was lowered.



Main migration types and their changing importance over time, exemplified for the village Hussaini based on the analysis of 891 migratory moves.

Figure 1: Changing patterns of migration from the village of Hussaini

In the late 1930s and early 1940s, service in the military forces offered one of the first off-farm monetary income sources for common men from Gojal. Local enlistment in a military regiment, set up in Gilgit under British colonial rule, had provided income opportunities for young men from Hunza since 1913, but the *mir* of Hunza banned Wakhi men from military service until at least 1935 (Kreutzmann 1996:288). The recruitment of the first Wakhi from Gojal into the Gilgit Scouts and in the British colonial army in the late 1930s marked the beginning of a far-reaching mobility change and the spatial mobilisation of the Wakhi unfolding over the subsequent decades.

Early military migrants from Gojal were among the first commoners to earn a regular cash income and to see 'the outside world'.

With their pay from the military and their knowledge about opportunities in the cities, early military migrants provided the preconditions for the next stage of mobility change, namely the onset of unskilled male labour migration from Gojal to the cities in the 1950s[5] (Figure 1). It was often close relatives of the early military migrants who, with their financial support and personal assistance, first mastered the challenge of leaving their village and finding labouring positions in the city (Figure 2). Nearly all of them went to Karachi, which remained the prime destination of Gojali migrants over the ensuing decades. Karachi, the leading industrial and economic centre of the country, was a boomtown in the 1950s and provided abundant job opportunities at very low costs of living. Young people from rural areas all over Pakistan were attracted to the city, which was also home to the *khoja* Ismailis, an affluent trader and business community which recognised in the migrants from Gojal and Hunza their poorer Ismaili brothers from the mountains, which they called *maulai* (Kreutzmann 1996:35, 45). By means of symbolic ties based on being Ismaili, a small religious minority in Pakistan, many *khoja* supported the *maulai* migrants and provided them with jobs in their factories, hotels and enterprises and as domestic servants in their homes.

Early labour migrants soon served as brokers for the subsequent migration of family members from their home communities. Brothers, cousins, nephews and (male) co-villagers were encouraged to follow them to Karachi and were procured with jobs and dwelling places. Savings groups and small-scale loans were organised among the *maulai* diaspora in Karachi to enable the migrants to occasionally visit their home villages.

The migration network from Gojal started to expand and grow in number as chain migration gradually gained momentum. Remittances started to reach home villages in the forms of cash, household goods, clothes and food. Even more importantly, and with a sustained impact, the early labour migrants enabled other (male) family members to acquire higher education in Karachi. *Maulai* migrants in the city saw the highly esteemed position given to education by the cultured *khoja* Ismailis, who they treated as role models.

[5] Probably the earliest labour migrant from Gojal to Karachi was Gul Muhammad from Gulmit, who moved to Karachi in 1951. The earliest labour migrant to Karachi from Hussaini went in 1952, and the earliest from Passu in 1954.

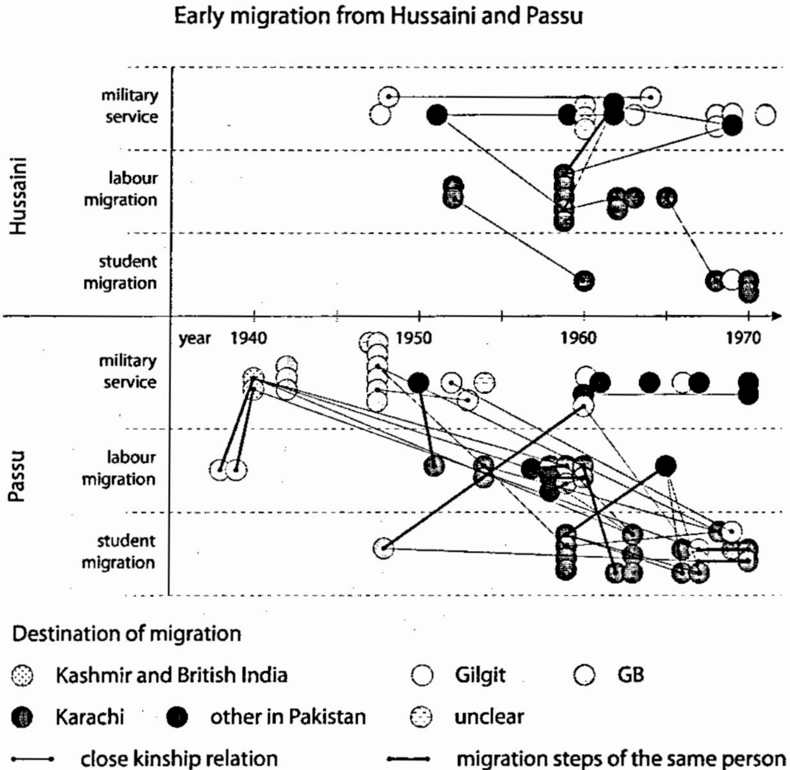


Figure 2: Early migration from the villages of Hussaini and Passu

Additionally, they were inspired by numerous religious messages and teachings of the Aga Khan III and his successor Shah Karim, Aga Khan IV, both of whom made education obligatory for their followers. Guided by these experiences, many Gojali labour migrants took their brothers, cousins, nephews or sons with them to Karachi in order to further their education, and even some of the labour migrants themselves enrolled in night schools and colleges in the city. Most of the early student migrants had to work part-time alongside their studies. Often they worked at night and studied in the daytime, or vice versa, and therefore managed to largely self-finance their studies because, in most cases, they could not expect any financial support from

their parents, who did not command any monetary income. In the 1960s, livelihoods in Gojal were still characterised by subsistence-oriented combined mountain agriculture run on a fragile and scarce natural resource basis, largely lacking in local off-farm income opportunities. Important support for *maulai* students in Karachi came from some *khoja* Ismailis, who learned about the hardships of their fellow Ismailis and provided informal scholarships for needy students.

Many of the early student migrants from Gojal managed to continue their education beyond the higher secondary school level in Karachi and other places, which meant an impressive leap from their formerly mostly illiterate family backgrounds. The 1970s saw the first college and university graduates emerging from the Gojali student migrant cohort, who subsequently often found employment in professional positions in different Pakistani cities. They not only established new anchor points for the expanding Gojali migration network, but also they were able to better support the next generation of student migrants thanks to their decent incomes. The success and income of the first professionals enabled a sharp rise in the numbers of student migrants from Gojal.

Female education started to spread throughout Gojal after the first girls' primary schools opened in the late 1960s. Female educational expansion advanced at an unprecedented pace, which made Gojal one of the leading regions for female education within Pakistan over the course of only about three decades (Benz 2012a). In the early 1980s, the first young women continued their education outside Gojal, marking the starting point of female student migration, which gained strong momentum in subsequent years.

From the 1950s, the road network was gradually expanded and improved in the region. Particularly the opening of the KKH in 1978 improved the accessibility of the region tremendously. Travel times and costs to cities in the Pakistani lowlands shrunk, providing new opportunities for cash crop sales (especially seed and ration potatoes, as well as many fruit varieties) to 'down-country' markets, and making available imported consumer goods in local bazaars. Food supplies for local households depended increasingly on purchased items, since the local production base became progressively less capable of sustaining the growing population. This made monetary income a necessity for virtually all households in the region. At the same time, income opportunities multiplied from the late 1970s onwards. The KKH made tour-

ism a lucrative business in Gojal in the early 1980s and provided opportunities for engagement in cross-border trade with China.

Expanding public administration and government services, as well as different NGOs' development programmes, provided new local off-farm income options in which returning student migrants found professional employment. Projects of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) in particular provided employment opportunities for women, many of whom were the first female graduates from Hunza and Gojal to find jobs in the 1990s. Thanks to their education and new roles as 'bread winners' for their families, gender roles changed in a process of women's empowerment, resulting in the much improved status of women in society.

RETURNING MIGRANTS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT

Returning Gojali migrants were of particular importance to their communities in many ways, as they brought back money, knowledge, skills and experience, which in turn made them an asset to local development. Often they became actively involved in village affairs, were proactive in initiating change and development and took over (positions with) responsibilities for their co-villagers and their community.

The first returning migrants to Gojal were former soldiers, who came back from the 1950s onwards. They usually brought with them savings from their pay and a remarkable sum of service termination benefits. In addition, they were eligible for a lifelong monthly pension, although they were still middle-aged men in their 30s and 40s. In a time when regular cash income was the exception in Gojal, these assets put them into a strong financial position within their communities, provided them with particular opportunities and allowed for a variety of investments. These resources were often used for the extension or construction of houses and for the establishment of small-scale businesses, e.g. general stores, restaurants, tea stalls or workshops. These returnees also invested in the education of male family members. This type of investment grew in importance over the years and gradually extended to females, too. Returning military migrants also turned out to be assets to their communities. In the 1950s and 1960s they were among the most experienced and educated people of their villages, as some of them had

continued their education during army service up to middle or high school level. Also they had acquired practical skills and knowledge from the military, e.g. in the fields of crafts and construction. Furthermore, they had experienced city life, modern technology and health facilities, and they were impressed by the large number of children attending schools there. Inspired by these experiences and driven by the desire to bring respective changes to their home community, returning soldiers engaged in local development initiatives.

In the 1980s, they became key counterparts in AKDN development projects in the region. For example, Muhammad Gohar, of Passu, had served in the Gilgit Scouts between 1948 and 1963. When he joined the forces at the age of 23 he was illiterate and lacked a formal education, but he was able to study during his service up to middle school level. After leaving the service at the age of 38, he returned to his village and established a general store – an investment most typical for returning soldiers throughout Gilgit-Baltistan (Kreutzmann 1989:188; Schmidt 2004:237; Stöber 2001:189). He actively advocated and eventually co-initiated female education in Passu and served as the founding head teacher of the first girls' school in the village, established in 1967. He continued to teach there for 12 years, the first five years of which he held his post on an honorary basis.

During the 1960s, the first generation of migrant students from Gojal completed their education and took on new careers. Some of them found jobs in Karachi or other Pakistani cities, but a substantial amount of them – at least temporarily – returned to their home villages in Gojal. Similar to the returning soldiers, they now constituted the most educated and experienced members of their community and became an asset to local development. At that time, Gojal was suffering from a severe shortage of trained experts in many fields, particularly in public health and education. When the first seven schools in Gojal were established in 1946/47, all but one teacher originated from outside the area, mostly Burushaski-speaking gentry from Central Hunza with middle school education learned in Baltit[6], since no formally educated men were available in Gojal (Nazar 2009:35, 40). During the

[6] The first school in the Hunza principality was established in Baltit in 1912 as a boys' primary school, which was upgraded to a middle school in 1946 (Harlech-Jones et al. 2003:176; Mehr Dad 1995; Sökefeld 1997:128). Before 1946, access to this school was controlled by the *mir* of Hunza. It mostly served the male youth of the local gentry (Nazar 2009:25, 29).

1950s, these external teachers were replaced by former students of the local primary schools (Nazar 2009:40). When the first student migrants to Karachi returned to their villages in the 1960s and 1970s, they were emphatically requested to start as teachers in local schools, and some were even summoned back from Karachi by their village community in order to become local teachers. For example, Ahmad Karim of Passu had just completed his Bachelor degree in Karachi in 1982, when he received a letter from his village community in which he was urged to return and to teach in the local school. He succumbed to the offer, cancelled his further education plans, returned to Passu and worked for the next 23 years as a teacher and eventually head teacher. Until quite recently there was a situation that whenever a student migrant returned to his village after completing his studies, he was asked to work for some time as a teacher in local schools. To this day it is still a widespread practice that student migrants give honorary classes in their village's school during their semester break visits. Furthermore, they provide information about study options in 'down-country' institutions and scholarship opportunities. Local students in their final year are assisted by migrant students in preparing for their final exams and for admission tests required by higher education institutions.

Returning migrants, who advocate education and dedicate themselves to the teaching profession and to voluntary educational commitments, have played a decisive role in the educational expansion in Gojal, which in turn has led to the area's outstandingly high education levels in regional comparisons.

Similar developments can be seen in the health sector. A scarcity of local health experts and difficulties in recruiting external personnel to health facilities in Gojal created a service gap in public medical care, which at least could be filled partially by returning migrants. For example, Amir Ullah of Hussaini passed his medical training at the Dow Medical College in Karachi in the 1960s and worked for several years in a surgery and dispensary in the city. After his return to Hussaini in 1971, he engaged in the public health sector in Gojal and served for 18 years on UNICEF health and sanitation programmes.

Economic investments and the establishment of small-scale businesses by returning migrants have contributed to socio-economic development in Gojal. Some of them have engaged in cross-border trade between Xinjiang and Pakistan, while others have purchased a vehicle and established a local

transport business. When international tourism started to reach Gojal in the 1980s, many returned migrants – some of them with work experience in the restaurant and hotel sector in Karachi – engaged in tourism as guides and tour operators, and they also invested in restaurants and guesthouses in touristic 'hotspots' such as Gulmit, Passu and Sost. The first two guesthouses in Passu were established in 1974 and 1983 by migrants returned from Karachi. During the 1980s and 1990s the numbers of visitors to the region grew and the tourism sector became an important source of occupation and income for many households in Passu. Even after harsh declines in tourist numbers (Figure 3) after the '9/11' incident in 2001 (Kreutzmann 2012:68; Watanabe et al. 2011), and again after the worsening security situation in Pakistan since 2008 and the blockage of the KKH by a huge lake which formed after a rockslide near Attabad in January 2010 (Kreutzmann 2010; Sökefeld 2012a, 2012b; Cook and Butz 2013), tourism continues to play an important role for at least some households, partially through the employment of household members in travel agencies and as tour operators in 'down-country' cities. In 2012, about 9 per cent of Passu's male workforce (aged 18 to 60 years, excluding students) worked in tourism as their main occupation.

Former labour migrants to countries of the Arabic-Persian Gulf form another important group of returning migrants in Gojal. In the 1980s, the first young men from Gojal travelled as labour migrants to work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. They usually stayed there for several years, often in unskilled jobs as drivers, cooks, construction workers, gas and oil field workers and in the gastronomy and hotel sector. Incomes in these sectors were and still are high in comparison to income levels in Pakistan and allow these migrants to remit or save substantial amounts of money. The early Gulf migrants often invested in means of production and machinery (e.g. tractors, threshers and saw mills), which reportedly placed them in the mid-1980s in the position of owning the lion's share of all mechanical means of production in Gojal, thus creating an economically strong, new class of machine owners (Kreutzmann 1989:192-193). Examples from Hussaini and Passu show that this new wealth not only enabled further productive investments, but also allowed for providing higher education to the children of these families. After a decline during the 1990s, Gulf migration from Gojal is currently experiencing a small revival.

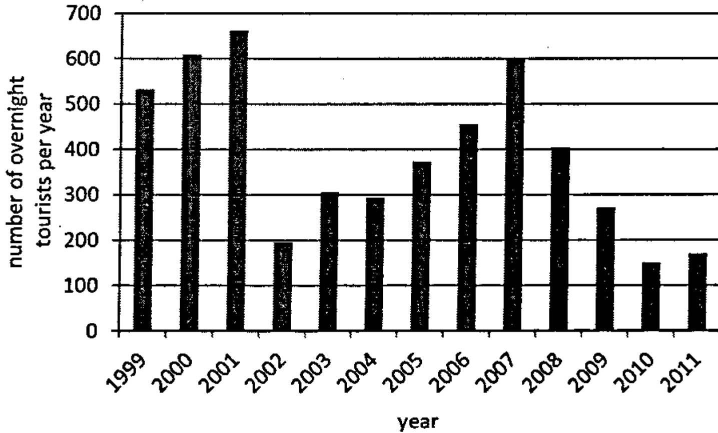


Figure 3: Tourism as a vulnerable business: reduced overnight guest stays at the *Passu Inn* after the '9/11' incident in 2001, the deteriorating security situation in Pakistan since 2008 and the blockage of the KKH as a result of the formation of 'Attabad Lake' in 2010.

Another way in which migrants contribute to local developments in Gojal and Hunza can be seen in their role in the anti-feudal movement. Amongst the labour migrants and students from the region, a protest movement took shape in Karachi in the 1960s and early 1970s, aiming at ending feudal rule in the Hunza principality with its high taxation and suppression. Migrants from Hunza formed the Organisation of Development and Progress in Hunza in Karachi as a pressure group to articulate their claims. They managed to find support from the Pakistani People's Party and its founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. In 1974, the Bhutto government eventually ended feudal rule in Hunza, and the supporters of the PPP and the anti-*mir* movement were rewarded with career opportunities in the form of scholarships and employment in the public sector (Kreutzmann 1996:289).

MIGRANTS' REMITTANCES AND TRANSLOCAL FLOWS OF SUPPORT

Remittances, described as a wide array of resources in general, and financial resources in particular, which are sent by migrants from the migration target to their families and communities in the home region are considered central aspects in explaining the linkages between migration and development (Cohen 2005; De Haas 2010; UNDP 2009; World Bank 2006). Mostly, remittances have been discussed in the literature regarding their potential to procure change and development in a particular sending region, and often they are narrowed down to bi-local "flows back to families and communities at origin" (UNDP 2009:79). Nonetheless, with the increasingly multilocal settings of households and families, for whom the 'sending region' is only one among many spatial anchoring points, remittances are also increasingly flowing between 'third places' within multilocal networks.

Such 'network remittances', flows of material and immaterial support within multilocal family networks, have played a central role in translocal development among the Wakhi of Gojal. Thanks to well-established family solidarity and resource redistribution systems, many family members have benefited whenever an individual person has managed to achieve a good professional position and income. Expectations of sharing, solidarity and reciprocity prevent the individual use of resources and instead encourage the redistribution of income and resources by supporting relatives with money, accommodation and food, contacts and assistance locally as well as across different locations. In this way, 'network remittances' find their way not only to the home villages in the form of financial remittances used for consumption, the construction of houses or for local economic investments, but also are channelled to other places where migrated family members can draw resources in the form of 'network remittances' from their multilocal family networks. Thanks to this translocal solidarity and family support, new opportunities for higher education outside Gojal have been enabled for many Gojalis. Education, for males and females alike, is given strong preference by the people of Gojal, which is reflected by virtually full school enrolment of the children, careers in education often up to graduation level, high education levels among the adult population and a high share of household budgets spent on education (Benz 2012b). A comparative study by Malik and Piracha (2006:362) found that with an average share of 24 per cent of total

household expenses, people in Hunza (including Gojal) have the highest education-based spending per household in relative and absolute terms in Gilgit-Baltistan. Most of these education expenses are 'network remittances', since both their generation and their spending take place outside Gojal. About half of the male workforce of the villages of Passu and Hussaini live and work outside Gojal, so as a result the bulk of households' cash income generation takes place outside the region. At the same time, more than half of the two villages' post-primary students study outside Gojal, which clearly underlines how important 'network remittances' are for education. Following the principle of reciprocity, those student migrants who were once beneficiaries of 'network remittances' during for their own education careers usually become a source of remittances themselves after achieving good professional positions, and they go on to support their family members in different places and thus allow for the next generation of student migrants to start their higher education careers.

This can be seen, for example, in the household of A.U.[7] of Hussaini (Figure 4). A.U. was born in Hussaini and attended his local primary school in the 1950s in the nearby village of Gulmit[8], where he lived in the house of a maternal aunt and was provided with free food and accommodation. When his elder brother M.B., who had gone to Karachi as a labour migrant in 1952, came to visit Hussaini in 1959, he took A.U. with him to Karachi, provided him with a place to live and covered all expenses during the first weeks, including travel to Karachi. A.U. found a well-paid job and fully self-supported his stay in Karachi. Besides his job, he managed to continue his education at middle school level. From his savings in Karachi, A.U. financially supported his brother M.B. in 1969, when he purchased land in the village of Pakora, in Ishkoman Valley, where he permanently resettled with his family. In 1972, A.U. returned to Hussaini, got married and today is the father of seven daughters and a son. One of his daughters, N. currently studies at Peshawar University, together with her cousin (the daughter of A.U.'s brother U.B.), both living in a student hostel.

[7] Names have been changed for privacy reasons.

[8] The first boys' primary school in Gulmit was established in 1946 (Nazar 2009:93). In Hussaini, the first boys' primary school was established in 1962 (Rehmat 2000:44) but was intermittently non-functional during the first years due to lack of teachers.

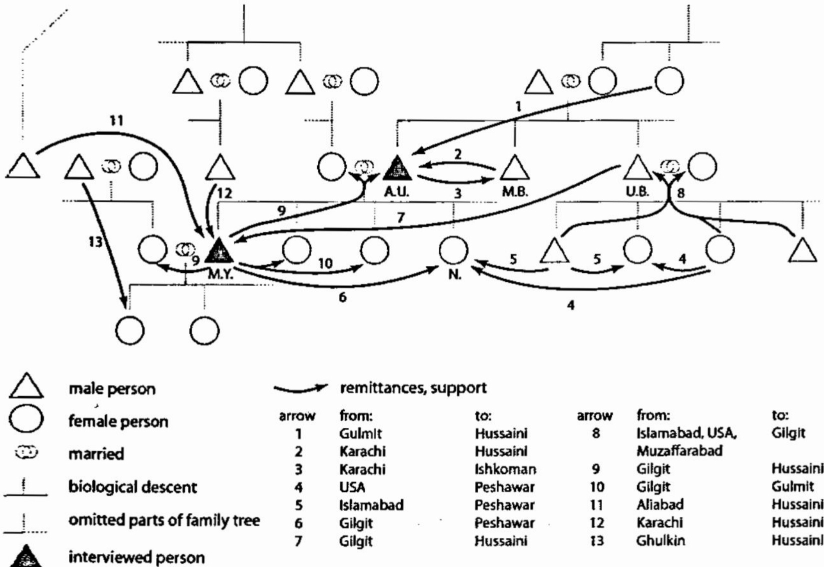


Figure 4: Selected remittances and translocal support in the family network of A.U. of Hussaini

The costs for their education and living expenses are covered by another cousin (the daughter of U.B.), who works as a medical doctor in the USA. At the time of the fieldwork they were spending their semester break in Islamabad at a cousin's place, who was working as a software engineer in the city. N.'s education is also financially supported by her brother M.Y., who works as a government employee in Gilgit and lives in his paternal uncle's house. This uncle permanently resettled with his family from Hussain to Gilgit in 1984, and together with his wife he enjoys support from some of his children living in Karachi, Islamabad, Peshawar, Muzaffarabad and the USA. M.Y. also sends remittances to his wife, his four children and his parents, who live in a joint household in Hussaini. In addition, he supports the education of two of his younger sisters at a private English-medium school in Gulmit, where they live in a student hostel. During his own educational career, M.Y. himself benefited from 'network remittances'. After his local basic school education he moved to Aliabad in Central Hunza for his intercollege studies, during which time he lived with and was fully supported by a distant relative

who was working as a government school headmaster in Hunza. The generous support given even by this quite distant relative in Central Hunza was considered as nothing unusual by the respondent, referring to the norm of reciprocity: "Of course [I stayed there] free of cost. We stayed there, and sometimes they come here and stay with us" (Interview M.Y., 26.10.2012). M.Y. continued his education in Karachi, where he was supported during the first weeks by his second grade maternal uncle, who had moved from Hussaini to Karachi four years earlier to undertake his studies and to work part-time in a five-star hotel. This uncle also brokered M.Y. a part-time job in the same hotel. M.Y. had to self-support his life and studies in Karachi and could not expect financial support from his father, who at that time already had to support the education of four of his daughters, three of them studying in Gilgit. M.Y.'s hotel job allowed him to take his wife and his newly born daughter to Karachi. Another two children were born there before the whole family moved back to Hussaini and re-joined his father's household. His wife is now working as a girls' school teacher in the village. His eldest daughter attends school in the nearby village of Ghulkin, where she lives with her maternal grandparents, free of cost 'of course'.

The example of A.U.'s household in Hussaini illustrates the importance of mutual support within (often far-reaching) family networks in-place as well as across space, and it exemplifies how complex the interwoven flows of 'network remittances' can be in reality. Thanks to these flows of support in the context of family solidarity and reciprocity, the spectrum of available opportunities and viable livelihood strategies for the involved individuals, households and families could be broadened considerably and processes of human and socio-economic development facilitated.

CONCLUSION

Socio-economic developments among the Wakhi of Gojal over about the last seven decades constitute an illustrative example of translocal development processes. Their outstanding levels of human development – in regional and national comparisons – and the sharp contrast with human development levels in neighbouring regions such as Nagar and Baltistan cannot be understood without taking into account the multilocal social networks of the Gojalis, through which opportunities have been broadened and risks reduced,

and through which money, goods, skills, knowledge and ideas have been channelled.

Education is part and parcel of the translocal development process among the Wakhi of Gojal and the cornerstone of the far-reaching developments and changes which the multilocal Wakhi community of Gojal has experienced over the last decades and which has turned their home region into one of the model regions of human development within Pakistan. There is a close connection between education, increased human capital, improved job and business opportunities, higher monetary income, material well-being and re-investments in the next round of education, resulting in upward spirals of socio-economic development and social mobility among the families involved (see also Benz 2012b; Benz and Schmidt 2012; Malik and Piracha 2006:362). Education has provided the precondition for the shift from an agro-pastoral basis of livelihood to off-farm job incomes and the switch from village-centred livelihoods to multilocal rural-urban livelihoods. Thanks to the norms of reciprocity, family solidarity and expectations of income redistribution among kin, the individual success of a pioneering migrant often multiplied within his family network by providing the basis for subsequent migration and the creation of new opportunities for family members.

The effects of migration, particularly related changes in education, employment, income and financial resources, have strongly changed the social structure in Gojal. Social stratification has partly been turned upside down: some families from the former 'lower-class' have participated from the very beginning in migration strategies and had the chance to advance socially through education and job-income, while some former 'upper-class' families have missed the chance. Social positions today are less determined by family origin (class) and agricultural resources (irrigated land, livestock) and instead based more on formal education, knowledge, skills and professional careers.

Translocal development has not been an equalising process in Gojal. The asset of multilocality is distributed quite unequally among families and households in the region, with important consequences for local vulnerability levels. This has been seen lately in the unequal abilities of Gojali households to cope with the impacts of the economic downturn after the Attabad rockslide and the subsequent lake formation and blocking of the KKH since 2010. When the most important local sources of financial income – cash

crops, trade and tourism – almost completely collapsed, the importance of remittances for the local population increased. Those households which can draw on the asset of multilocality in the form of 'network remittances' are much less vulnerable in such a situation compared to those which lack these important links.

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