

**Protective Frameworks and Their Effects on the Socio-Economy
of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia:
The Case of the Afar Region**

Addressing Illegal Migration in Tunisia:

The Need for A Comprehensive Policy Approach

Gastronomy as a Soft Power Tool:

Turkish Gastrodiploamacy Activities in Africa

The Compulsory Study of Mandarin by African Students
at Chinese Universities: A Soft Power Tool?

**Comparative Analysis of Concentration Camps
in Africa between 1900 and 1910**



PROTECTIVE FRAMEWORKS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE SOCIO-ECONOMY OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS) IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF THE AFAR REGION

AHMED ABDULETIF ABDULKADR – MEKONNEN SHAREW TEBEJE – GYÖRGY IVÁN NESZMÉLYI

ABDULKADR AHMED ABDULETIF, PHD, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS,
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS, SAMARA UNIVERSITY

ABDULKADR2016@GMAIL.COM

MEKONNEN SHAREW TEBEJE, LL. B, LL. M, LECTURER, SCHOOL OF LAW, SAMARA UNIVERSITY SHAREWM29@GMAIL.COM

GYÖRGY IVÁN NESZMÉLYI, PHD, PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL AND POLITICAL STUDIES,
MILTON FRIEDMAN UNIVERSITY, NESZMELYI.GYORGY@UNI-MILTON.HU



Abstract

The study aims to evaluate the impact of protective frameworks on the socio-economic conditions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Ethiopia-Afar Region due to conflict in the northern region. This evaluation will be conducted using national and international instruments such as the Ethiopian Constitution, the Kampala Convention, UN Guiding Principles, and the Great Lakes Protocol. The study employed a qualitative research method, and primary data were collected through key informant interviews, observations, and document reviews. The study's findings show that the government is limited in providing an adequate response. The findings also indicate that the government's ability to provide an appropriate standard of living, including, at the very least, access to enough food, water, decent housing, health care, a foundational education, and opportunities for jobs and livelihoods, is limited. Additionally, none of the IDPs recovered any personal property that was destroyed or left behind at their place of origin as a result of their displacement; one of the study's key findings is that national policy does not adequately protect the rights of IDPs. The study's conclusions recommend developing a national policy framework to protect IDPs both during and after relocation, to provide them with a long-term solution by ensuring adequate living conditions, to find a mechanism by which IDPs can recover their own property and documentation that was lost or destroyed as a result of displacement, or to be compensated for it and to provide a legal remedy for crimes committed against IDPs. Ethiopia must also ratify international agreements such as the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GPID) and establish reliable institutional frameworks. This will compel the Ethiopian government to prioritize and pay attention to IDPs affected by war and other causes.

Keywords

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Afar Region, Tigray, Protective Frameworks, Durable solutions

Received: September 20, 2023 | 1st Revision: July 8, 2024 | Accepted: December 15, 2024

Abdulkadr, Ahmed Abduletif – Tebeje, Mekonnen Sharaw – Neszmélyi, György Iván (2024). Protective Frameworks and Their Effects on the Socio-Economy of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Ethiopia: The Case of the Afar Region. Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 5-20.

1. Introduction

According to the United Nations Guiding Principles (1998), IDPs are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.” In a more recent definition, the Kampala Convention (2009) defined Internally Displaced Persons as “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State.”

Due to the increasing number (estimated 40.3 million worldwide) of global IDPs (Edwards, 2017), IDPs are now considered as important as other issues in the scholarly community. Internal displacement can be caused by international or non-international armed conflicts, circumstances of violence that are not armed conflicts, grave human rights violations, natural or man-made disasters, and so on, according to the definitions above. Several researchers (Lwabukuna, 2011; Terminiski, 2013; Van der Ploeg and Vanclay, 2017; Maru, 2017; IDMC 2018a; IDMC 2018b; Tarrósy 2020) identified conflict as one of the causes of internal displacement. Furthermore, IDPs remain in their own nation and are protected by their own government, even if that government is to blame for or complicit in their relocation (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees). At this point, it is important to note that the phrase “in particular” in the Guiding Principles definition implies that the list of displacement factors is not exhaustive. Internal displacement can also be caused by large-scale development projects such as dams that are developed without any attempt by the government to relocate or compensate displaced persons.

Fundamental human rights are severely violated for IDPs. Psychological pain from the loss of family, friends, and property; security dangers and the obligation to protect oneself; and, above all, humanitarian needs and response are among the major issues encountered by IDPs both within and outside camps (Lenshie and Yenda, 2016). In many situations, the living conditions in these camps are deplorable. Food and water are in low supply, insecurity is severe, and livelihood options are scarce in congested and dirty settlements (United Nations Environment Program). This causes social and financial strains on host communities, especially as many IDPs seek refuge among the destitute in metropolitan areas (Vasa et al., 2021).

Ethiopia is riddled with climate-induced displacement caused mainly by drought and floods. Beginning in 2015, Ethiopia faced one of the strongest onsets of El Niño, a periodic heating of the eastern tropical Pacific, which reduced the *kiremt* (summer) rainfall and successively resulted in drought in the Southern and Southeastern parts of the country. This prolonged drought impacted agricultural and pastoralist communities across Ethiopia in 2019 by decreasing crop yields from the main *meher* (winter) harvest, reducing pastures for livestock,

and drying up water resources. Floods are another major cause of climate-induced displacement. While certain areas experienced reduced rainfall, other low-lying areas experienced heavy rainfall and floods during the *Kiremt* rainy season.

In recent years, Ethiopia has been among the top countries with IDPs. According to the report by OCHA (2019), Ethiopia is one of the three countries with the highest number of IDPs in the world, affecting the people's existence and their livelihood. Another report by Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) (2019) also put Ethiopia in the top ranking with regard to severe internal displacement. Around 202,202 IDPs were displaced in October 2019 alone due to several flood incidences in Afar, Oromia, Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR), and Somali regions (IOM Ethiopia National Displacement Report 6, Round 23, Nov 2020).

Adding to the high mobility landscape of Ethiopia is the number and rate of returns. According to the government, 1.8 million IDPs have returned to their origin as of June 2019. This nationwide, government-led return operation has been ongoing since April 2019 (IOM Ethiopia National Displacement Report 6, Round 26, September 2021).

Early in November 2020, the federal government of Ethiopia purportedly launched a military offensive after the regional party of Tigray allegedly attacked the Northern Command of the Ethiopian National Defense Force in Mekelle, Tigray province. Following this, a conflict erupted in the north of Ethiopia, which is thought to be the cause of the displacement of more than two million IDPs. The Afar Region was one of the areas impacted by the fighting, and it is believed that more than 700,000 IDPs from the Afar and Tigray ethnic groups are living there in various camps. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the accessibility and application of IDP protection frameworks and their impact on the socioeconomic situation of IDPs.

2. Research Methodology

A qualitative research design was used to analyze the data collected from primary and secondary sources of information. Focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and field observations were used to gather the primary data from the internally displaced individuals living in two camps (Silsa and Samara camps) and

Fundamental human rights are severely violated for IDPs. Psychological pain from the loss of family, friends, and property; security dangers and the obligation to protect oneself; and, above all, humanitarian needs and response are among the major issues encountered by IDPs both within and outside camps.

from the IDPs who had returned to Ab'ala. The following questions were raised in the focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

1. Do you know the national and international rights of IDPs?
2. How good is this IDP camp for living?
3. Do you get enough food to stay alive?
4. How effective is the regional government in fulfilling your (those returned and those in camps) needs?

The following questions were used to analyze the secondary sources of information, such as the available reports, published statutes, and proclamations.

1. What legal and policy frameworks are in place in Ethiopia to protect the rights and address the needs of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)?
2. How effective have these protective frameworks been in ensuring IDPs' physical security, access to basic services, and socio-economic well-being in the Afar region?
3. What are the key challenges and limitations the Ethiopian government and local authorities face in implementing these protective frameworks for IDPs in the Afar region?
4. How have the existing protective frameworks (or lack thereof) impacted the livelihood strategies, economic activities, and overall socio-economic status of IDPs in the Afar region?
5. To what extent have the protective frameworks considered the unique cultural, social, and economic characteristics of the Afar region and its displaced populations?
6. What roles do regional bodies (such as IGAD and AU) play in supporting or complementing the implementation of protective frameworks for IDPs in Ethiopia?
7. What strategies or policy recommendations can be proposed to strengthen the protective frameworks and enhance the socio-economic outcomes for IDPs in the Afar region of Ethiopia?

3. The IDPs and Challenges

The conflict between the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Federal government has seriously affected the people of Tigray and Afar. According to focus group discussions, the respondents found that they were socially disconnected from their relatives and became economically dependent on the aid of others. The IDPs in different camps in the Afar region have lost their herds, homes, and religious and cultural heritages, besides losing relatives. This result is similar to the findings of Landau and Duponchel (2011), who reported that the IDPs' social and economic connections prior to their displacement are matters in their own right. Moreover, researchers (for example, Baban et al., 2017; Vecchio, 2018; Abbay, 2022; Gebrewahd, 2023) concluded that social disconnections and economic dependency arise from the loss of means of livelihood.

The effect of internal displacement in the region was observed in many ways. According to the observation of the researchers from the camps where the IDPs were staying, there was a lack of access to safe water and poor sanitation, which in turn had an impact on health and led to the death of infants and elderly people. Access to safe water was one of the problems registered in the IDP hosting areas. Internal displacement also affects the host area. For example, price inflation on products and housing was observed in the area and surroundings where the IDPs stayed. This result supports the findings of Alobo and Obaji (2016), which show the IDP's dependency on the basic services of the host area.

4. International Legal and Institutional Frameworks on the Protection of IDP Rights

Those who are internally displaced are persons or a group who require protection from their states. Internally displaced people, like all people, require the fundamental human rights protections currently provided by existing legal frameworks, such as those governing refugees, humanitarian laws, and human rights. Most national states have agreements to provide their citizens with the protections the current regulatory system offers. IDPs must be protected from violations of their fundamental rights. Although there is no enforceable international legal framework to do so, the existing framework protections may play crucial roles in ensuring their safety. The following sections will examine the existing legal and institutional frameworks relevant to protecting IDPs under international law.

5. Protection under Human Rights and Humanitarian Law Instruments

International actors may be called upon to assist in cases where national authorities are unable or unwilling to protect potential or actual victims of enormous atrocities by diplomatic, humanitarian, and/or enforcement activities. Many international legal instruments have provisions that could offer protection and support to IDPs, including international human rights treaties and international humanitarian law treaties. Measures focused on internal displacement compel states to uphold their obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law. However, it is crucial to consider what “protection” entails before reviewing the pertinent clauses. Protection for IDPs typically entails fostering an atmosphere that respects human rights, preventing and/or reducing the immediate impacts of a particular pattern of abuse, and re-establishing respectable living conditions through either reparation, restitution, or rehabilitation.

Protection is described as “...all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the individual's rights in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law” (Doswald-Beck, L. and Sylvain, V. 1999; Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Internally Displaced Persons Protection Policy, 2016).

In conclusion, laws and policies that address the needs of internally displaced people (IDPs) for protection and assistance come from two different areas: first, from the principles of international human rights law and international humanitarian

law, and second, from an expanding body of IDP-specific laws and policies, many of which have been passed and are currently being put into practice by national authorities in nations worldwide. The right to freedom of movement and residence as guaranteed by Articles 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and 12(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights are two examples of pertinent provisions of international human rights law that, as previously mentioned, can be applied for protecting IDPs (ICCPR, 1966). The UDHR also contains provisions concerning the prohibition of arbitrary deprivation of property and possessions (UDHR, 1948), which are regularly violated in internal displacement. Furthermore, the UDHR grants fundamental rights to an adequate standard of living and dignity brought about by socio-economic and cultural rights (UDHR, 1948).

Economic and social rights are listed in Articles 22 to 26 of the UDHR, and they are further developed and set out as binding treaty norms in the ICESCR. These rights provide the conditions necessary for prosperity and well-being. Economic rights refer, for example, to the right to property, the right to work, which one freely chooses or accepts, the right to a fair wage, a reasonable limitation of working hours, and trade union rights. Social rights are necessary for an adequate standard of living, including rights to health, shelter, food, social care, education, and the continuous improvement of living conditions (Articles 6 to 14 of the ICESCR). Access by displaced communities to employment, social security, and property is key to self-reliance (Vida et al., 2020). This allows IDPs to live constructive and dignified lives, reduces their overall vulnerability to protection risks, and enhances the sustainability of durable solutions.

This is supplemented by, for instance, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1990). The latter two instruments underscore the equal rights of women and children, including education (CEDAW, 1979). Under the 1945 UN Charter, UN Member States are empowered to take action to promote fundamental human rights (UN Charter, 1945). International humanitarian law is especially important when armed conflict is the root cause of internal displacement. The 1977 Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts and Common Article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions are applicable. Likewise, in cases of interstate armed conflict, Part II of the Fourth Geneva Convention may be used to protect people (Geneva Conventions, 1949, Additional Protocol II). Although there are such international legal frameworks, it is frequently challenging to make use of the protection they provide for IDPs. For instance, human rights law does not entirely protect the right to freedom of movement. In particular, Common Article 3 does not protect freedom of movement in the context of internal displacement brought on by armed conflict. Additional Protocol II's Article 17 only protects from arbitrary displacement in this situation. In conclusion, there are two leading causes for the difficulties encountered. First, some nations may not have ratified the pertinent accords or have done so with significant restrictions and/or reservations.

Second, although procedures are widespread in most international law, the mechanisms for their implementation often proven to be ineffective.

6. United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement

IDPs have the same rights as other citizens and long-term residents of their country because they are citizens of their own nation. These rights are expressed in the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, a collection of consolidated, legally non-binding principles that serve as a roadmap for national and international actors in addressing the pressing human rights and humanitarian needs of IDPs. By analogy, they are compared to international human rights law, international law on refugees, and international humanitarian law. Many governments have endorsed the Guiding Principles, which, despite not being a treaty, could be argued to represent or assist in forming customary international law. The Guiding Principles lay the groundwork for an extensive framework on IDP protection, even though they are not legally binding and serve as an example of how international standards apply during displacement.

Ethiopia, a signatory of many international instruments, is not a signatory state of Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement; hence, the Ethiopian government needs to be concerned and give attention to the large number of displaced people due to conflict or other reasons.

7. Great Lakes Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons

The Great Lakes Protocol was endorsed in 2006 by the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region's eleven-member countries. It was the first legally binding multilateral agreement to adopt and implement the UN Guiding Principles (NRC, IDMC and the International Refugee Rights Initiative, 2008). This Protocol provides that Member States shall ratify the present Protocol and enact national legislation to domesticate the Guiding Principles fully and provide a legal framework for their implementation within national legal systems (Great Lakes Protocol, 2006). This Protocol also provides the Guiding Principles with a legal foundation throughout the region and supports adopting national policies to guarantee the minimal level of protection for IDPs as stipulated by the Guiding Principles.

The Great Lakes Property Protocol is also a legally binding instrument and requires state parties to establish, adapt, or amend national laws, procedures, mechanisms and schemes to better protect the right to property of IDPs during displacement, especially in the context of durable solutions. It complements the IDP Protocol, particularly concerning creating conditions for durable solutions. The restoration of property and land rights is one of the key conditions for achieving a solution to internal displacement that is durable and sustainable (Etenesh, 2007). The special protection afforded to communities that are particularly attached to their lands, e.g. pastoralists, through the strong emphasis placed on the principle of permitting their return to their former lands, makes it clear that for such communities, return is the preferred type of durable solution, as it helps to safeguard their traditional lifestyle and livelihoods.

8. The Kampala Convention

The Kampala Convention is the first legally binding, continent-wide instrument dedicated to African internal displacement. It has set five overall objectives aimed at addressing IDP concerns. These are to:

- a. Promote and strengthen regional and national measures to prevent or mitigate, prohibit and eliminate root causes of internal displacement as well as provide for durable solutions;
- b. Establish a legal framework for preventing displacement and protecting and assisting internally displaced persons in Africa;
- c. Establish a legal framework for solidarity, cooperation, promotion of durable solutions and mutual support between the States Parties in order to combat displacement and address its consequences;
- d. Provide for the obligations and responsibilities of State Parties for the prevention of internal displacement and protection of, and assistance to, internally displaced persons;
- e. Provide for the respective obligations, responsibilities and roles of armed groups, nonstate actors and other relevant actors, including civil society organizations, concerning the prevention of internal displacement and protection of, and assistance to, internally displaced persons (Kampala Convention, 2009).

Kampala Convention specifies that states must take measures to protect individual, collective, and cultural property belonging to displaced people, whether it was left behind or is in their possession. States must also establish mechanisms for resolving disputes relating to the property of IDPs. States must take all appropriate measures, whenever possible, to restore the lands of communities with a special dependency and attachment to such lands. More generally, states commit to providing effective remedies to all displaced people, including establishing effective legal frameworks to provide just and fair compensation and other reparations to IDPs for damage incurred due to displacement (Kampala Convention, 2009).

Following the northern conflict, many individuals who had been uprooted from their homes started the difficult journey back to their original communities. This return, however, was bittersweet. While they longed to reconnect with familiar places and loved ones, the scars of the conflict ran deep.

Families found themselves grappling with not just the physical loss of their homes, but also the invisible wounds of trauma, anxiety, and grief. The IDPs returned to their original location after their area is freed from the TPLF fighters. However, this return took place without adequately addressing the psychological, social, and economic damages inflicted by the conflict.

A psychiatrist involved in treating internally displaced persons (IDPs) noted that the individuals required more time to achieve psychological well-being. Additionally, an interviewee highlighted that the number of professionals providing psychological therapy was limited, making it difficult to reach all IDPs.

Before welcoming internally displaced persons (IDPs) back to their original communities after the conflict, it was vital to create a supportive environment for their return. This meant ensuring that essential social services were ready to meet their needs, including access to medical care, education, and housing resources.

Equally important was addressing the psychological wounds many carried from their experiences. The return to familiar places could be a painful reminder of loss and trauma. Without adequate support, the journey home risked becoming overwhelming, leaving many IDPs feeling isolated and vulnerable. By prioritizing these critical services, communities could help facilitate a smoother reintegration, allowing individuals to heal and rebuild their lives with dignity and hope.

Prior to resettling the IDPs in their original location, social services must be maintained, and the necessary equipment must be provided, in addition to the psychological harm. According to Abdulkadr and Neszmélyi (2021), several infrastructures were damaged due to the conflict between TPLF and the Federal government of Ethiopia. The religious centres have not been rebuilt, social service facilities have not been adequately provided, and the herd losses have not been reimbursed. The IDPs have various preferences for government and stakeholder intervention. During focus group discussions, youngsters expressed the need for special support to engage in economic activities through new startups. Meanwhile, elderly participants from Afar, interviewed as key informants, expressed a preference for social protection benefits such as the replacement of houses that were burnt as a result of the conflict. It is crucial to note that the residents of neighboring northern Afar areas belong to the Tigray and Afar ethnic groups. Returning internally displaced persons (IDPs), particularly those from the Tigrayan ethnic group, to their original locations without reaching a consensus on the situation will have negative implications for the future of both communities. The Afar IDPs, despite being victims of the conflict themselves, believe that the Tigrayan IDPs support

Kampala Convention specifies that states must take measures to protect individual, collective, and cultural property belonging to displaced people, whether it was left behind or is in their possession. States must also establish mechanisms for resolving disputes relating to the property of IDPs. States must take all appropriate measures, whenever possible, to restore the lands of communities with a special dependency and attachment to such lands.

the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). This perception can further tensions between the two groups.

9. The Role of IGAD and AU in Addressing IDP Crises in Ethiopia

The internal displacement crisis in Ethiopia is a complex and multifaceted humanitarian challenge, exacerbated by factors like political instability, ethnic tensions, and armed conflicts (UNHCR, 2023). The Ethiopian government has faced limitations in effectively responding to the needs of the displaced populations. In this context, the involvement of regional and continental organizations like the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU) can be crucial in addressing the crisis (Gebremariam, 2021).

IGAD and the AU can play a constructive role in supporting the Ethiopian government's efforts to address the IDP crisis in several ways:

- *Diplomatic engagement:* These organizations can engage in diplomatic efforts to facilitate dialogue and negotiations between the Ethiopian government, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), and other relevant stakeholders (Pellet, 2021). This may aid in finding peaceful resolutions to the underlying conflicts driving the displacement of people.
- *Humanitarian assistance:* IGAD and the AU can mobilize resources and coordinate the delivery of humanitarian aid, such as food, water, shelter, and medical supplies, to the affected IDP populations (OCHA, 2023), like it happened similarly in other cases in East Africa (Tóth and Topa, 2014). These organizations can work with the Ethiopian government and international organizations to ensure the effective distribution and fair allocation of these resources.
- *Coordination and advocacy:* These regional and continental bodies can facilitate the coordination of efforts among various stakeholders, including the Ethiopian government, international organizations, and civil society groups, to ensure a coherent and effective response to the IDP crisis. They can also advocate for the Ethiopian government to uphold its responsibility to protect its citizens and address the IDP crisis (Habte and Kweon, 2018).
- *Monitoring and accountability:* IGAD and the AU can establish mechanisms to monitor the situation on the ground, document human rights violations, and hold the Ethiopian government accountable for its actions or inactions (Amnesty International, 2023).

It is important to note that the involvement of IGAD and the AU should strike a balance between respecting Ethiopia's sovereignty and providing necessary humanitarian assistance and support. Constructive engagement, transparency, and a commitment to finding lasting solutions that address the root causes of the IDP crisis will be crucial for the success of any regional or continental initiatives (Mabera, 2023).

10. Legal and Institutional Protection of IDPs in Ethiopia

As stated earlier, over the past few years, Ethiopia has seen a sharp rise in the number of internally displaced persons. In a recent scenario review, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies reported that approximately 1.2 million people have been internally displaced since September 2017 due to fighting, primarily along the borders between Somalia and Oromia. Following extensive political, social, and economic reforms undertaken by the Federal government across the nation starting from April 18, 2018, there has been an escalation in tension and unrest in the area. Conflicts between Somali and non-Somali ethnic groups have been occurring in Ethiopia's Somali region since August 4th, 2018. At least 52,000 people have been internally displaced as a result of the hostilities' escalating brutality in Jijiga, Kebri Dehar, and other nearby communities (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Ethiopia: IDP Population Movement, 2018).

Ethiopia is responsible for protecting its citizens from the effects of internal displacement as a sovereign state. As a party to various international human rights treaties and other instruments, Ethiopia must take action to ensure the rights and protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs). The Guiding Principles, which state that it is the national authorities' "principal duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction," also favor this (UN Guiding Principles, 1998). Ethiopia must also devise domestic institutional and legal frameworks that facilitate the implementation of protection measures. However, neither has Ethiopia created a separate agency with the responsibility of protecting IDPs nor implemented a complete policy or legal framework. In light of this, assessing whether the general legal safeguards afforded to everyone under Ethiopian law are sufficient to solve the difficulties IDPs are facing in the nation is essential. It is vital to first review the contents of the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) (FDRE Constitution, 1995) as the superior legislative framework applicable across the country. Under the FDRE Constitution, 'any Ethiopian or foreign national lawfully in Ethiopia has, within the national territory, the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his residence, as well as the freedom to leave the country at any time he wishes to' (FDRE Constitution, 1995 Art. 32(1)).

The FDRE Constitution establishes Ethiopia as a Federal State comprising nine regional states (FDRE Constitution, 1995, Art. 47(1)), and 'the territorial jurisdiction of Ethiopia shall comprise the territory of the nine members of the Federation and its boundaries shall be as determined by international agreements (FDRE Constitution, 1995, Art. 2). However, despite this explicit constitutional safeguard, Ethiopian nationals have frequently been forcibly relocated due to their ethnicity from one region of the nation to another. Unsurprisingly, there have been instances where citizens have purportedly been forcibly relocated based on their ethnicity by government agencies of the Federation's members. This is despite the FDRE Constitution's guarantees that the Federal and State legislative, executive, and judicial institutions

at all levels should protect and uphold citizens' fundamental rights and freedoms (FDRE Constitution, 1995, Art. 44(2)).

The Ethiopian Constitution incorporates various economic, social, and cultural rights. Every Ethiopian has the right to engage in economic activities freely, to choose his/her means of livelihood, occupation, and profession, and equal access to publicly funded services. It further requires the state to allocate ever-increasing resources to provide social services, provide funds for the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, the aged, and children without parents or guardians subject to available means (FDRE Constitution, Art. 41), and to pursue policies aimed at expanding job opportunities for the poor through undertaking programs and public works projects. It also imposes a duty on the state to protect and preserve historic and cultural legacies and to contribute to the promotion of arts and sports. The Constitution also guarantees several socio-economic rights as part of the National Policy Principles and Objectives (FDRE Constitution, Arts. 89-91 Ethiopia currently lacks a comprehensive national policy framework to address internal displacement despite the existence of various scattered laws. Additionally, there is no explicit policy in place to safeguard the socio-economic rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

11. Ethiopian Human Rights Commission

The Ethiopian Human Rights Commission was constituted as an independent Federal entity accountable to the House of People's Representatives in accordance with sub-article 14 of article 55 of the FDRE Constitution and Proclamation No. 210/2000. The Commission's primary goal is to ensure that every citizen's rights are upheld, respected, and fully safeguarded while taking the required action when infractions are discovered. However, not all IDP categories clearly fall under the authority of the Commission; therefore, they cannot benefit from the protections offered by the Commission. However, as the Commission's primary responsibility is to deal with rights, it automatically assumes the protection of human rights.

One of the main functions of National Human Rights Institutions is to investigate complaints. They have received many complaints regarding forced evictions (Abdo, 2013). They are not explicitly allowed to file a lawsuit on their own behalf or on behalf of an aggrieved party. This is because there is no clear legal framework that gives them the right to exercise power. Under Article 6 of Proclamation 210/2000, the Commission's duty concerning different forms of IDPs has been made clear in resolving complaints of human rights breaches regardless of their causes. Above all, the Commission may play a key role in ensuring that IDPs, like everyone else in Ethiopia, are protected.

Several efforts have been made to enable the forcibly displaced people in Ethiopia to live their lives. The government acted to relocate displaced people to areas of largely secure living conditions. Additionally, it offered rudimentary services like food and drink. Through the donation of necessities like clothing and other comparable products, several societal groups also play a significant part in helping the displaced. Support from the local and international communities has included,

among other things, cash gifts and assistance in building shelters for IDP relocation. After post-conflict peacebuilding, as planned with stakeholders, it happens occasionally that displaced people are pushed into returning to their homes. This is the case in the Afar Region, where hundreds of thousands were being forcefully returned to their homes without their consent and with no adequate food, water, essential medical services, sanitation, or shelter. Generally, policymakers expect displaced persons to return to their home communities when the conflict ends (Bohnet and Rudolf, 2015). However, conflict situations are often characterized by a time of transition during which violent conflict frequently re-emerges rather than by well-defined borders. In times of ongoing war, the “right to return” is commonly mentioned; however, this puts such returnees at additional risk (Bohnet and Rudolf, 2015). As a result, requests to implement the right to return must only be considered when crucial prerequisites have been met.

12. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study’s findings reveal that the government has limitations in providing an adequate response. It indicates that the government struggles to offer a suitable standard of living, including access to essential needs such as food, water, decent housing, healthcare, education, and job opportunities. Furthermore, the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the study did not recover any personal property left behind or destroyed at their place of origin due to their displacement. A key finding is that national policy fails to sufficiently protect the rights of IDPs. Sustainable solutions are necessary to ensure that IDPs no longer require aid and can resume their pre-displacement lives. As the IDPs in the study area come from various ethnic groups, particularly the Tigrayans, reintegration at their place of origin through grassroots solutions and reconciliation is recommended. Moreover, the study’s conclusions recommend developing a national policy framework to protect IDPs both during and after relocation, to provide them with a long-term solution by ensuring adequate living conditions, to find a mechanism by which IDPs can recover their own property and documentation that was lost or destroyed as a result of displacement, or to be compensated for it, and to provide a legal remedy for crimes committed against IDPs. Ethiopia must also ratify international agreements like the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (GPID) and establish reliable institutional frameworks, which force the Ethiopian government to care about and pay attention to IDPs who have been displaced by war and other causes. ✨

References

- Abbay, A. (2022). State-Building/State-Destroying in Ethiopia – A Backdrop to the Tigray Genocide. *Hungarian Journal of African Studies* Vol. 16, No. 3 (Fall 2022) pp. 95-116 <https://journals.lib.pte.hu/index.php/afrikatanulmanyok/article/view/6554/6214>
- Abdulkadr, A. A. and Neszmélyi, G. I. (2021). Root Causes and the Socio-Economic Impact of the Ongoing War Between the Tplf and the Federal Government of Ethiopia (2 November 2020 – 15 October 2021). *Hungarian Journal of African Studies* 15(4), 37-52. DOI: 10.15170/AT.2021.15.4.

- African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) (2009). <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/african-union-convention-for-the-protection-and-assistance-of-internally-displaced-persons-in-africa-en.pdf>
- Aloba, E. and Obaji, S. (2016). Internal Displacement in Nigeria and the Case for Human Rights Protection of Displaced Persons, *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization*, Vol 51. Internal Displacement in Nigeria and the Case for Human Rights Protection of Displaced Persons - CORE Reader. pp. 26-33; <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JLPG/article/view/32031/32901>
- Amnesty International. (2023). Ethiopia: Crimes Against Humanity in Western Tigray Zone. 6th April, 2022, <https://www.amnesty.ie/ethiopia-crimes-against-humanity-in-western-tigray-zone/>
- Baban, F. – Ilcan, S. – Rygiel, H. (2017). Syrian refugees in Turkey: pathways to precarity, differential inclusion, and negotiated citizenship rights. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 43(1):1-17, DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2016.1192996
- Bohnet, H. and Rudolf, M. (2015). Voluntary return to refugees: chances of peace and sustainable development? (*BICC Policy Brief*, 3/2015). Bonn: Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-62013-4>
- Cameron, B.T. (2014). Reflections on refugee studies and the study of refugees: implications for policy analysts, *Journal of Management and Public Policy*, Vol. 6 No. 1, pp. 4-13. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272828945_Reflections_on_Refugee_Studies_and_the_study_of_refugees_implications_for_policy_analysts
- Doswald-Beck, L. and Sylvain, V. (1999). International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights Law. International Committee of the Red Cross, 26 p. <https://international-review.icrc.org/sites/default/files/S0020860400071539a.pdf>
- DTM (2019). Ethiopia: National Displacement Dashboard 16 (March - April 2019). <https://dtm.iom.int/ethiopia>
- Edwards, A. (2017), Forced displacement worldwide at its highest in decades, annual global trends report, United Nations High Commission for Refugees, Geneva www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/stories/2017/6/5941561f4/forced-displacement-worldwide-its-highest-decades.html
- Etenesh, M. (2007). Impact of Development-Induced Displacement on Female Headed Households in Inner City Slum Areas of Addis Ababa: The Case of Sheraton Addis Expansion Project. (M.A. thesis), 171 p, University of Addis Ababa, <http://etd.aau.edu.et/handle/12345678/6924>
- Gebremariam, T.G. (2021). Igad, African Union collateral damages for Tigray war. *Nation*, 07 March, 2021, <https://nation.africa/kenya/news/africa/igad-african-union-collateral-damages-for-tigray-war-3392126->
- Gebrewahd, M. T. (2023). The War on Tigray: Geopolitics and the Struggle for Self-Determination. *Hungarian Journal of African Studies* Vol. 17, No. 3 (2023) pp. 5-21 <https://journals.lib.ptc.hu/index.php/afrikatanulmanyok/article/view/7638/7120>
- Habte, B. and Kweon, Y. J. (2018). *Forced Migration Review*, 59, October, 2018, p 40-43. <https://www.fmreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FMR59-EN.pdf>
- IDMC (2018a). Internal displacement in 2018: Mid-year figures. <http://www.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/201809-mid-year-figures.pdf>
- IDMC (2018b). Global report on internal displacement. http://www.internaldisplacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/201805-final-GRID-2018_0.pdf
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (2016). Internally Displaced Persons Protection Policy, IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2016.pdf <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2020-11/IASC%20Policy%20on%20Protection%20in%20Humanitarian%20Action%2C%202016.pdf>

- International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, (2018). Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) Ethiopia, IDP Population Movement. Ethiopia: IDP Population Movement - Emergency Plan of Action (EPoA) DREF n° MDRET019/PET051 - Ethiopia ReliefWeb
- IOM, (2021). Ethiopia National Displacement Report 9, Round 26: June – July. Ethiopia — National Displacement Report 9 (June — July 2021) | Displacement ([iom.int](https://dtm.iom.int)) <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ethiopia-%E2%80%94-national-displacement-report-9-june-%E2%80%94-july-2021>
- IOM, (Nov 2020). Ethiopia National Displacement Report 6, Round 23: August – September. Ethiopia — National Displacement Report 6 (August — September 2020) | DTM <https://dtm.iom.int/reports/ethiopia-%E2%80%94-national-displacement-report-6-august-%E2%80%94-september-2020>
- Landau, L. B. - Duponchel, M. (2011). Laws, Policies, or Social Position? Capabilities and the Determinants of Effective Protection in Four African Cities, *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Volume 24, Issue 1, Pp 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feq049>
- Lenshie, N. E. – Yenda, H. B. (2016). Boko Haram Insurgency, Internally Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Response in Northeast Nigeria, *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, Vol. 4 Issue 8, 141-150. <https://www.internationaljournalcorner.com/index.php/theijhss/article/view/126870/87760>
- Lwabukuna, O.K. (2011). Internal displacement in Africa: African solutions to African problems? Challenges and prospects. *Journal of Internal Displacement*, 1(1), 131-141. https://journalinternaldisplacement.webs.com/Vol1No1/lwabukuna_JID_Vol1_No1.pdf
- Maberu, F. (2023). Ethiopia's Tigray Conflict Peace Deal Showcased the African Union's Peace Diplomacy, but Several Sticking Points Remain. Wilson Center, Washington D.C. February 15, 2023, <https://www.wilsoncenter.org/blog-post/ethiopias-tigray-conflict-peace-deal-african-union>
- Maru, M. T. (2017). Causes, dynamics and consequences of internal displacement in Ethiopia. *Working Paper FG 8*. Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) [German Institute for International and Security Affairs], 42 p. https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/arbeitspapiere/Maru_2017_Internal_Displacement_Ethiopia.pdf
- Mohammed, A. M. (2013). The Human Rights Commission of Ethiopia and Issues of Forced Evictions - A Case Oriented Study of its Practice. In: Brems, E., Van der Beken, C. and Abay Yimer, S. (Eds). *Human Rights and Development, Legal Perspectives from and for Ethiopia*. Series: International Studies in Human Rights, Volume: 111 Brill - Nijhoff pp. 329–359. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004280250_014
- NRC, IDMC and the International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI), (2008). The Great Lakes Pact and the Rights of Displaced People: A Guide for Civil Society, The Great Lakes Pact and the Rights of Displaced People: A Guide for Civil Society. 48 p. https://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/Disp_GreatlakesGuide_IDMC-IRRI-NRC_2008.pdf
- OCHA (1998). United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. <https://api.internal-displacement.org/sites/default/files/publications/documents/199808-training-OCHA-guiding-principles-Eng2.pdf>
- OCHA (2019). Ethiopia humanitarian needs overview 2019. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ethiopia/ethiopia-humanitarian-needs-overview-2019>
- OCHA (2023). Ethiopia: Humanitarian Needs Overview 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/ocha-annual-report-2023>
- Pellet, P. (2021). Understanding the 2020-2021 Tigray Conflict in Ethiopia – Background, Root Causes, and Consequences. *Series of the Institute for Foreign Affairs and Trade*, Budapest, https://hiia.hu/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/KE_2021_39_ET_Tigray_Conflict_in_Ethiopia_Pellet_0810.pdf

- Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (Great Lakes Protocol), (2006). In the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region (Great Lakes Pact). <https://www.refworld.org/reference/regionalreport/radr/2006/en/94162>
- Tarrósy, I. (2020). Afrika az „Afrika felemelkedőben” narratíva valósága, 2020 Africa - The reality of the “Africa on the Rise” narrative. *Máltai Tanulmányok* Vol 2, No. 1. (2020) pp. 71-79, https://epa.oszk.hu/04000/04049/00003/pdf/EPA04049_maltai_tanulmanyok_2020_01_071-080.pdf
- Terminski, B. (2013). Development-induced displacement and resettlement: social problem and human rights issue (a bibliography), Geneva. 43 p. <https://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/handle/document/32902>
- The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE Constitution), UNHCR, 1995. <https://www.refworld.org/legal/legislation/natlegbod/1995/en/18206>
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979). Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 18 December 1979, OHCHR. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, (1990). Microsoft Word - Document1 (ohchr.org) <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>
- Tóth, T. and Topa, Z. (2014). Winner or Loser of the Nile River Basin? The Economic Role of Sudan in the Nile Region. *Selye e-Studies*, 2014 http://old.e-studies.ups.sk/en/homepage/doc_download/62-winner-or-loser-of-the-nile-river-basin-the-economic-role-of-sudan-in-the-nile-region.html UN Charter, (1945). The National Archives of the United Nations <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/united-nations-charter>
- UNEP (2007). United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). Population Displacement and the Environment, Sudan: PostConflictEnvironmental Assessment. 358p. ISBN: 978-92-807-2702-9 https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/22234/UNEP_Sudan_PCEA_2007.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- UNHCR (2023). Ethiopia Situation: UNHCR Regional Update. Retrieved. UNHCR, Geneva <https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/103797>
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Internally Displaced People. <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/internally-displaced-people.html>
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (1948). GA Res 217(III) UN Doc A/810, Article 13. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, G.A. res. 217A (III), U.N. Doc A/810 at 71 (1948). United Nations, <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>
- Van der Ploeg, L. and Vanclay, F. (2017). A Human Rights Based Approach to Project Induced Displacement and Resettlement. *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal*, 35(1), 34–52. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14615517.2016.1271538>
- Vasa, L., Radulescu, A., Vida, I. (2021). Regulation issues of the Ugandan financial sector. *Economics & Working Capital* 2021(1-2) 51-56. <http://eworkcapital.com/regulation-issues-of-the-ugandan-financial-sector/>
- Vecchio, F. (2017). Asylum Seeker Materiality and Identity-Building: Shapers of Socio-legal Incarceration. In: Vecchio, F., Gerard, A. (eds) Entrapping Asylum Seekers. Transnational Crime, Crime Control and Security. Palgrave Macmillan, London. pp 247–270 https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-58739-8_10
- Vida, I. Spaller, E. and Vasa, L. (2020). Potential effects of Finance 4.0 on the employment in East Africa. *Economy and Sociology / Economie si Sociologie*, (2) 29-42. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36004/nier.es.2020.2-03>



ADDRESSING ILLEGAL MIGRATION IN TUNISIA: THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY APPROACH

HAJER TRABELSI

PHD STUDENT, DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS,
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
HAJERTRABELSI920@YAHOO.FR

Abstract

Following the 2011 revolution, Tunisia has grappled with a significant challenge posed by illegal migration, a complex issue shaped by an interplay of economic, political, and regional dynamics. High unemployment rates and limited economic opportunities compel many Tunisians to seek better prospects abroad, often resorting to irregular migration channels. Even more, political instability and conflicts in neighbouring regions have exacerbated this situation, acting as a push factor that propels individuals to seek refuge beyond their homeland. The resultant surge in undocumented migrants has transformed the country into a transit hub. This upsurge not only strains Tunisia's limited resources but also brings about social and economic consequences, impacting public services and intensifying competition in the job market. Effectively addressing this issue demands a comprehensive approach, necessitating reforms in economic policies, legal frameworks, and international collaboration. This policy brief advocates for a holistic approach, integrating domestic initiatives with international cooperation to confront the intricate challenge of illegal migration in Tunisia.

Keywords

illegal migration, Tunisia, economy, unemployment.

Received: September 24, 2024 | 1st Revision: October 30, 2024 | Accepted: December 16, 2024

Trabelsi, Hajer (2024). Addressing Illegal Migration in Tunisia: The Need for A Comprehensive Policy Approach. Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 21-28.

1. Scope of the Problem

Illegal migration in Tunisia is a multifaceted challenge rooted in a complex interplay of economic, political, and regional factors. The country suffers from high unemployment rates, mounting poverty and limited economic opportunities, forcing a significant number of Tunisians to seek better prospects abroad. Tunisia's economy was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, further exacerbating already-existing economic challenges. As of June 2023, the unemployment rate in Tunisia reached 15.6%, which is considered a drop from the all-time high of 18.9% in December 2011 (National Institute of Statistics, 2023).

In the same vein, the economic downturn in recent years further strained the country's democratic institutions and fuelled public frustration as the budget deficit reached 7.7 % in December 2022 (AI Monitor, 2022). In January 2021, protests erupted across Tunisia, exacerbated by anger over economic hardship, unemployment, and government corruption. Demonstrations took place in various regions, with protesters demanding political and economic reforms that were expected after the 2011 uprising. The government's response to these protests and its ability to address the underlying issues remain crucial for maintaining the stability of Tunisia's young democracy and addressing the surge of irregular and illegal migration in the country. Other financial strains in the country include food shortage and the rise of imported staples such as grains, sugar and vegetable oil, which are all repercussions of the war in Ukraine (Rahali, 2022). Increases in the price of goods led to the rise of the inflation rate in the country from 6.7% in January 2022 to 7.3% in June 2024 (Institut National de Statistiques, 2022/2024). As a result of the country's ailing economic situation and poor purchasing power, the poverty level in the country hit a record of roughly 4 million Tunisians according to the Minister of Social Affairs (Echaabnews, 2022). Dire economic conditions and inefficient governance challenge Tunisia, boosting interest in irregular migration especially among the young who desire to leave the country in search of better opportunities and prospects abroad (Abderrahim, 2023).

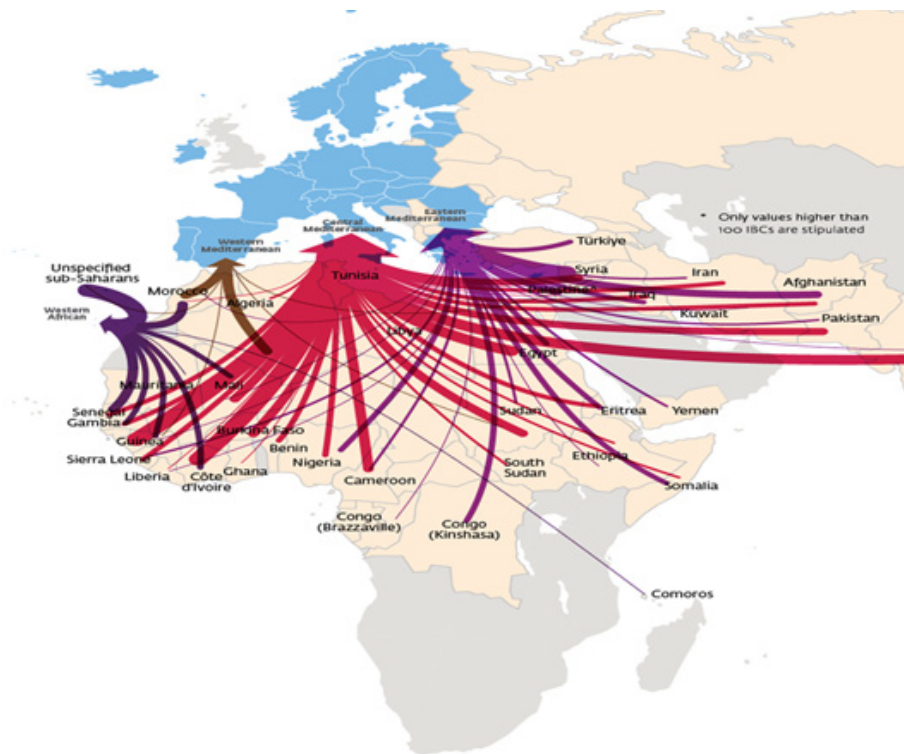
The lack of viable legal avenues often leads individuals to resort to irregular migration channels such as Lampedusa and recently Serbia, contributing to the rise in undocumented migration. Additionally, political instability in the country and conflicts in neighbouring regions act as prominent push factors, propelling individuals to seek refuge beyond Tunisia's borders. The resultant influx of undocumented migrants from Libya, Algeria and sub-Saharan countries not only strains the country's resources but also has far-reaching social and economic consequences. Overcrowded public services, increased job market competition, and potential social tensions underscore the urgency of addressing this pervasive problem.

According to a recent report by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, the population of illegal foreign migrants living in Tunisia has expanded since 2020. Though the exact number remains unclear, Ivorians and Guineans are believed to be the most numerous, with estimates of 8,000 to 20,000 Ivorians and

7,000 Guineans. Other nationalities in the country include Malians, Sudanese and Cameroonians (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2024).

A key issue to highlight is the rise of racism and xenophobic tensions in Tunisia in recent years following the increasingly visible presence of sub-Saharan migrants in the country (Abderrahim, 2023). Anti-migrant sentiments have risen sharply considering the challenging economic situation of the country and the controversial statements from Tunisian leadership, accusing sub-Saharan migrants of contributing to crime and economic instability. In February 2023, President Kais Saied claimed that the arrival of these undocumented migrants is but a part of a plot to weaken the country's identity and change its demographic landscape (Le Monde, 2023).

Tunisia is considered to be a transit country for many undocumented migrants from sub-Saharan countries who embark on risky journeys to Europe. The acute socio-economic crisis in the country together with the growing presence of these irregular migrants primarily in Sfax and Greater Tunis have led to the country's leaders framing this societal problem as a threat to national security (Assabah News, 2021).



 *Figure 1: Migratory Routes into Europe*
Source: Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (2023)

Political instability has significantly shaped the irregular migration landscape in Tunisia. Episodes of political unrest, ambiguity, and transitions since the 2011 uprising have played a pivotal role in encouraging irregular migrants to leave the country. In this sense, the absence of political stability generates a sense of insecurity, compelling people to embark on irregular migration journeys in pursuit of a more stable and secure life. Moreover, concerns related to restricted political freedoms and instances of human rights abuses amplify the factors propelling individuals to engage in irregular migration channels. In fact, ever since President Kais Saied dissolved the elected parliament and seized most of the powers in his hands in July 2021, basic rights and freedoms have been jeopardized and major political opponents have been jailed (Human Rights Watch, 2023). On the eve of the presidential elections, which were held on October 6, 2024, tensions rose across the country. A pre-election assault was waged as more opposition members were arrested or harassed while judicial independence was undermined. Three candidates, including Saied, were approved by Tunisia's Electoral Commission to run October's presidential election, ignoring a court ruling to reinstate three different people (Human Rights Watch, 2024).

The intricate dynamics of political instability not only diminish confidence in the domestic political process but also act as a catalyst for those seeking refuge in regions perceived as politically more stable. Recognizing the profound impact of the troubled economic and political context on irregular migration underscores the necessity for comprehensive policies. These policies should not only address the root causes of political and economic instability but also account for the associated consequences on migration patterns in Tunisia.

2. Policy Alternatives and Recommendations

Despite the surge of illegal migrants from Tunisia and the growing number of maritime departures from the country to European shores, the dossier of illegal and irregular migration remained low political priority until 2023 (Abderrahim, 2023). Official Italian figures disclose that at least 12,083 individuals arrived to Italy from the Tunisian coast from the start of 2023 until 13 March of the same year. This number reflects an increase of 788% compared to the same period in 2022 (Agenzia Nova, 2023). According to a report by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime in 2024, an estimated 97,306 migrants arrived to Italy from Tunisia in 2023, just over three times as many as in 2022 (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2024). Security-based approaches were used by governments to curb the number of illegal departures from Tunisian shores. Considering the troubled political context and the ailing economy of the country, socio-economic and political reforms have been publicly demanded and prioritized by different governments since the 2011 uprising. It was only after tragic boat disappearance off the coast of Zarzis in September 2022 that President Saied started voicing this alarming issue when he promised to ensure accountability for any shortcomings in the handling of the tragedy. In July 2023, the Tunisia Interior Ministry announced that more than

900 migrants have drowned off Tunisia's coast in their perilous sea voyages to Europe (France 24, 2023).

Strengthening measures to control borders is a critical aspect in addressing the complexities of illegal migration not only in Tunisia but also in North Africa and the Sahel region. This unequivocally requires a coherent and multifaceted strategy to fortify the country's boundaries and regulate the movement of individuals across them. Considering the geographical proximity between Tunisia and Europe, the imperative for effective border control should be amplified. This entails deploying advanced surveillance technologies such as radar systems, drones, and monitoring equipment to augment situational awareness along the borders. Simultaneously, bolstering the number of skilled personnel including border patrol agents and immigration officers is imperative to sustain a robust and vigilant presence. To support these initiatives, the European Commission agreed to disburse a package worth 67 million euros aimed at strengthening Tunisia's capacities to combat human traffickers and tighten border controls (Hayden, 2023). In July 2023, the EU and Tunisia signed a memorandum of understanding for a financial assistance loan of 900 million euros, contingent upon an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program (EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding, 2023). The macro loan encompasses budgetary support and a generous aid package intended to strengthen economic ties and fight irregular migration (Carnegie Middle East Center, 2024).

A critical dimension of enhanced border control involves upgrading infrastructure. This may encompass the construction of physical barriers such as fences or walls strategically placed to discourage illegal crossings. Improved infrastructure serves not only as a deterrent but also streamlines the processing of legal border crossings, thereby contributing to overall border security. Collaboration with neighbouring countries – primarily European counterparts – is indispensable, with joint initiatives like intelligence sharing and coordinated patrols fortifying regional security and addressing the inherent challenges posed by illegal migration. Moreover, the integration of biometric technology and modern databases plays a prominent role in elevating the effectiveness of border control. This enables more precise identification and tracking of individuals entering or exiting the country. The technological synergy forms the basis of a comprehensive border management system, addressing security imperatives while facilitating the flow of legal trade and travel. Implemented judiciously, enhanced border control measures significantly

Despite the surge of illegal migrants from Tunisia and the growing number of maritime departures from the country to European shores, the dossier of illegal and irregular migration remained low political priority until 2023.

augment a country's capacity to manage migration, fortify national security, and fulfil international obligations.

Legislative reforms represent a fundamental avenue for addressing the multifaceted challenges associated with illegal and irregular migration in Tunisia. A comprehensive approach often involves revising and fortifying immigration laws to provide authorities with the necessary tools to manage migration flow effectively. This may include amendments to enhance border enforcement, streamline legal immigration pathways, and impose stricter penalties for illegal entry or residence. By establishing clear legal frameworks, Tunisia can better regulate the status of migrants within its borders while upholding human rights standards. Legislative reforms can also focus on creating pathways for legal migration, facilitating processes for asylum seekers and implementing mechanisms for repatriation or deportation in cases of irregular residence.

Additionally, reforms may address issues related to human trafficking, smuggling, and the protection of vulnerable migrant populations from Tunisia, neighbouring countries and Sub-Saharan countries. Ensuring that the legal framework aligns with international norms and conventions is crucial for fostering cooperation with the global community. Public awareness campaigns may accompany legislative reforms to educate citizens about the legal implications of illegal migration and the avenues available for legal entry. Overall, legislative reforms play a pivotal role in shaping a coherent and just response to illegal migration, providing the legal foundation for enforcement agencies, protecting the rights of migrants, and promoting international collaboration in addressing this complex issue.

International cooperation stands as a cornerstone in the efforts to effectively address illegal migration in Tunisia. Given the transnational nature of migration, collaborative initiatives with neighbouring countries and international organizations are essential for developing comprehensive strategies. Tunisia's engagement with European countries and regional partners is critical for fostering a coordinated response to migration challenges. This cooperation extends beyond mere information exchange to include joint operations, intelligence sharing, and the development of regional policies that address the root causes of migration. Diplomatic efforts to establish agreements on repatriation, border management, and the protection of human rights contribute to a cohesive and unified approach.

Furthermore, collaboration with international organizations, such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) enables Tunisia to access resources, expertise, and best practices in managing migration flow. These partnerships facilitate capacity-building initiatives for Tunisian authorities, ensuring that they are well-equipped to address the complexities of irregular migration. By actively participating in regional and global dialogues on migration, Tunisia can contribute to shaping international frameworks that balance security concerns with humanitarian principles. Strengthening international cooperation not only enhances Tunisia's ability to manage its

own migration challenges but also fosters a shared responsibility and solidarity in addressing the broader global issue of migration.

3. Conclusion

For years, Tunisia has been facing the complex and evolving challenge of irregular migration, which is shaped by a daunting mix of economic insecurity, social inequality and political volatility. Chronic instability in the Sahel region and neighbouring countries such as Libya and Sudan has further aggravated the situation with waves of outbound migration that transformed the country into a transit hub of undocumented migrants to Europe. Addressing illegal migration in Tunisia necessitates a comprehensive approach that includes enhanced border control measures, legislative reforms, and robust international cooperation. Adopting this holistic strategy is required for Tunisia to effectively manage the challenges of illegal migration and safeguard national security. Once effectively implemented, these concerted efforts can create a sustainable framework that not only mitigates the complexities of illegal migration within Tunisia's borders but also aligns with international standards, contributing to shared understanding and cooperative solutions on the global stage. ✨

References

- Abderrahim, Tasnim. (2023). Tunisia increased fragility fuels migration surge. *Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime*, 2-32.
- Blaise, Lilia. (2023). Tunisia's President Saied claims sub-Saharan migrants threaten country's identity. *Le Monde*. (2023, February 23). https://www.lemonde.fr/en/le-monde-africa/article/2023/02/23/in-tunisia-president-kais-saied-claims-sub-saharan-migrants-threaten-country-s-identity_6016898_124.html
- EU-Tunisia Memorandum of Understanding (2023). European Parliament. (2023, July 16). [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2023/751467/EPRS_ATA\(2023\)751467_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2023/751467/EPRS_ATA(2023)751467_EN.pdf)
- Hayden, Jones. EU finalizes migrant deal with Tunisia. *Politico*. (2023, July 16). <https://www.politico.eu/article/eu-migration-deal-tunisia-migrants-africa-european-commission/>
- Inflation (glissement annuel). Institut National de la Statistique. (2023, December 7). <https://www.ins.tn/statistiques/90>
- Inflation (glissement annuel). Institut National de la Statistique. (2024, September 16). <https://www.ins.tn/en/statistiques/90>
- Khawaja, Bassam. (2024). Tunisia's electoral commission paves the way for Kais Saied's second term. *Human Rights Watch*. (2024, September 4). <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/04/tunisia-electoral-commission-paves-way-kais-saieds-second-term>
- Meddeb, Hamza and Louati, Fakhreddine. (2024). Tunisia's transformation into a transit Hub: Illegal migration and policy dilemmas. *Carnegie Middle East Center*. (2024, March). <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2024/03/tunisia-transformation-into-a-transit-hub-illegal-migration-and-policy-dilemmas?lang=en>
- Migratory Routes. (2023). FRONTEX European Border and Coast Guard Agency. <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/what-we-do/monitoring-and-risk-analysis/migratory-routes/migratory-routes/>
- Rahali, Chiraz. 2022. *يف تاي داصتقالا تقنخ برحلا ةنخدأ: تمثاق قافأ عم*. *Le Maghreb*. (2023, January 3).

- Tunisia Irregular Migration Reaches Unprecedented Levels. (2024). Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. (2024, August). <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Tunisia-Irregular-migration-reaches-unprecedented-levels-GI-TOC-August-2024.pdf>
- Tunisia overtakes Libya in the irregular routes of migrants to arrive in Italy by sea. (2023, March 13). *Agenzia Nova*. <https://www.agenzianova.com/en/news/Tunisia-overtakes-Libya-in-the-irregular-routes-of-migrants-to-arrive-in-Italy-by-sea/>
- Tunisia says 900 migrants drowned off its coast this year. France 24. (2023, July 27). <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20230727-almost-800-migrants-drowned-off-tunisia-in-six-months-national-guard>
- Tunisia to raise new taxes to close budget deficit. *Al Monitor*. (2022, December 26) <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2022/12/tunisia-raise-new-taxes-close-budgetdeficit>
- Tunisia Unemployment Rate. National Institute of Statistics. (2011-2023). <https://www.ceic-data.com/en/indicator/tunisia/unemploymentrate#:~:text=Tunisia%20Unemployment%20Rate%20dropped%20to,an%20average%20rate%20of%2015.50%25>
- World Report 2023, Tunisia. Human Rights Watch. (2023). <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/tunisia>
- هل تفتوقوم لبانق ىلإ سنوت يف نوق راجال أقرافال ل وحت له *Assabah News*. (2021, October 02).
- ىعسنسو ةحيضفو ةميرج وه سنوت يف اريقف نبيالم 6 ةبارق دوجو “..ةيعامتجال نووشل ريزو رقفل ا ةحفالكمل ةديج جماربب ةيعامتجال ا ةلودل ضرفل *Echaab News*. (2022, May 26).

THE COMPULSORY STUDY OF MANDARIN BY AFRICAN STUDENTS AT CHINESE UNIVERSITIES: A SOFT POWER TOOL?

EMMANUEL FRIMPONG SARPONG, PHD CANDIDATE
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM NINGBO CHINA
EMMANUELSARPONG@NOTTINGHAM.EDU.CN

DOMINIC WINSTON KAKU, M.A. ECONOMICS
RENMIN UNIVERSITY OF CHINA
DOMINICKAKU34@RUC.EDU.CN

ISTVÁN TARRÓSY (CORR. AUTHOR), PHD, DR HABIL, PROFESSOR
UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
TARROSY.ISTVAN@PTE.HU



Abstract

The 2019/2021 Afrobarometer survey data show that only two percent of Africans view Mandarin as a desirable international language for young people to learn. This indicates that Beijing's attempts to enhance its cultural soft power in Africa through language promotion have had limited success. This project aims to further explore this finding by examining the perspectives of the compulsory study of Mandarin among African student migrants who have studied or are currently studying in China. We employed a descriptive survey design with quantitative data collected through questionnaires from a sample of 315 former and present African students in China. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected, including frequencies, percentages, standard deviations, and means. Contrary to the Afrobarometer survey results, African students in China greatly value learning Mandarin. The majority believe that proficiency in Mandarin makes them valuable members of society. They also desire Mandarin to be taught more widely in their home countries and view China as an attractive destination due to their Mandarin language skills. These results suggest that while the general African public may not be attracted to Mandarin, African migrant students with direct experience in China have a more positive perception of the language and its benefits. This highlights the need for future studies on Chinese soft power in Africa, as the perspectives of specific subgroups may differ from broader public opinion.

Keywords

Mandarin, African students, China, Soft power

Received: November 26, 2023 | 1st Revision: September 25, 2024 | Accepted: February 16, 2025

Sarpong, Emmanuel Frimpong - Kaku, Dominic Winston - Tarrósy, István (2024). The Compulsory Study of Mandarin by African Students at Chinese Universities: A Soft Power Tool? Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 29-44.

1. Introduction

In recent times, China has evolved into a global powerhouse in various spheres, including education, culture, media, economy, agriculture, and technology (Chow 2015, 93-115; Cai 2010, 234-240; Yu 2009, 1-4; Song, Zhou and Hurst 2019, 1-8; Vörös 2022, 4-5). This evolution has triggered a surge in trading activities and an increasing demand for Chinese education among international students seeking enrollment in Chinese academic institutions. Additionally, the Chinese economy has progressively emerged as an attractive destination for African students. Consequently, there has been a noticeable increase in African students pursuing education at Chinese universities and other educational establishments (Tarrósy 2020, 28-29). Many of these Chinese universities, in line with the Chinese government's internationalization strategy, mandate Mandarin language studies for international students, including those from Africa. In the early stages of their study, almost all international students are required to learn Mandarin. In June 2017, the Chinese Ministry responsible for education published new rules that made the study of Mandarin compulsory for international students. While some people argue that these Chinese institutions have made learning Mandarin for foreign students mandatory to promote cross-cultural exchange and improve communication, others are of the view that this may be part of Beijing's cultural soft power strategy in a global landscape.

As the global competition for influence grows more intense, Beijing utilizes soft power as a strategic tool to shape African perceptions and ideas. Through significant investments in manufacturing, technology, and infrastructure in various African countries, Beijing goes beyond physical development to promote Chinese culture and language. By prioritizing the promotion of the Chinese language, Beijing aims to strengthen cultural ties and expand its influence in the region. This effort includes substantial investments in establishing Confucius Institutes (CI) and Confucius Classrooms (CC) as part of its comprehensive soft power strategy (Hefele, Merkle & Zhivkov 2015, 56-72). As of 2023, China had established "773 CC and 498 CI in 160 different countries" (China Daily, 2023). According to a report by the Africa-China Centre for Policy and Advisory (ACCPA), Africa hosts 48 Confucius Classrooms (CC) and 61 Confucius Institutes (CI).

China's objective is to enhance understanding of its culture and values through Mandarin education, aiming to bolster commercial and diplomatic relationships. Nonetheless, concerns arise regarding Beijing's potential 'colonization' through its language-focused soft power endeavors in Africa. These concerns may impact China's culture-driven soft power strategy in Africa, as A'Zami (2015) discussed in relation to neocolonialism and Beijing's influence consolidation on the continent.

■ **As the global competition for influence grows more intense, Beijing utilizes soft power as a strategic tool to shape African perceptions and ideas.**

Although there is a wealth of literature on African student migrants studying Mandarin in Chinese higher education, there is still a lack of research concerning the personal perspectives of these individuals. Therefore, we aim to focus on this demographic to explore their motivations and the subtler influences at play. This empirical paradigm seeks to answer our four research questions:

1. How do African student migrants value Mandarin education in their academic institutions?
2. What is the correlation between perceived societal value and Mandarin proficiency among African student migrants?
3. How is the teaching of Mandarin perceived in the home country context?
4. What impact does learning the Chinese language have on the attractiveness of China for individuals?

A total of 315 former and current African student migrants from Suzhou, Shanghai, Beijing, and Nanjing were randomly selected for participation in a descriptive survey to gather data on the mandatory Mandarin language curriculum within their institutions.

This study builds upon existing research that has contributed to understanding African student educational mobility in China and its impact on Chinese soft power initiatives. Some pieces based on fieldwork explore how China's "African policy" has facilitated the movement of Africans – primarily students, traders, and entrepreneurs – to cities like Guangzhou, which is known as a hub for African business (Tarrósy 2020, 20-36). Kenneth King looks at how China uses education and training programs as key tools in its soft power strategy in Africa. He argues that China leverages educational and training opportunities to build goodwill and strengthen ties with African nations. Scholarships for African students to study in China, as well as training programs for African professionals, are central to this strategy (King 2013). In "Africans in China: The Experiences from Education and Training," Adams Bodomo, through his fieldwork, explores the experiences of African students and professionals who have traveled to China for education and training programs. He examines the broader context of China-Africa relations through the lens of African migrants pursuing educational opportunities. He argues that African students are offered scholarships and opportunities to study in Chinese universities as part of China's efforts to promote its soft power and build goodwill and influence (Bodomo 2014).

2. The Soft Power of Mandarin: A Literature Review

The conceptualization of Chinese soft power among African student migrants in China has been scarce, and expanding the relevant knowledge corpus requires immediate scholarly attention. Therefore, this research project seeks to highlight this demographic's perceptions.

According to the 2019/2021 Afrobarometer survey, only two percent of Africans consider Mandarin an important language to learn. Therefore, scholars must inves-

tigate whether this perspective aligns with the beliefs of the African population in China.

Soft power has consistently been portrayed as a non-coercive and persuasive force in International Relations. The concept introduced by Joseph Nye refers to the non-coercive methods through which a country can influence others. Instead of using force or coercion, this approach relies on attraction and persuasion to win over others. Nye avers that “soft power rests on the ability to shape the preferences of others” (Nye 2004, 5). Nye asserts that there are three things that give rise to soft power: cultural enticement, attractive political doctrines, and appealing foreign policies and actions.

Amitai Etzioni explores the distinction between different types of power and highlights that “power differs according to the means employed to make the subject comply. These means may be physical, material, or symbolic” (Etzioni 1975, 6). This includes three categories of power: coercive, remunerative, and normative. This latest category “relies on the capacity to motivate through the force of ideas and win compliance through creating group norms with which individuals wish to identify” (Lampton 2008, 10). David Lampton broadens Etzioni’s concept into “ideational power,” which, as he underlines, “includes leadership, human intellectual resources, innovation, and culture [...], which is broader than soft power” (ibid).

Other notable scholars have written extensively on soft power to support Nye’s core idea. These scholars conceptualized power as the ability to control immaterial and ethereal things like information, culture, perception, opinion, and ideology (Foucault 1980; Gramsci 1971; Butler 1997). Gramsci argues that a country’s power is not solely based on tangible resources such as military strength or economic wealth but also on intangible resources like culture and language. He suggests that cultural and linguistic hegemony plays a crucial role in maintaining and exerting power. Countries use cultural and linguistic dominance to shape subordinate classes’ values, beliefs, and identities, thereby maintaining their control over society. By controlling the cultural and linguistic sphere, the ruling class can shape the worldview and consciousness of the masses, making them more compliant and less likely to challenge the existing power structures.

Language serves a pivotal role as a soft power instrument in International Relations, as emphasized by Kurlantzick (2007) and Wang (2007). Given its inseparable linkage with culture, language holds the power to mold perceptions, foster connections, and wield influence. A nation can amplify its soft power dynamics by advocating for its language as a universal means of communication (Li 2008). Specifically concerning Mandarin, its endorsement as a crucial foreign language for study forms a fundamental aspect of Beijing’s comprehensive soft power approach, as highlighted by Gil (2008) and Yang (2015). Numerous scholars focused on the Africa-China relationship are increasingly exploring the impact of CIs on Chinese soft power initiatives. The establishment of CIs has facilitated broader access to Chinese language education and bolstered Chinese soft power by facilitating cross-cultural exchanges. In examining the global implications of CIs on Chinese soft

power strategy, Kenneth King offers valuable insights toward a nuanced comprehension of the significance of their existence: “[...] the CIs are currently light years away from the impact of McDonald’s or Hollywood blockbusters [...] They have altogether a more modest ambition than global competition for influence with the West. That would be wishful thinking. Their goal is to encourage hundreds of thousands of people to see a China that is different from how it is often presented in the West” (King 2013, 178). It is clear that perceptions significantly influence our ability to win the hearts and minds of others. This aspect should not be underestimated.

Blanchard and Lu (2012) offer a contrasting perspective on the role of language as a soft power tool. Their critique highlights the need to consider multiple soft power variables beyond language in the soft power discourse. They caution against solely focusing on the increase in Chinese language learners without a comparative analysis of other languages like Arabic, French, and Spanish. They caution Chinese soft power scholars and learners that drawing any conclusion on increasing one of the Chinese soft power variables, such as language, without a corresponding measure of other states or actors may result in skewed interpretations. Therefore, “while a dramatic percentage increase in the number of individuals studying Chinese has taken place, this fact may not be important if an even greater percentage increase has taken place in the number of individuals studying Arabic, French and Spanish” (Blanchard and Lu 2012, 570 citing Ding and Saunders 2006).

3. Mandarin as a soft power tool: the Case of the Afrobarometer Survey of 2019/20

China’s growing presence in Africa has recently become increasingly complex and multi-faceted. While economic investment and infrastructure projects often dominate discussions, the concept of soft power has also come into focus. This research project’s understanding of soft power is based on the Nyeian sense, i.e., a nation’s ability to influence others through cultural values, political ideals, and attractive

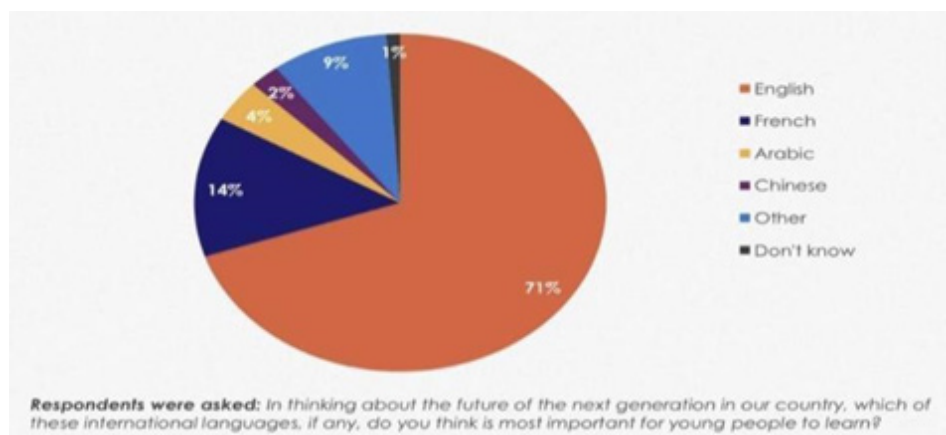


Figure 1. A pie chart showing the best international language for children to learn.
Source: Afrobarometer survey 2019/2020.

policies. However, the 2019/20 Afrobarometer survey revealed that a mere two percent of Africans view the Chinese language as desirable for children to learn, emphasizing the limitations of China's soft power in Africa. The survey rehashes the notion that China's soft power in Africa is not based on cultural attraction, particularly language. This revelation calls for research addressing the gap in the literature by examining perceptions of the importance of the Chinese language among African communities residing in China.

4. Why do African Students in China present an interesting case population to study?

The scholarly discourse on China–Africa relations in the 21st century has shown a notable increase in research output. This trend can be traced back to the historical foundations established during the era of Mao Zedong (Sarpong & Duho, 2022). The ongoing interaction between China and Africa is characterized by continual social, economic, and geopolitical shifts (Alden 2011). Notably, China's comprehensive Africa policy, exemplified by the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) convened in 2000, has facilitated and intensified China's involvement with the African continent (Tarrósy 2020, 22). These persistent transformations underscore the African community as an intriguing subject of study.

Within China, the African student migrant community represents the second-largest demographic after the African business community. This demographic is a tangible symbol of the deepening engagements between Beijing and Africa. In 1956, there were only 4 African students in China, but by 2018, nearly 81,000 African students were studying and living in the country (China Daily, 2023).

This demographic shift highlights the burgeoning African student community, offering a valuable vantage point to explore China–Africa interactions from diverse African and Chinese standpoints through their integration and interactions within the local context.

The African student migrant community in China is a unique population that offers an opportunity to rethink the conversation around China–Africa relations. By exploring the perceptions, experiences, and perspectives of Africans living outside their home continent, we can gain insights into their cultural, economic, social, and diplomatic engagements and interactions. It is crucial to understand how the experiences and perceptions of Africans living in China shape their relations. This knowledge can aid in filling any research gaps that may exist in the scholarly works on China–Africa relations.

5. The Case of African Students in China: Suzhou, Shanghai, Ningbo, and Nanjing

Suzhou, Shanghai, Beijing, and Nanjing remain home to some of China's top universities, as well as a large number of African students. African students studying in these cities can access world-class facilities, expert faculty, and cutting-edge research opportunities. A comprehensive study for African students in these Chinese cities provides an important reference for the achievements and success of the Chinese language as a soft power 'element' among Africans outside the African continent.

6. Methodology

The study used a descriptive research survey design between January and April 2023. The study population was comprised of former and current international students from universities in China. The participants of the study were selected randomly, irrespective of their programs of study or gender.

Primary data was collected from a sampling size of 315 African students who have studied or are presently studying in China. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 305 students for the study.

7. Ethical Considerations

This research project adhered strictly to the generally accepted research ethics and guidelines. The interview process was guided by the principles of approval, full disclosure, voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality.

Respondents were notified of the aims and goals of the research before seeking their participation. Also, disclosures relating to any interests in the project were disclosed. The authors of the research were fully disclosed to safeguard the integrity and credibility of the research and its findings. Confidentiality is a crucial agreement between the researcher and the respondent. According to Anderson (1998), researchers must fulfill ethical requirements regarding confidentiality by refraining from disclosing the information provided by respondents and other participants to third parties without obtaining their consent. The information gathered from respondents and research participants is treated with the utmost trust and confidentiality.

Participants were informed that their involvement in the project was voluntary. The project organizers allowed sufficient time for respondents to read and understand the requirements of the information being sought. They were also allowed to ask questions and seek clarification on any ambiguous issues. Furthermore, research participants were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time without needing to provide an explanation. If they chose to withdraw, it would not incur any costs or negatively affect the relationship between the researchers and the participants.

Respondents were given a consent form indicating their willingness to partake in the project. They were free to withdraw at any time during the data collection process, even after giving their consent. They were not required to give an explanation for their withdrawal, and had no liability for their withdrawal.

8. Demographic information

Demographic information is essential in surveys as it offers valuable insights into the characteristics and backgrounds of respondents. This information is crucial for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the target population. The research project focused on African students from diverse backgrounds, considering factors such as nationality, age, gender, length of stay in China, and level of education.

Most respondents were between the ages of 25 and 29 (representing 48.70%). One respondent was above the age of 40. This demographic information provides relevant insight into how perspectives and experiences vary across different age groups.

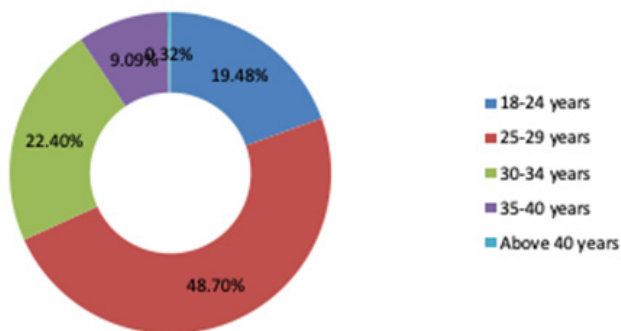


Figure 2. Demographic information: age

The nationalities of each respondent were grouped according to their region in Africa: North, East, West, and South. There were no respondents from Central Africa.

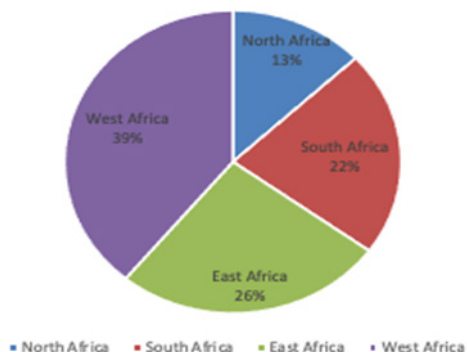
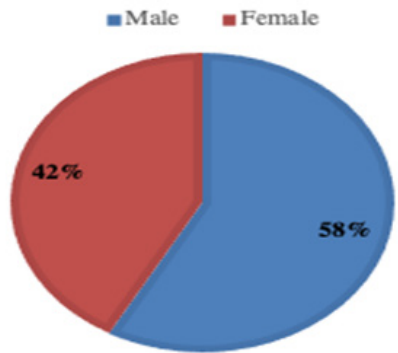


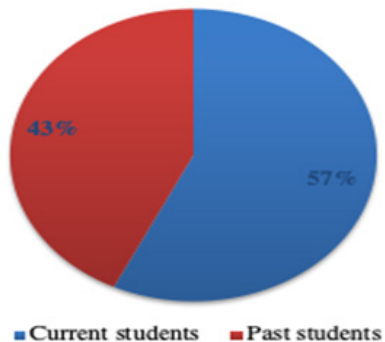
Figure 3. Demographic information: nationality

Information about gender in the survey offered valuable information on how the different genders perceive Chinese soft power. Gender can influence preferences, attitudes, and behaviors. Close to two-thirds of respondents were males, and the remaining were female.



^ Figure 4. Demographic information: gender

The survey population consisted of both current and former African students in China. The majority of participants, representing 63.8% of the total, were African students currently studying in the country.



^ Figure 5. Demographic information: student status

The question “How long have you been studying/studied in China?” was posed to the respondents to find out their duration of stay in China. Information on duration of stay can be relevant in surveys that focus on migration or specific regions. It can provide insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals who have lived in a particular area for different lengths of time.

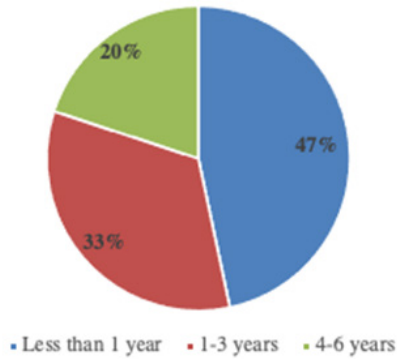


Figure 6. Demographic Information: duration of stay

The level of education of respondents in this survey is an important demographic characteristic that provided insights into perspectives and opinions. This research highlights the education level of respondents for several reasons. First, knowing the education level of respondents allows for the analysis of data based on different educational backgrounds, which can help identify any patterns or trends that may exist. It allows for the analysis of data based on different educational backgrounds, which can help identify any patterns or trends that may exist. It also provides a basis to examine how the opinions of respondents are influenced by their academic qualifications, which can impact their responses to survey questions.

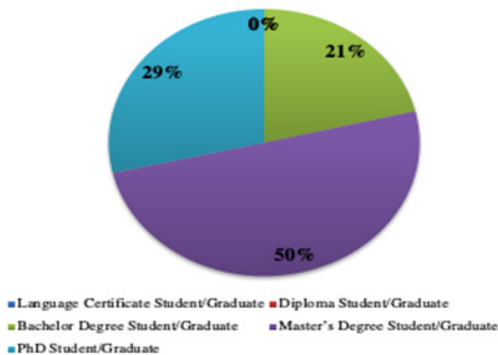


Figure 7. Demographic Information: educational qualification

In terms of investigating the socio-economic dimensions of the African students, questions about whether the each of them were beneficiaries of Chinese scholarship (including but not limited to a Government, Provincial or University scholarship) and if so whether the scholarships are partial or fully funded. It is important to mention that the type of scholarship may affect the overall experience.

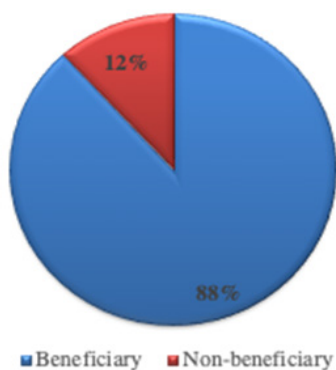


Figure 8. Authors' own construct: Demographic information (scholarship beneficiary)

Fully funded scholarships typically cover tuition, accommodation, and living expenses, allowing students to focus on their studies. Partial scholarships, however, may leave students struggling to cover the remaining costs, which could affect their academic and mandarin learning performance and motivation. The overwhelming majority were on beneficiaries of fully funded scholarships.

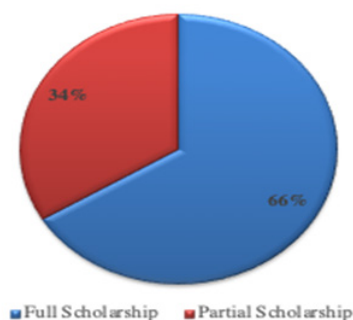


Figure 9. Authors' own construct: Demographic information (nature of scholarship)

9. Presentation of Results

Questionnaire	Mean Score*	Standard Deviation	Frequency
To what extent do you appreciate the learning of Mandarin in your school as an international student?	4.25	0.57	315
To what extent do you think that your Mandarin proficiency makes you an ideal person in society?	4.26	0.79	315
How do you value the teaching of Mandarin in your home country?	4.29	0.80	315
To what extent does learning the Chinese language makes China attractive to you?	4.36	0.79	315

Table 1. Authors' construct. Source: Field data, 2023.

*Mean ranges: Very Low Rating (1.0-1.9), Low Rating (2.0-2.9), High Rating (3.0-3.9), Very High Rating (4.0-4.9).

Research Question 1: To what extent do you appreciate the learning of Mandarin in your school as an international student? This survey question aims to determine how the study of Mandarin influences respondents' perceptions and attractions toward China. The data indicates that respondents greatly appreciate learning the Chinese language at their institutions (mean=4.25, SD=0.57). This suggests that international students value the opportunity to study Mandarin, as it enhances their learning experience. The findings indicate that the study of Mandarin among African students reflects a positive reception of Chinese language and culture. This can be interpreted as a form of soft power, demonstrating that China's cultural influence extends to African students in China who choose to learn Mandarin.

Research Question 2: To what extent do you think that your Mandarin proficiency makes you an ideal person in society? The result gives evidence that respondents have the view that their level of Mandarin proficiency contributes highly to the ideal persons they become in society (mean=4.26, SD=.79). This indicates that most African students believe their proficiency in Mandarin positively influences their personalities within society. This perception suggests that being proficient in Mandarin is considered valuable and beneficial. When examining Chinese soft power, this finding implies that Mandarin proficiency significantly enhances China's cultural influence and appeal. It indicates that effective communication in Mandarin can help foster positive perceptions of China and its culture.

Research Question 3: How do you value the teaching of the Chinese language in your home country? The result shows that the respondents highly value the teaching of the Chinese language in their home countries (mean=4.29, SD=.08). When analyzing this survey result in the context of Chinese soft power, this result con-

cludes that the teaching of the Chinese language in respondents' native countries can contribute to enhancing China's cultural influence and soft power. It suggests that there is a recognition of the importance of Chinese language education and a desire to engage with Chinese culture, which is an indication that there is a positive perception and interest in learning Chinese among the respondents.

Research Question 4: *To what extent does learning the Chinese language make China attractive to you?* The results revealed that learning the Chinese language significantly enhances China's attractiveness to international students (mean = 4.37, SD = .79). This indicates that proficiency in the Chinese language positively influences China's soft power among African students and that the ability to speak Chinese is perceived as a valuable skill, contributing to a favorable perception of China. To analyze Chinese soft power in this context, it is important to explore the reasons behind this positive response. Are the respondents interested in Chinese culture, business opportunities, or other aspects of China? Understanding the motivations behind their interest can help identify specific areas where China's soft power can be further enhanced.

10. Challenges

The data collection process encountered various challenges, notably in reaching participants due to the geographical dispersion of African students across multiple provinces and institutions in China. To mitigate this challenge, we utilized WeChat, a predominant social media and messaging platform in the country, to effectively disseminate the survey. This approach facilitated access to our target demographic but also introduced certain limitations along the process. For instance, we faced challenges in ensuring the comprehensive completion of the questionnaire, as some respondents raised concerns regarding privacy and data security on the platform. Additionally, the online survey format hindered follow-up with participants who began but did not finalize their responses.

Moreover, the potential for sampling bias emerged from our reliance on WeChat, which may have primarily reached students who were more digitally engaged and held favorable views of Mandarin learning. This reliance could skew the results, as those less connected to Chinese digital platforms or with less favorable experiences may have been underrepresented in the sample. To mitigate these challenges, we undertook concerted efforts to engage diverse student groups and promote broad participation across various regions and institutions in China.

Despite these challenges, our collected data yielded valuable insights into African students' perceptions of compulsory Mandarin learning in China. Nonetheless, these limitations highlight the necessity for future research to utilize a broader array of data collection methods. Such an approach would enhance representativeness and facilitate a more comprehensive exploration of the complexities surrounding African students' experiences in China.

11. Conclusion

This study reveals a striking contrast between the general African public's limited enthusiasm for Mandarin, as indicated by the 2019/2021 Afrobarometer survey, and the overwhelmingly positive perceptions held by African student migrants who are studying/studied in China. Our findings indicate that for these students, Mandarin transcends the status of a foreign language, emerging as a vital asset fundamentally connected to their professional and social aspirations. The data underscores the instrumental value attributed to Mandarin proficiency by African students, who perceive it as a crucial vehicle for enhanced career opportunities and social mobility within China and their home countries. This contrast between African students' views and the broader sentiments of the African public suggests that direct experience in China significantly transforms perceptions of Mandarin and its practical utility.

Our findings are in line with Xu et al. (2023, 524), highlighting African students' perception of Chinese "linguistic capital" as beneficial for employability and social prestige. Tarrósy (2020, 29-30) further highlights the widespread belief among these students that Chinese is a vital global language with significant instrumental value.

Since our survey was conducted, recent developments in 2024/25 have shown continued growth in African students pursuing education in China, even amidst global uncertainties. According to Pie News, the anticipated launch of the Plan for China-Africa Cooperation on Talent Development in late 2024 is expected to stimulate an increase in the enrollment of African students in Chinese universities and colleges. This initiative aims to enhance educational ties by implementing various programs and strategies. China's Belt and Road Initiative has deepened ties with several African countries, with educational exchange remaining a key pillar of this relationship. Mandarin language learning has become increasingly prominent in Africa, with several countries introducing it into school curricula as part of broader economic cooperation agreements. This signals a shift toward greater acceptance of Mandarin as a strategic language for international engagement, even if it has not yet translated into widespread enthusiasm among the general African public. These trends suggest that the role of Mandarin in shaping China-Africa relations will continue to evolve, with a growing number of African students leveraging their language skills for career advancement.

Given the limited sample size and scope of our research, there is a clear need for more expansive studies that examine a wider range of African student experiences in China and explore how these individuals' perceptions evolve post-graduation. Larger-scale research could provide more definitive insights into how Mandarin proficiency affects their long-term career trajectories and social standing upon returning to Africa. Additionally, future research should focus on comparative studies between African student migrants and other international student groups in China to gauge the broader implications of language learning within China's global soft power strategy. ✨

References

- A'Zami, D. (2015). 'China in Africa': From Under-researched to Under-theorised? *Millennium*, 43(2), 724-734.
- Afrobarometer (2020). *Africans regard China's influence as significant and positive, but slipping*. Retrieved from https://www.afrobarometer.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/ad407-chinas_perceived_influence_in_africa_decreases-afrobarometer_dispatch-14nov20.pdf
- Alden, C. (2011). The Changing Dynamics of China's Engagement in Africa. *Journal of African Development* 13 (1-2): 177-196.
- Altalouli, M. (2021) Soft Power: A Driver of the Rise of the Treasury of a Language. *Open Journal of Modern Linguistics*, 11, 668-671.
- Bodomo, A. (2014). Africans in China: The Experiences from Education and Training. In *The International Conference of China and Africa Media, Communications and Public Diplomacy*, Beijing, 10-11 September 2014. <https://www.cmi.no/file/2911-.pdf>
- Blanchard, J.-M. F., & Lu, F. (2012). Thinking Hard About Soft Power: A Review and Critique of the Literature on China and Soft Power. *Asian Perspective*, 36(4), 565-589. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42704806>
- Butler J. (1997). *The psychic life of power: theories in subjection*. Stanford University Press.
- Cai, H. (2010): Review of China's Great Economic Transformation by L. Brandt & T. G. Rawski. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 59(1), 234-240. <https://doi.org/10.1086/655431>
- China Daily (2023). *Experts: Don't politicize work of Confucius Institutes*. Retrieved from <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202312/09/WS6573a382a31040ac301a6f16.html>
- Chow, G. C. (2015): *China's economic transformation*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons
- Ding, S., & Saunders, R. A. (2006). Talking up China: An analysis of China's rising cultural power and global promotion of the Chinese language. *East Asia*, 23(2), 3-33.
- Etzioni, A. (1975). *A comparative analysis of complex organizations: On power, involvement, and their correlates*. New York: Free Press.
- Folkman, S. (2000). Privacy and confidentiality. In B. D. Sales & S. Folkman (Eds.), *Ethics in research with human participants* (pp. 49-57). American Psychological Association.
- Foucault, M. (1980). *Power Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon. Brighton: Harvester Press.
- Gil, J. A. (2008). The Promotion of Chinese Language Learning and China's Soft Power. *Asian Social Science*, 4(10), 116-122.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.
- Hefele, P., Merkle, D., & Zhivkov, S. (2015): Taking Confucius to Africa: How Cultural Diplomacy Conveys China's Voice and Perspectives to the World. In: Wahlers, G. (ed.): *Transatlantic Relations*. International Reports 5/2015. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. pp. 56-72. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep10121.8>
- Kelly, R. (2017). How China's soft power is building a neo-colonial system in Africa. *Ketagan Media*.
- King, K. (2013). China's aid and soft power in Africa: *The case of education and training*. Boydell and Brewer.
- Lampton, D. M. (2008). *The Three Faces of Chinese Power: Might, Money, and Minds* (Vol. 263). University of California Press.
- Sarpong, E. F., & Duho, K. C. T. (2022). Topical Concerns for Africa-China Cooperation in 2022. *Dataing Policy Brief*, 2.
- Song, L., Zhou, Y., & Hurst, L. (2019): Deepening reform and opening-up for China to grow into a high-income country. In: Song, L., Zhou, Y. & Hurst, L. (eds.): *The Chinese Economic Transformation: Views from Young Economists*. Canberra: ANU Press. pp. 1-18. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvp7d4j8.8>

- Kurlantzick, J. (2007). *Charm Offensive, How China's Soft Power Is Transforming the World*. Yale University Press.
- Odrowaz-Coates, A. (2018). Soft power of language in social inclusion and exclusion and the unintended research outcomes. *Language, Discourse & Society*, 6(2), 15-30.
- Tarrósy, I. (2020). Africans in China: The Migration-Related Consequences of China's "African Policy". *Limen*, 2(2), 20-36.
- Vörös, Z. (2022). Kínai geopolitika a 21. században: a globális világrend megkérdőjelezése? [Chinese Geopolitics in the 21st Century – Challenging the Global World Order?] *Eurázsia Szemle*, 2(1), 8-28.
- Wang, H., & Lu, Y. C. (2008). The Conception of Soft Power and its Policy Implications: a comparative study of China and Taiwan. *Journal of Contemporary China*, 17(56), 425–447. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10670560802000191>
- Wang, Y. (2008). Public Diplomacy and the Rise of Chinese Soft Power. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 616, 257–273. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25098003>
- Yu, H. (2009). *Media and Cultural Transformation in China (1st ed.)*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203882016>
- Xu, W. (2023). Rising China and rising Chinese: An investigation into African international students' language beliefs. *System*, 115, 103054.
- Xu, W., Stahl, G., & Cheng, H. (2023). The promise of Chinese: African international students and linguistic capital in Chinese higher education. *Language and Education*, 37(4), 516-528.



GASTRONOMY AS A SOFT POWER TOOL: TURKISH GASTRODIPLOMACY ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA

BETÜL KÖMMECI

PHD STUDENT, DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS,
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
KOMMECI.BETUL@PTE.HU

Abstract

The ancients said, “The way to the heart is through the stomach.” Gastronomy, closely related to concepts such as public diplomacy, cultural diplomacy, and soft power, plays an important role in Turkish foreign policy as a means to have an influence over hearts and minds. In addition, gastrodiplomacy activities also contribute to the country’s promotion, country image, and nation branding. This article examines the concept of soft power, gastronomy as an outlet for cultural expression, and Türkiye’s gastrodiplomacy in Africa. Soft power is a strategic approach that enables countries to gain influence in international relations through tools such as culture, diplomacy, and economy. While gastronomy plays an important role in the construction of national identity and belonging, it also provides a platform that strengthens intercultural dialogue and understanding. In this context, gastrodiplomacy is a diplomatic tool that aims to create a positive image in the international arena by introducing the cuisines of countries. The study emphasizes the importance of Turkish cuisine as one of Türkiye’s soft power strategies towards Africa that it relies on in this process. At the same time, the cultural diplomacy and gastronomy projects of the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and Yunus Emre Institute (YEE) in Africa focus on the roles of these institutions in developing Türkiye’s relations with Africa. This article examines the impact of Türkiye’s gastrodiplomacy activities in Africa on African people and its contribution to Türkiye’s image in the region, while also discussing cultural barriers and criticisms of these strategies for culinary diplomacy.

Keywords

Gastrodiplomacy, Gastronomy, Soft Power, Turkish Cuisine, Türkiye-Africa Relations

Received: October 21, 2024 | 1st Revision: December 16, 2024 | Accepted: December 28, 2024

Kömmeci, Betül (2024). Gastronomy as a Soft Power Tool: Turkish Gastrodiplomacy Activities in Africa. Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 45-56.

1. Introduction

Soft power is a concept in the literature of international relations that refers to the capacity of states to influence other states through non-coercive means. This concept, introduced by Joseph Nye (2004), includes elements such as cultural values, diplomacy, and economic cooperation. Soft power plays an important role in the construction of national identities and images, especially through cultural expression tools. In this context, gastronomy stands out as a means of introducing a country's cultural heritage to the world, and international relations established through gastronomy are called *gastrodiplomacy*. Gastrodiplomacy refers to the use of culinary cultures by states to spread their cultural influences and create a positive image in the international arena (Rockower, 2012).

When Türkiye's diplomatic strategies towards Africa are examined, it is seen that these strategies are supported by soft power tools. In recent years, Türkiye has used different soft power elements to develop its relations with African countries and has especially popularized cultural diplomacy through gastronomy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, 2020-2021). Turkish cuisine has great potential in the international arena with its richness and diversity, and this potential creates a significant impact both in the construction of cultural identity and in the perception of Türkiye in Africa. The gastronomy events organized by Türkiye in Africa through institutions such as TİKA and Yunus Emre Institute contribute to the strengthening of both cultural and economic relations by introducing Turkish cuisine.

The events, festivals, and promotions organized to introduce Turkish cuisine in Africa have increased the cultural interaction and dialogue in these countries, and gastronomic interaction has deepened with the spread of Turkish restaurants. In this context, TİKA's gastronomy projects in Africa and the cooking courses organized by the Yunus Emre Institute can be considered as concrete examples of Türkiye's soft power policies. The role of gastrodiplomacy activities in Türkiye's commercial and diplomatic relations with African countries is one of the main areas of examination in this study. In addition, the contributions of these activities to Türkiye's image in Africa and the cultural obstacles and criticisms encountered are also the focal points of this article.

In this study, the qualitative research method was used to examine Türkiye's gastrodiplomacy activities in Africa. The research was conducted through both secondary source scanning and case studies. First, a literature review is provided on Türkiye's soft power strategies and gastrodiplomacy activities in Africa, and academic articles, reports, books, and documents published by official institutions were analyzed. In addition, the gastronomy activities implemented by TİKA and the Yunus Emre Institute in Africa were evaluated in detail using the case study method. The Turkish food festivals held in Africa, the spread of Turkish restaurants, and various training programs will be the focal points of these analyses.

The main purpose of this study is to examine Türkiye's gastrodiplomacy activities in Africa as a soft power tool and analyze the role of gastronomy in cultural diplomacy and international relations. The study aims to evaluate how Turkish

cuisine creates a cultural interaction in Africa and its impact on strengthening Türkiye's image on this continent. In this context, the research questions are the following: How do Türkiye's gastronomy-focused diplomatic activities in Africa shape the development of cultural identity in this region? How do these activities have an impact on Türkiye's soft power strategies?

In this context, the study aims to contribute to the limited number of academic studies on the global promotion of Turkish cuisine and diplomatic relations with Africa. Studies on the effects of Turkish gastrodiploacy in Africa are limited in the literature, and generally focus on Türkiye's soft power policies or trade relations. However, the comprehensive analysis on the impact of Türkiye's gastronomy as a soft power element in Africa is limited. This literature gap requires an in-depth examination of Türkiye's cultural activities in Africa and the effects it creates through gastronomy. This study is intended to fill this gap in the literature by generating empirical data on the effects of Turkish gastrodiploacy activities on both the construction of cultural identity and Türkiye's international image in Africa. In particular, TİKA's and the Yunus Emre Institute's gastronomy-based cultural diplomacy studies in Africa will be analyzed to determine and evaluate how they contribute to Türkiye's image in Africa and what difficulties are encountered in this process.

2. The Concepts of Gastronomy, Gastrodiploacy, and Soft Power

Today, the cuisines of different cultures have become more accessible with globalization and the spread of the internet. Gastronomy as a means of cultural expression plays an important role in transferring the identities and values of nations to other communities. According to Avcıkurt and Sarioğlu (2019), the phenomenon of gastronomy is an interdisciplinary field closely related to many scientific fields such as production, consumption, distribution, conflict, ethics, media, environment, labor, and globalization, as well as culture, history, psychology, anthropology, religion, society and geography (Avcıkurt and Sarioğlu; 2019). In addition, the phenomenon of gastronomy can bring together people from different age groups, cultures, religions, and social backgrounds (Avcıkurt and Sarioğlu, 2019). In this context, soft power can be defined as the strategy of nations to expand their influence through cultural, ideological, and diplomatic means instead of military or economic coercion (Nye, 2004). Soft power has become an effective tool in international relations, especially in recent years, and gastronomy is among these power elements. Gastronomy is a powerful tool for nations to share their cultural heritage and establish ties with foreign nations. For example, cultural elements introduced through a country's cuisine can create positive perceptions in other countries and strengthen diplomatic relations (Rockower, 2012).

In this context, *gastrodiploacy* means the use of gastronomy as a tool in international relations. Gastrodiploacy is used as part of soft power strategies in the international arena by introducing a country's cultural assets through its food and beverage culture (Rockower, 2012). According to Kul (2019), states try to achieve two goals through culinary diplomacy and cooking: to encourage the strengthen-

ing of nations' images and to improve their prestige and standing on the world stage. Thus, the use of gastronomy as soft power is the effort of countries to make their own lifestyles attractive through diplomacy. In addition, the popularity of food and culinary culture contributes positively to a country's image (Kul, 2019).

The term gastrodiploMACy first appeared in 2002 in an article in *The Economist* titled "Food as an Ambassador", which described Thailand's public diplomacy campaign to promote food and culinary arts to the world (Zhang, 2015, p. 569). In addition, while Asian countries such as Malaysia, Japan, Thailand, and Sri Lanka are known to be pioneers in this regard, Türkiye has also been placing increasing importance on gastrodiploMACy in recent years. Türkiye's implementation of this strategy on the African continent aims to strengthen its diplomatic and commercial relations with African countries. In this process, Türkiye has diversified its soft power tools in Africa by deepening its cultural and economic ties through gastronomy (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, 2021).

■ **The term gastrodiploMACy first appeared in 2002 in an article in *The Economist* titled "Food as an Ambassador", which described Thailand's public diplomacy campaign to promote food and culinary arts to the world.**

3. Turkish Cuisine and Cultural Diplomacy

Turkish cuisine has a rich history dating back centuries with its cultural richness and geographical diversity, comprising an important aspect of cultural identity. Turkish cuisine is not only a gastronomic heritage, but also one of Türkiye's soft power tools that is of great importance in the international arena. The promotion of Turkish cuisine globally is an important part of Türkiye's cultural diplomacy activities and efforts to build a positive image on the international stage. Thus, the promotion of food culture is one of the tools that enable Turkish society to transfer its values and cultural richness to other people. These promotional activities are carried out through various international events, festivals, and Turkish restaurants. Thus, Türkiye's cultural heritage is promoted worldwide through gastronomy and a positive impact is created in international relations (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2021).

Additionally, the role of gastronomy in the construction of cultural identity should not be ignored. A country's cuisine reflects not only the food habits of that society, but also its history, traditions, and social structure. Turkish cuisine, like the cuisine of all countries, plays an important role in the process of creating cultural identity and belonging. In this context, Turkish cuisine reinforces the identity of the society not only with its flavors but also with the cultural and historical meaning that food carries. At the same time, the international promotion activities of Turkish

cuisine are an effective tool in reflecting the cultural identity to the outside world. Traditional dishes symbolize Türkiye's cultural richness and contribute to Türkiye's soft power policies (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2021). In this context, there is also a Turkish diaspora that should not be forgotten because food stands out as a powerful tool for preserving cultural heritage and identity for these communities. One of the most well-known examples of this is the Turkish community living in Germany and its contribution of Turkish cultural heritage and identity associated with the "döner kebab".

4. Turkish Gastrodiploamacy Activities in Africa

Türkiye's gastrodiploamacy activities in Africa have been an important tool in strengthening cultural ties with various events and projects that include the promotion of Turkish cuisine. In this context, Turkish food festivals and promotional events are organized in African countries to promote Turkish cuisine's rich diversity and cultural heritage. The spread of Turkish restaurants in Africa is also an important element contributing to this process. Turkish restaurants, especially those opened in capitals and big cities, have both introduced the local people to Turkish cuisine and allowed Turkish food to take root in Africa as a part of Turkish culture. Such events and restaurants are among the soft power elements that strengthen Türkiye's cultural presence in Africa and nourish diplomatic relations (TİKA, 2024; Yunus Emre Institute, 2023). For example, as Dursun (2022) states, there are approximately twenty high-quality Turkish restaurants in South Africa and there is great interest in these restaurants. One of the biggest reasons for this is that approximately 10 million Muslims live here. Another reason is that Turkish TV series and movies are very popular, and people are curious about Turkish culture. This situation makes a great contribution to Türkiye in terms of gastronomy promotion (Dursun, 2022). This example illustrates how TV series and the film sector are other factors that contribute to soft power. Thus, we understand that soft power elements are interrelated and codependent. Dursun (2022) shares his own experience in his article, stating that he realized once again how important gastronomy promotion is for restaurant experiences when he visited South Africa. This is the case because hundreds of Turkish chefs work in these restaurants and hundreds of Turkish products are introduced into the market by chefs. He has also stated several times that this situation significantly contributes to Türkiye in terms of socio-economic aspects. When the influence of digital and social media and the power of Turkish movies come together, Türkiye's gastronomy promotion also accelerates. He argues that because of the rich culture of Turkish cuisine, there is such a great demand for Turkish restaurants that it is almost impossible to find tables without reservations (Dursun, 2022).

Another example is the Turkish chef Sait Akdivit, who is greatly appreciated for the traditional dishes he made in Nigeria. In 2017, this Turkish chef was brought to a restaurant in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, and over time he became admired by Nigerians for the delicious traditional Turkish dishes he prepared (Bashal, 2021). Akdivit stated that he offered various flavors of Turkish cuisine to Nigerians with

the Turkish dishes, desserts, coffee, tea and Turkish delights that he prepared in the restaurants he worked. Akdivit attracted people's attention with the Turkish dishes he made such as Adana kebab, İskender, Pide varieties, Kuru Fasulye, Mercimek Çorbasi and Lahmacun. He also taught Turkish dishes and culture to the local chefs who were with him.

Akdivit stated that when he first came to Nigeria and started to offer Turkish dishes to Nigerians, few people preferred these dishes at first due to the difference in taste. However, he emphasized that he managed to attract the attention of Nigerians over time with the food he made. One of the biggest reasons for this is that Nigerians love to try different things, especially meat. That is why they prefer the Adana Kebab, Döner, and İskender meat-based dishes that the chef makes. However, Akdivit emphasizes that he has difficulty finding Turkish products in Nigeria as 90 percents of the ingredients he uses in his meals are from Türkiye. Akdivit has opened four restaurants and 130 Nigerians work in these restaurants. He also trains many of the staff members to become chefs.

The Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) and the Yunus Emre Institute (YEE) play key roles in Türkiye's gastrodiploamacy activities in Africa. TİKA is responsible for various gastronomy projects in Africa, enabling local people to experience Turkish cuisine and build cultural bridges between local and Turkish cuisine. For example, within the scope of the projects supported by TİKA, foods such as Baklava and Kebab, which are important elements of Turkish cuisine, are introduced through workshops and festivals. These projects also strengthen economic and diplomatic relations between Türkiye and African countries (TİKA, 2021). For instance, the International Vocational and Technical Education Project, which has been carried out by the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency and the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce since 2012, has graduated its 59th class of trainees (TİKA, 2019). Individuals from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Haiti, Mali, and Niger were provided with classes focusing on culinary arts and preparing halal food in an intensive four-week training program. The goal of the courses was for the trainees to develop their professional skills and understand the importance of hygiene in commercial kitchens and in their personal lives. Türkiye's leading chefs participated in the training with demo menus that they created and prepared with the



^ Figure 1: Turkish Chef Sait Akdivit in Nigeria. Source: Bashal (2021)



Figure 2: Türkiye Continues to Share Its Gastronomy Experiences with Africa. Source: TİKA (2019)

trainees. The trainees also had the opportunity to visit hotels, dormitories, and food production facilities in the program to learn about Türkiye's experiences in the field of culinary arts and gastronomy during on site experiential learning (TİKA, 2019).

Humanitarian aid is also included in the gastronomy projects. For example, food packages containing basic necessities were delivered to 500 families in need during the *Access to Safe Food in Lesotho* initiative organized by TİKA on the occasion of Ramadan (Africa Newsroom, 2024). In addition, at the opening ceremony of this program organized with the Lesotho National Assembly Member Bolala Khesa, a member of parliament expressed his feelings as follows: "This aid provided by the generous Turkish nation has an important meaning for the people of Lesotho. We are grateful to Türkiye and TİKA for their assistance" (Africa Newsroom, 2024).

The Yunus Emre Institute (YEE) also believes in the importance to gastronomy in Turkish culture, contributing to cultural diplomacy activities by organizing Turkish cooking courses in Africa. These courses organized by YEE teach African students who want to learn the subtleties of Turkish culinary traditions and dishes, while also increasing intercultural interaction (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2022). For example, YEE organized a Turkish cuisine promotion event in Johannesburg, South Africa in



Figure 3: Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) Shares Meals during Ramadan in Lesotho, Southern Africa. Source: Africa Newsroom (2024)

2022. The event was held at the Rosebank Capsicum Culinary Studio, where traditional Turkish cuisine was presented to hundreds of South Africans. In her speech at the event, the Turkish Ambassador to Pretoria, Ayşegül Kandaş, explained the rich diversity and origins of Turkish cuisine to South Africans and emphasized the importance of gastronomic diplomacy in terms of Türkiye-South Africa relations. Turkish dishes such as Ayran Aşı Soup, Hünkarbeğendi, Kısır, and Lokma were introduced to the participants at the event, and Turkish Coffee, Dolma, and Baklava were also served (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2022).

In another South African event held in 2023, the Johannesburg Yunus Emre Institute met the increasing demand for the richness of Turkish cuisine in South Africa by organizing gastronomy events (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2023). The Johannesburg Yunus Emre Institute Coordinator, Abdulaziz Yigit, mentioned that South Africans who show interest in Türkiye's cultural heritage are also fascinated by Turkish cuisine. In Turkish cuisine courses, Turkish culinary culture and dishes are introduced for four weeks. The trainees not only get to know the richness of Turkish cuisine closely but they also have the opportunity to taste Turkish dishes. The courses bring Turkish culture and teach the trainees Turkish words from the ingredients used in the dishes. Participants also get hands on practice with cooking equipment used in the kitchen (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2023).

It was reported that, for example, 81-year-old Cynthia Gatter stated that she attended the institute's Turkish courses, registering as soon as she learned that Turkish cuisine courses would be held. She stated that after learning the recipe for Mercimek Çorbası (Lentil Soup) in the course, she prepared this soup for her daughter as soon as she got home. Gatter also stated that she admires Turkish culture and was impressed by the hospitality of the Turkish people, emphasizing that she loves the Turkish language because the grammar rules contribute to Turkish being unique among world languages. Another trainee, Rehana Farista, stated that Turkish cuisine is very rich both in terms of the preparation of the dishes and the taste it leaves on the palate. She expressed this by stating, "No dessert can be as delicious as the desserts in Turkish cuisine." Another trainee, Ziyaad Dockrat, stated that he wanted to attend the course to get to know Turkish culture better, mentioning his interest in Turkish



▲ Figure 4: Promotion of Turkish Cuisine in South Africa. Source: Yunus Emre Enstitüsü (2022)

culture and his dream of visiting Istanbul. This illustrates that elements of soft power are interconnected, creating a positive effect between all of the elements (Yunus Emre Enstitüsü, 2023).

Another activity of the Yunus Emre Institute is the organization of a culinary workshop for Senegalese bakers during gastrodiploamacy activities carried out by the Dakar Yunus Emre Institute in Senegal. In this culinary workshop, employees of Mburu Bakery in Dakar prepared the menu with local wheat and ingredients specific to Africa, learning to make Simit. The Dakar Yunus Emre Institute Deputy Coordinator Efe stated that they were happy to introduce Simit, which has an important place in Turkish cuisine and culture for the Senegalese people. Efe emphasized that they held the workshop in the Mburu Bakery, which primarily employs female staff. Simit offer a very different taste for Senegalese people, but there was great interest in tasting this food during the workshop. Simit will be included in the menu and sold at the Mburu Bakery (YEE, 2023).

Following this workshop, a Turkish cuisine event was held on May 7, 2023 at the Mburu bakery in Dakar, and ambassadors from various countries attended. At the gathering, information about Turkish breakfast culture and Simit was provided by the Turkish Ambassador to Dakar, Nur Sağman, and the Deputy Coordinator of the Dakar Yunus Emre Institute, Halil İbrahim Efe. Simit went on sale on May 8, 2023 in the Mburu bakery (YEE, 2023).

A final example is the Yunus Emre Institute's promotion of Turkish cuisine in Zanzibar on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Republic. A Zanzibar YEE

In Turkish cuisine courses, Turkish culinary culture and dishes are introduced for four weeks. The trainees not only get to know the richness of Turkish cuisine closely but they also have the opportunity to taste Turkish dishes.



▲ Figure 5: Senegalese Bakers Making Simit. Source: YEE (2023)



▲ *Figure 6: The Promotion of Turkish Cuisine in Zanzibar. Source: AA (2023)*

Representative, Arif Edip Aksoy, stated that culinary culture has a very important place in Türkiye's cultural heritage. Steps to be followed in preparing and cooking dishes were shared with the trainees throughout the workshop. Additionally, trainee Safa Masoud Ali expressed his admiration for the richness of Turkish cuisine, while Zanzibari trainees who experienced the flavors of Turkish cuisine for the first time expressed their desire for the workshop to be held again (TRT Haber, 2023).

5. The Impact of Turkish Gastrodiploacy in Africa

Turkish gastrodiploacy activities in Africa contribute positively to Türkiye's image in the region and play an important role in cultural interaction. Food, as a powerful tool reflecting a country's cultural identity, has been effective in shaping perceptions of Türkiye among the people in Africa. Turkish culinary events and gastronomy projects have contributed to Türkiye being identified as a modern and hospitable country, creating a positive impression in the eyes of the public. In addition, these events have reinforced Türkiye's presence in Africa both as a diplomatic and cultural actor (TİKA, 2024; Yunus Emre Institute, 2023).

In terms of economic and diplomatic relations, Turkish cuisine has helped strengthen commercial ties in Africa. In particular, the opening of Turkish restaurants and the introduction of Turkish products to the African market have contributed to bilateral commercial relations and accelerated the presence of Turkish companies on the continent. In addition, Türkiye's diplomatic activities through gastronomy have increased dialogue between the two countries and allowed diplomatic relations to progress more easily (TİKA, 2021). However, along with the positive results, there are difficulties encountered in this process. For example, according to Dursun (2022), South Africa is a country for many different people from all over the world and Turkish cuisine appeals to more general groups of people because it does not contain intense spices like Arab or Indian cuisine. In addition, Turkish cuisine has a very wide range of tastes from many countries and cultures because Türkiye historically ruled over a very wide geographic region (Dursun, 2022). Although no negative results were found about Turkish cuisine specifically in Africa, there may

be situations where Turkish gastrodiploamacy may encounter difficulties in adapting to local tastes and cultural sensitivities.

6. Conclusion

Türkiye's gastrodiploamacy activities in Africa constitute a remarkable example in terms of the use of soft power tools. The role of gastronomy in the construction of cultural identity and the potential to develop dialogue between countries constitute an important bridge in Türkiye's relations with the African continent. The richness and diversity of Turkish cuisine not only promotes Türkiye's cultural heritage but also contributes to the establishment of a strong cultural bond with African societies. Gastronomy-based projects carried out by institutions such as TİKA and the Yunus Emre Institute are effective in strengthening both cultural and economic relations. These activities positively affect Türkiye's image on the continent and reinforce Türkiye's soft power in Africa with the widespread interest in Turkish cuisine. The increase of Turkish restaurants, food projects, and events such as food festivals in Africa illustrates this cultural diplomacy in action. However, it is also possible that difficulties such as cultural differences and adaptation to local tastes should not be ignored.

As a result, Türkiye's gastrodiploamacy activities in Africa have the potential to not only increase cultural interaction but also deepen trade and diplomatic relations. In the future, making these strategies more sustainable and integrated with local communities could help Türkiye achieve stronger results in its relations with Africa. The access of Turkish cuisine to a wider audience on the continent will play an important role not only in the construction of cultural identity but also in the creation of economic opportunities. In this context, Türkiye's diversification of its gastrodiploamacy activities and its development of sustainable projects that integrate more with local tastes and cultures will increase the success of its soft power strategies. ✨

References

- AA (2023): Türk mutfağının lezzetleri Zanzibar'da tanıtıldı [Turkish cuisine flavors introduced in Zanzibar]. <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/guncel/turk-mutfaginin-lezzetleri-zanzibarda-tanitildi-811333.html>
- Africa Newsroom (2024): Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) Shares the Abundance of Ramadan in Lesotho, Southern Africa. APOGROUP. <https://www.africa-newsroom.com/press/turkish-cooperation-and-coordination-agency-tika-shares-the-abundance-of-ramadan-in-lesotho-southern-africa?lang=en>
- Aldemir, T. (2023): Gastrodiploamacy initiatives in the world and Turkey. *Journal of Gastronomy, Hospitality and Travel*. Vol.6. pp. 1097-1109.
- Avcıkurt, C., Sarioğlam, M. (2019): Gastronomi Olgusunda Sosyolojik Bakış [Sociological Perspective on the Gastronomy Phenomenon]. Ankara: Detay Yayıncılık. (1st ed.)
- Basha, A. (2021): Türk aşçı, Nijerya'da yaptığı geleneksel yemeklerle büyük beğeni topluyor [Turkish chef receives great acclaim for traditional dishes he makes in Nigeria]. AA.. <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/yasam/turk-asci-nijeryada-yaptigi-geleneksel-yemeklerle-buyuk-begeni-topliyor/2418822>
- Dursun, Y. (2022): Güney Afrika'da Türk Gastronomisi Esintileri [Breeze of Turkish Cuisine in South Africa]. Gurme Akademi. <https://www.gurmeakademi.com/blog/guney-afrika-da-turk-gastronomisi-esintil>

- Kul, N. (2019): Mutfak, Kimlik, Diplomasi Türkiye’de Gastro Diplomasi [Cuisine, Identity, Diplomacy – Gastro Diplomacy in Türkiye]. (1st ed.). Ankara: Tün Kitap.
- Leavy, P. (2017): Research Design Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches. The Guilford Press.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye (2021): Cultural Diplomacy. 2020-2021. https://www.mfa.gov.tr/site_media/html/TKGM-Prestij-Kitabi-2020-2021.pdf
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye (2021): Türkiye-Africa Relations. <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/turkiye-afrika-iliskileri.tr.mfa>
- Nye, Jr., J. S. (2004): Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics. Public Affairs.
- Nye Jr., J.S. (2020): Yumuşak Güç: Dünya Siyasetinde Başarının Araçları [Soft Power: Tools for Success in World Politics]. (3rd ed.). Ankara: BB101 Yayınları.
- Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2021): Zengin Türk Mutfağı Dünyaya Tanıtılıyor [Rich Turkish Cuisine is Introduced to the World]. <https://basin.ktb.gov.tr/TR-292184/zengin-turk-mutfagi-dunyaya-tanitiliyor.html>
- Rockower, P. (2012): Recipes for Gastrodplomacy. Place Branding and Public Diplomacy. 8(3). pp. 235-246.
- Tarhanoglu, O. (2024): Analysis of Turkey’s African Policy in The Framework of Public Diplomacy and Non-Governmental Organizations. Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, 79, pp. 1-22. <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/3156482>
- T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Başkanlığı (2020): Gastro-diplomasi [Gastro-diplomacy]. https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/turkce/pozitif_iletisim_kampanyalari/detaylar/gastro-diplomasi#
- TİKA (2021): TİKA IN AFRICA. https://tika.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Afrika_Zirvesi.pdf
- TİKA (2019): Türkiye Gastronomi Tecrübesini Afrika’yla Paylaşmaya Devam Ediyor [Türkiye Continues to Share Its Gastronomy Experience with Africa]. https://tika.gov.tr/detail-turkiye_gastronomi_tecrubesini_afrika%27yla_paylasmaya_devam_ediyor/
- TRT Haber (2023): Türk mutfağının lezzetleri Zanzibar’da tanıtıldı [Turkish cuisine flavors introduced in Zanzibar]. <https://www.trthaber.com/haber/guncel/turk-mutfagin-in-lezzetleri-zanzibarda-tanitildi-811333.html>
- Yunus Emre Enstitüsü (2022): Güney Afrika’da Türk Mutfağı Tanıtıldı [Turkish Cuisine Introduced in South Africa]. <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/guney-afrikada-turk-mutfagi-tanitildi>
- Yunus Emre Enstitüsü (2023): Güney Afrikalılar Türk Mutfağının Lezzetlerini Öğreniyor [South Africans Learn the Flavours of Turkish Cuisine]. <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/guney-afrikalilar-turk-mutfagin-in-lezzetlerini-ogreniyor>
- YEE (2023): Senegalli Fırıncılar Simit Yapmayı Öğrendi [Senegalese Bakers Learn How to Make Simit]. <https://www.yee.org.tr/tr/haber/senegalli-firincilar-simit-yapmayi-ogrendi>
- Zhang, J. (2015): The Foods of the Worlds: Mapping and Comparing Contemporary Gastrodplomacy Campaigns. *International Journal of Communication*. Vol.9. pp. 568-591.

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHINA AND THE EU'S CONCEPTUALISATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES TOWARDS THE GLOBAL SOUTH

LILEI SONG, PROFESSOR

DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES AT THE SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF TONGJI UNIVERSITY.

SONGLILEI@TONGJIEDU.CN

SZABOLCS PASZTOR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

LUDOVICA UNIVERSITY OF PUBLIC SERVICE.

PASZTORSZABOLCS@UNI-NKE.HU (CORRESPONDING AUTHOR)



Abstract

The concept of the Global South originates from developing countries and the idea of the Third World. Additionally, the international influence and power of the Global South have increased significantly in global governance discussions. China, which has evolved from a position in the 'middle ground' to becoming the 'largest developing country,' is considered part of the Global South. China is contemplating the prospect of strategically intensifying its collaboration with the Global South, conceptualising and orchestrating the Global South as a cornerstone of its diplomatic strategy. The EU must adapt to the changing multipolar global landscape and address the rising influence of the Global South. Current academic discussions focus on the emergence of the Global South and its impact on the international arena. These conversations also examine the policies of major powers – such as China, the United States, Russia, and India – toward the Global South, as well as the political and economic importance of the Global South's development. This has enhanced the international politics and political economy implications of the Global South, but a comparison of the Global South policies of different countries is lacking. Accordingly, this article will elucidate the discrepancies in China and Europe's conceptualisation of the Global South and investigate the divergences in strategic objectives, methodologies, and priorities for collaboration between China and the European Union in this region. Theoretically, this approach can facilitate the expansion of research into China-Europe relations. From a practical standpoint, the Global South represents a novel avenue for China-EU collaboration and a crucial instrument through which China can pursue its objectives in conjunction with the EU.

Keywords

Global South; global governance; international order; China; EU

Received: August 28, 2024 | 1st Revision: November 18, 2024 | Accepted: February 15, 2025

Song, Lilei - Pásztor, Szabolcs (2024). A Comparative Analysis of China and the EU's Conceptualisation and Implementation of Policies towards the Global South. Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 57-78.

1. Introduction

The Global South is becoming an increasingly significant emerging force in the global political landscape. Concurrently, the Global South's share of global gross domestic product (GDP) has surpassed that of developed economies.² A growing influence accompanies the collective emergence of countries in the Global South on more strategic and political matters, including international security, regional conflicts and multilateral diplomacy. For example, Latin American countries have collectively articulated their positions on global governance issues through the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). In September 2023, at the Group of 20 (G20) summit in India, the African Union (AU) was granted a permanent seat on the G20.³ South Africa initiated legal proceedings at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on 29 December 2023, filing a genocide lawsuit against Israel on behalf of the Palestinian people in Gaza.⁴ Despite considerable pressure from the United States and other Western countries, South Africa has remained steadfast in its position, reflecting the growing autonomy and commitment of the Global South as a political force on the international stage.⁵

China and the European Union espouse disparate views and adopt divergent responses to the ascendant Global South. China has proposed and promoted the implementation of several significant international cooperation initiatives, including the Belt and Road Initiative, the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, and the Global Civilisation Initiative. China has provided substantial endogenous impetus, cooperation platforms, and economic assistance for the development of the Global South. In his speech at the closing ceremony of the BRICS (group of Brazil, Russia, India, and China) Business Forum 2023 in South Africa, Chinese President Xi Jinping observed that, as a developing country and a member of the Global South (a broad term encompassing a diverse group of countries, primarily in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean), China has historically shared a similar trajectory with other developing countries. He underscored that China has consistently championed the collective interests of developing countries and has been a pivotal force in promoting greater involvement of emerging market countries and developing countries in global affairs⁶ (Bunde – Eisentraut – Schütte, 2024).

The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts are contributing to the erosion of the existing international political, security, and economic order. Concurrently, relations between the Global South and the European Union are significantly transforming tone and content. The EU has acknowledged the growing significance of the Global South as a collective of developing countries⁷ (Caulcutt, 2022). Nevertheless, there are discrepancies between the two parties concerning established commercial trade, debt relief, climate change and multilateralism reform. The European Union has aligned itself with the Biden administration in demanding that the Global South publicly condemn and impose economic sanctions on Russia. Furthermore, the EU has been accused of adopting a “double standard” in its approach to the Israeli-Palestinian and Russian-Ukrainian conflicts, a stance

that has attracted criticism from the Global South. French President Emmanuel Macron has accused countries that have remained neutral in the Russia-Ukraine conflict of “complicity” with Russia, characterising their stance as tantamount to supporting the actions of the Russian Federation.⁸ There is a divergence of perspectives and policy options between China and Europe concerning the Global South.

China and the European Union espouse disparate views and adopt divergent responses to the ascendant Global South.

The current academic discourse on the Global South predominantly encompasses the ascendance of the Global South and the concomitant evolution of the international landscape,⁹ the foreign policies of major powers such as China, the United States, Russia, and India towards the Global South,¹⁰ and the political and economic import of the development of the Global South¹¹ (Debin – Dongqi, 2023). This has enhanced the Global South’s international politics and political economy implications. However, a comparative analysis of the policies of different countries in the Global South is lacking. Accordingly, this article will elucidate the discrepancies in the conceptualisations of the Global South by China and Europe and investigate the divergences in strategic objectives, methodologies, and priorities for collaboration between China and the European Union in the Global South. Theoretically, this approach can facilitate the expansion of research into China-Europe relations. The Global South represents a novel avenue for China-EU collaboration and a crucial instrument through which China can pursue its objectives in conjunction with the EU.

This paper employs a comparative analysis methodology to examine the conceptualisation and implementation of policies towards the Global South by China and the European Union. The research integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches, drawing from primary and secondary sources, including official policy documents, speeches, academic literature, and data from international organisations. Content analysis is applied to assess narratives, policy objectives, and the strategic orientation of both actors towards the Global South.

The study is divided into two primary stages. First, we conduct a historical and conceptual analysis to understand the origins and evolution of the Global South as perceived by China and the EU. Second, we evaluate the implementation of policies through case studies, focusing on specific initiatives like China’s Belt and Road Initiative and the EU’s Global Gateway. Comparative indicators such as economic engagement, political partnerships, and institutional norms highlight similarities, differences, and areas of potential cooperation.

The paper is structured into the following sections: (i) the introduction provides an overview of the Global South’s increasing prominence and the research’s relevance; (ii) the conceptualisation of the Global South, which analyses the historical and ideological frameworks through which China and the EU conceptualise the

Global South. (iii) The comparative analysis of policy approaches investigates both actors' economic, political, and institutional strategies, with case studies illustrating practical applications. (iv) The Autonomy of the Global South discusses the growing independence of Global South countries and their interactions with China and the EU. (v) Finally, the conclusion summarises the key findings and offers insights for future research and policy considerations.

By systematically comparing China's and the EU's approaches, this paper aims to contribute to the academic discourse on international relations and global governance, offering perspectives on potential avenues for cooperation in the evolving geopolitical landscape.

2. A Comparative Analysis of the Conceptualisation of the Global South in China and Europe

The majority of countries in the Global South have a history of colonialism by countries in the Global North, primarily European nations. Subsequently, these countries emerged from colonial or semi-colonial situations and became newly industrialised nations. The concept of the Global South initially emerged from the context of developing countries and the "third world," as a contrast to the terms "former colonies" and "underdevelopment." In contrast to these, the Global South espoused a more neutral and open-ended set of values.

The term Global South is currently debated in academic, political, and economic circles, yet there is no consensus on its scope. Three principal definitions have emerged: geopolitical, political, and economic¹² (Oglesby, 1969).

In its earliest usage, the term Global South was employed as a geographical metaphor for underdevelopment and as a substitute for the term 'Third World.' The term was first employed in 1969 by Carl Oglesby, an American left-wing political activist who coined the term Global South. In his argument, Oglesby posited that the domination of the Global South by the Global North had resulted in the emergence of an intolerable social order over centuries.¹³ The term Global South is used as a generic designation for the low- and middle-income countries of Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America, and the Caribbean (per the World Bank's classification). This usage implies a post-colonial legacy and its associated consequences and burdens.

Secondly, the term Global South is imbued with a particular set of political connotations. The term Global South is not geographically defined and is used to refer to a group of countries that encompass a diversity of values, cultural traditions, levels of development, and interests. The most common characteristics of countries in this region are non-Western, anti-interventionist, and development-oriented.

Thirdly, economic attributes serve as pivotal indicators of the division of the Global South. Concurrent with the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement, leaders of developing countries sought to effectuate alterations in the global economic order. In 1964, representatives of 120 countries, international organisations, and civil society groups convened in Geneva for the inaugural United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). A group of 77 non-aligned countries issued

the Joint Declaration of 77 Developing Countries, which established the Group of 77 (G77). In alignment with the tenets of the theory of dependence, the G77 seeks to reduce reliance on developed countries by limiting the export of raw materials to industrialised nations and strengthening the manufacturing capabilities of low-income countries to meet the economic needs of developing countries. The Finance Centre for South-South Cooperation defines the “Global South” as the “Group of 77 and China.”¹⁴ Furthermore, it is emphasised that the objectives and actions of the G77 aim to rectify and ultimately eradicate imbalances within the global economic system.

China and the EU have markedly disparate internal development logics and foreign policy trajectories, leading to markedly disparate ontological understandings of the Global South. China has consistently regarded itself as a constituent of the Global South, a position it has striven to actualise. In contrast, the European Union perceives the Global South from the vantage point of a position of otherness, passively accepting the political and economic implications of the Global South.

2.1. China is a member of the Global South

The concept of China’s interpretation of the Global South can be traced back to the idea of a “middle ground.” This concept was followed by China’s declaration as the “largest developing country.” Mao Zedong first introduced this latter idea during a conversation with the left-wing American journalist Anna Louise Strong in 1946. His statement came in response to the post-World War II Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as the looming civil war in China. Mao suggested that there was a “middle ground” amidst these superpowers, which included the capitalist countries of Europe, Asia, and Africa, alongside colonial and semi-colonial nations. Furthermore, he emphasized that China was the “largest developing country.”¹⁵ As the Cold War intensified in the 1950s and 1960s, national liberation and decolonisation movements flourished, with new countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America gaining prominence. Concurrently, several “middle ground” national organisations were established, including the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the Group of 77 (G77).

Considering these circumstances, Mao Zedong proposed the concept of the “two middle zones.” The term “two middle zones” describes two distinct geographical areas: the first encompasses the vast, economically backward countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, while the second includes the imperialist and developed capitalist countries of Europe. Both regions are in opposition to the United States’ exertion of control. In Eastern European countries, the question of opposition to Soviet control arises.¹⁶ In 1974, in the context of a significant deterioration in Sino-Soviet relations and the emergence of a pattern of competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, Mao Zedong proposed the theory of the ‘three worlds,’ characterising China as a third-world country¹⁷ (Xiaoping, 1993).

In the 1980s, developing countries emerged as the dominant political and economic force on the global stage. Concurrently, China initiated a new phase of reform

and opening up, representing a significant shift in the country's diplomatic orientation, with developing countries becoming the primary focus of its foreign policy. In his remarks, Deng Xiaoping emphasised the crucial importance of peace, economic advancement, and development in addressing the global strategic challenges of our time. The issue of peace is pertinent to both the Eastern and Western hemispheres. In contrast, the development issue is pertinent

to both the Northern and Southern hemispheres. In conclusion, the key terms are 'East-West' and 'North-South.' "The North-South issue represents the core issue, in terms of both its intrinsic importance and its capacity to inform and shape the other key issues"¹⁸ (Wang Yi, 2023). The East-West issue primarily concerns the competition between the United States and the Soviet Union and does not include China. China's reform and opening up are confronted with the development challenge, which naturally aligns with the North-South issue.

With the conclusion of the Cold War and the dissolution of the bipolar system, the East-West issue has receded from the historical stage. In consequence, the concept of the "Third World" has been superseded by that of developing countries. China has consistently maintained its status as the world's largest developing country, a diplomatic position that has remained unchanged despite shifts in its comprehensive national strength.

In July 2023, Wang Yi, in attendance at the thirteenth meeting of BRICS Senior Representatives on Security Affairs in Johannesburg, articulated that the Global South constitutes a group of emerging market countries and developing countries. Furthermore, he asserted the necessity of continuously deepening the conceptualisation of the 'Third World' and 'developing countries.' China should persist in deepening South-South cooperation, spearheading the Global South towards unity and self-improvement, collectively safeguarding national security and stability, and facilitating the construction of an equitable and orderly multipolar world¹⁹ (Shada Islam, 2024). A review of the history of Chinese diplomacy reveals that from occupying a "middle ground" position to becoming the "largest developing country," China now belongs naturally to the Global South. The case of BRICS cooperation and enlargement provides an illustrative example of China's resolve to reinforce its ties with other countries in the Global South.

2.2. The EU's Global South Narrative

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the European Union has had to adjust and adapt to an unpredictable multi-polar world on the one hand and face up to the rising Global South on the other²⁰ (Dworkin, 2023). This has constituted a challenging period for the EU, which has had to navigate a shifting global landscape and the

With the conclusion of the Cold War and the dissolution of the bipolar system, the East-West issue has receded from the historical stage.

complexities of its internal and external relations. At this time, the European Union employs the terms “third world,” “developing countries,” and “least industrialised countries” to refer to the Global South, thereby perpetuating a clear “developed-backward” and “rich-poor” dichotomy.

During the Cold War period, Europe’s Global South policy was not a comprehensive policy towards all countries of the Global South. Instead, it was a policy that originated from and was shaped by the European policy towards specific regions, particularly those countries that had been colonised, namely those in the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS). From the outset of the European integration process, the European Community, through the Association Agreements, established special economic, trade, and political ties between the Western European countries and the former colonised countries of the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific). This entailed the unilateral preferential trade of Western European countries with the ACP region. Moreover, the bonds between these nations and the European Community are reinforced through various means, including providing development assistance. The continuation of the special relations established during the colonial era is evidenced by the strengthening of ties with these countries, including the provision of development assistance.

European policy towards the ACP countries can be seen as a successor to the Southern policy of the Cold War. While material assistance was initially provided to former colonies on a bilateral basis, from the 1960s onwards, it gradually reached developing countries worldwide. Concurrently, several multilateral aid agencies were established, including the UNDP, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the African Development Bank, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. These organisations were established to provide developing countries with personnel training, concessional loans, and specialised technical assistance on a large scale.²¹ In 1980, the Independent Commission on International Development published the Brandt Report, which proposed a “Brandt Line” to divide the world into North and South based on GDP per capita. Furthermore, the report proposed the 30th parallel as a geographical boundary between the Global South and the Global North.²²

In the aftermath of the Cold War, the international order underwent a significant transformation, evolving from a bipolar and predominantly United States-led unipolar structure to a multipolar configuration. The European Union (EU) has progressively underscored the influence of the ascendance of the Global South’s role in global affairs. In light of this analysis, the EU has devised and enacted a strategy of pragmatic cooperation between the two parties. Nevertheless, the EU continues to adhere to a perspective that is both “West-centred” and “Eurocentric” in nature. The concepts of “Orientalism” and “post-colonialism” are still perpetuated by the EU, which is deeply rooted in Western and European ideologies. This reflects these ideas’ long-standing and pervasive influence in the West and Europe. The ‘us and them’ distinction, which is ingrained in Orientalism and post-colonialism, still has significant influence. In a speech delivered to a group of young European diplomats

in October 2022, Josep Borrell, the Vice-President of the European Commission, drew a comparison between Europe and a garden, describing it as “the optimal synthesis of political freedom, economic prosperity, and social cohesion that humanity can construct,” and “a garden surrounded by a jungle”²³ (Iveson – McNair, 2023).

In addition to the straightforward “dichotomy of identities,” the EU’s initiatives towards the Global South are designed to “choose one side.” The EU has deliberately excluded China from the Global South in an effort to polarise China’s relations with the broader developing world and diminish China’s influence within this region. The European Union’s dialogue with the Global South focuses on a limited range of issues, including illegal migration, the fight against corruption, and climate change. Notably, calls from the Global South for reform of multilateral institutions, accelerating the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and eliminating North-South inequalities have been largely ignored.²⁴

Concerning the international order, China, in collaboration with countries in the Global South, opposes the polarisation and confrontation of the international community. Conversely, China is dedicated to diversifying global influence and advancing this objective. Several European countries and the United States do not acknowledge China’s status as a developing country and are attempting to revoke its designation as a country in the Global South. Moreover, they are pursuing a calculated strategy of estrangement and marginalisation of China from other countries in the Global South.

3. A comparative analysis of the policy approaches of China and Europe towards the Global South

China and the European Union engage in collaborative endeavours with the Global South. However, their strategic objectives, approaches, and priorities diverge considerably, reflecting the influence of their respective geopolitical interests, goals, and values. In general, China’s policy towards the Global South can be said to emphasise three aspects. The objective is to establish a “community of interests,” “community of responsibility,” and “community of destiny” between China and the Global South, based on the principles of “common development, shared destiny, and shared dignity.” The European Union’s approach can be characterised as one of economic primacy, geopolitical competition, and historical interdependence. This has led to a strategy of “strengthening economic ties, polarising and confronting politically, and regulating norms and regulations.”

3.1. Economic cooperation

China’s cooperation with the Global South has primarily concentrated on economic development and infrastructure projects. As a developing country that had successfully lifted millions of people out of poverty, China’s development model could provide instructive examples for the Global South. Firstly, through the South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund (SSCAF) and the South-South Cooperation and Development Academy (SSCDA), China has facilitated developing countries’

capacity-building, enabling them to pursue autonomous development. The South-South Cooperation Assistance Fund, in close collaboration with United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes, has initiated a significant number of humanitarian and development projects efficiently and sustainably. The South-South Fund and the South-South Academy have evolved into significant public goods for China's engagement with countries in the Global South. Concurrently, China's collaboration with the Global South is frequently typified by extensive infrastructure initiatives, investment agreements and trade arrangements that prioritise economic expansion and the acquisition of natural resources. The promotion of new mechanisms, such as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the BRICS New Development Bank, as well as the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, has provided a new source of impetus for economic growth and the improvement of people's livelihoods in developing countries. China's Belt and Road Initiative has become a significant platform for advancing global infrastructure development and economic collaboration. Its scope has expanded beyond Asia and Europe to encompass Africa and Latin America, with over 150 countries and 30 international organisations signing the Belt and Road Initiative cooperation agreement. Three Belt and Road Initiative cooperation summits have been held, and more than 20 multilateral cooperation platforms in specialised fields have been established.²⁵

At the series of summits marking the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, President Xi announced the launching of six 100-project initiatives over five years. These initiatives encompass 100 poverty reduction projects, 100 agricultural cooperation projects, 100 trade promotion assistance projects, 100 ecological protection and climate change projects, 100 hospitals and clinics, 100 schools and vocational training centres, the establishment of a South-South cooperation assistance fund, the implementation of 100 "maternal and child health projects" and 100 "happy school projects," and the establishment of a South-South cooperation assistance fund. Furthermore, a South-South cooperation assistance fund has been established, the China-United Nations Fund for Peace and Development has been set up, training and scholarships have been provided to China, the debt of interest-free loans to the countries concerned has been forgiven, and assistance in the form of loans and scholarships has been provided to the countries concerned. From 2013 to 2018, China assisted 122 countries and 20 international and regional multilateral organisations in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Oceania, and Europe. The countries and territories receiving assistance included 53 in Africa, 30 in Asia, 22 in Latin America and the Caribbean, 9 in Oceania, and 8 in Europe.²⁶

Most developing countries demonstrated a limited capacity for technological innovation, necessitating the importation of foreign technology. China has a long history of transferring technology to other developing countries. This has involved sharing its experience in governance and appropriate technology, directing more resources to the sustainable economic and social development of developing countries, and supporting the majority of developing countries in removing bottlenecks to their development. To illustrate, China has developed a highly sophisticated high-

speed railroad technology, which has been successfully deployed domestically and is now being actively exported overseas. This has attracted considerable attention and recognition from the international community. In October 2023, the Yawang High-Speed Railway, the first high-speed railway in Southeast Asia, the inaugural project of the Belt and Road Initiative, and a national strategic undertaking for Indonesia, was inaugurated. From the Tanzan Railway, the Aceh Railway, and the China-Laos Railway to the Yawan High-Speed Railway, China's railroads and high-speed railways have become the flagship of the joint construction of the Belt and Road Initiative and international production capacity cooperation. The Belt and Road Initiative has reshaped the interconnection of countries in the Global South in the areas of infrastructure and logistics, science and technology, and innovation. It has led to the development of countries in the Global South in the areas of infrastructure and logistics, science and technology, and innovation.

The European Union's engagement with the Global South encompasses trade and aid. Concerning trade and economic matters, the EU has entered into Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Island States (ACP) since the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000.²⁷ The aforementioned agreements have been concluded with these regions and countries, as well as with the ACP. These efforts aim to diversify external economic and commercial relations, to gain a competitive advantage in terms of values and standards, and to strengthen the reliance of these markets of the South on the EU. Additionally, these agreements are intended to advance the strategic objectives related to geopolitical competition and confrontation. Since signing the Cotonou Agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Island States (ACP) in 2000, significant advancements have been made in the negotiations between the EU and these regions and countries for the conclusion of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between them. Furthermore, in addition to basing its unilateral trade preferences for the ACP on reciprocity, intending to establish a so-called "partnership of equals," the EU has accelerated its negotiations on FTAs (Free Trade Agreement) with several other developing countries. Additionally, the EU is moving ahead with negotiations with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), and some of its member states attempting to resume FTA negotiations with India. The EU is pursuing negotiations with ASEAN and several of its member states, as well as with the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) in Latin America intending to resume FTA negotiations with India.

Regarding international aid, the European Union (EU) typically espouses a multilateral approach to development assistance, actively disseminating Western ideals of democracy, human rights, and good governance to developing countries and regions. In December 2021, the EU announced the launch of its "Global Gateway" programme, which aims to support global infrastructure development. The programme will mobilise 300 billion euros for various projects between 2021 and 2027, 150 billion euros for the Europe-Africa investment programme, and 45 billion euros for the Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and Caribbean regions. In a recent statement,

the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, asserted that the Global Gateway is a program and strategy that is in direct competition with China's Belt and Road Initiative²⁸ (Tagliapietra, 2024). By extending collaborative efforts on economic and social infrastructure initiatives, the European Union can leverage its capacity to advance its values and vision of sustainable development.²⁹ The European Union considers the Global Gateway to be an instrument for implementing its foreign and security policy. At the bilateral level, the EU cooperates with target countries on matters pertaining to transport, trade, and networks. At the regional level, it fosters regional cooperation with ASEAN and countries in Central Asia, Latin America, and Africa. At the international level, it enhances collaboration with international organisations on the fundamental rules framework for connectivity. Since its inception in December 2021, the Global Gateway Initiative has facilitated the implementation of several projects with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa, as well as Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific. However, the efficacy of these projects remains to be seen, particularly in light of the relatively short period since their inception.

3.2. Political relations

China has developed a set of policy concepts for collaboration with countries in the Global South. The country is committed to following the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is a platform for comprehensive and sustainable development in these nations. The Global Security Initiative provides a platform for regional security governance mechanisms to resolve border conflicts and combat cross-border crime and terrorism. Additionally, it establishes multi-lateral cooperation mechanisms for non-traditional security issues, including food security, energy security, and climate variability. The Global Civilization Initiative serves as a platform for cross-civilization pluralistic exchanges, mutual appreciation, and intercommunication. This initiative responds to the needs of countries in the Global South to move beyond the dominance of Western civilisation, develop their international discourse, and foster cultural self-confidence.

China has successfully established several “1+N” dialogue and cooperation mechanisms with Southeast Asia, Africa, Latin America, Central Asia, the Arab States, and the Pacific Island countries. This has led to an enhancement of mutual trust with countries in the Global South through implementing various measures, including “policy communication, facility connectivity, trade facilitation, financial integration and people-to-people exchanges.” China has also been an active proponent of multilateral mechanisms, including BRICS, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) and ASEAN+1, which are designed to facilitate common development and cooperation among countries of the Global South. The BRICS countries have garnered increasing attention and support from a growing number of countries, thereby becoming a pivotal driving force for fostering collaboration within the Global South. In the wake of the 2022 Ukrainian crisis, the BRICS countries refrained from unconditional participation in the West's comprehensive sanctions against Russia.

Instead, they largely maintained a neutral stance in the series of votes adopted by the United Nations against Russia. In a recent proposal, Brazilian President Lula da Silva suggested the formation of a “peace club” comprising China, India, and Brazil to facilitate a peaceful resolution to the ongoing crisis³⁰ (Javorceková, 2023).

As a nation that has experienced repeated incursions by external powers throughout its history, China has consistently demonstrated its unwavering solidarity with developing countries in their quest to safeguard their sovereignty, security, and developmental interests. It has also been a vocal advocate for their cause on the global stage. China has repeatedly exercised its right of veto in the United Nations Security Council, created peaceful conditions and provided humanitarian assistance and support to countries and regions such as Zimbabwe, Syria, and Bolivia. With regard to the question of Palestine, China’s position is that the “two-state solution” should be supported and that the historical injustices suffered by the Palestinian people should be rectified. Furthermore, China advocates that conflicts and disputes should be resolved through peaceful means, such as negotiations, to achieve peace and stability in the region. China has consistently advocated for establishing a more equitable and just international order while also striving to protect the collective interests of countries in the Global South.

In contrast, the European Union has been the subject of criticism from the international community on account of its purported “double standards” in the Russian-Ukrainian and Palestinian-Israeli conflicts³¹ (Gwyn Jones, 2024). Furthermore, the moral and ethical standards espoused by the EU have been called into question in the context of mounting disagreements over debt relief, climate change, and multilateralism reform. Additionally, the “Black Lives Matter” campaign has prompted international reflection on the long history of systemic racism in European colonial history, the slave trade and European Union immigration policies³² (De Genova, 2020). From the perspective of the European Union, geopolitical competition and confrontation have become a reality for the international community³³ (Dixson-Declève et al., 2023). The EU is pursuing a policy of strengthening its trade and economic ties with the majority of countries in the Global South, including India, while simultaneously attempting to significantly reduce its relations with other important countries in the Global South, such as China. Therefore, based on geopolitical competition and confrontation, the Global South policy of the EU and some of its member states cannot be considered truly “globalised.”

3.3. Institutional norms

China’s diplomatic approach has consistently been oriented towards the Global South, focusing on fostering a community of shared human destiny. This approach has been characterised by a commitment to non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and the provision of assistance without conditions. China is a member of the Global South and will continue to be regarded as a developing country. China has consistently demonstrated its unwavering support for the countries of the Global South in pursuing their independent and autonomous development path. It has also

taken a firm stance against external interference and has worked to safeguard the Global South's independent and autonomous political character. In addressing international and regional flashpoint issues, China has consistently advocated for regional countries and organisations to resolve challenges through peaceful and autonomous means and has opposed external interference under the pretext of humanitarian assistance. China has consistently demonstrated a commitment to advancing and rejuvenating the Global South. China has proposed global development initiatives and spearheaded international development cooperation to address global development challenges. Presently, over 100 countries and international organisations have expressed support for this initiative, with nearly 70 countries having joined the Group of Friends of the Global Development Initiative.³⁴

As a nation that has experienced repeated incursions by external powers throughout its history, China has consistently demonstrated its unwavering solidarity with developing countries in their quest to safeguard their sovereignty, security, and developmental interests.

Since assuming the presidency of the Security Council in 2017, China has spearheaded the convening of open debates on a number of critical issues pertaining to the security and stability of the African continent. These include discussions on “Strengthening Africa’s peace and security capacity,” “Strengthening peacekeeping operations in Africa,” and “Peace and security in Africa.” Additionally, China has hosted a series of high-level meetings, including one on “Peace and security in Africa: promoting post-epidemic reconstruction and eliminating the root causes of conflict in Africa” and another on “Peace and security in Africa: promoting post-epidemic reconstruction and eliminating the root causes of conflict.” China has actively participated in United Nations-led peacekeeping missions and played a pivotal role in escorting vessels in the Gulf of Aden and peacekeeping operations in Mali, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It has consistently upheld the principle of “Africa’s initiative, Africa’s consent, and Africa’s leadership” and has opposed unilateral actions by Western countries. The aforementioned actions have facilitated the realisation of lasting peace in Africa.

In order to facilitate cooperation in infrastructure connectivity, international production capacity, standardisation of equipment manufacturing, trade facilitation, technology standardisation and other pertinent topics related to the construction of the Belt and Road Initiative, China has organised over 4,000 training programmes for officials from relevant countries. The training programme has established an exchange platform for policy communication among countries, and the participants have proposed recommendations for the integration of the Belt and Road Initiative

into regional development plans, including the African Union's Agenda 2063, the ASEAN Connectivity Master Plan 2025, and the European Union's Euro-Asian Connectivity Strategy.

The European Union, which has long claimed to be a "normative force," has increasingly emphasised binding the Global South in areas such as human rights, environmental protection and immigration. In pursuit of its interests and geopolitical goals, the EU has sought to transfer and tie up developing countries through the transfer of benefits in the economic, political, scientific, and technological fields. The European Union has adopted a series of legal instruments, including the Decision on Restrictive Measures against Serious Violations of Human Rights, the Green Pact, the Carbon Border Mechanism, and the Anti-Forced Labor Act. These instruments collectively provide a framework for the "legalisation" of the European Union. This represents a case of Europe's "legal" intervention in the internal affairs of the Global South. The EU's rigorous standards in the green sector may impede industrial growth in countries undergoing industrialisation. In the domain of immigration, the intensifying use of coercive tactics by border and coast guard personnel against migrants has given rise to considerable resentment in countries from which migrants are emigrating.

4. The autonomy of the Global South and its implications for international relations

The Global South is currently undergoing a process of increasing autonomy in pursuing its interests and asserting its right to speak. It is actively pursuing its efforts in global governance, such as climate change, regional security, and public health. Furthermore, it has changed its previous passive acceptance of the established arrangements of the Western developed countries and has become more proactive in launching concepts and programmes conducive to its development. The autonomy and influence of the Global South in international affairs is reflected, in particular, in its reluctance to align with the West in responding to the Ukrainian crisis³⁵ (Aiden, 2023). At the United Nations General Assembly in April 2022, over 80 member states voted against or abstained from expelling Russia from the Human Rights Council.³⁶ The then President of Senegal, Maki Sal, cautioned that Africa's "burden of history" meant the continent was disinclined to become a hotbed of new cold wars and side shifting.³⁷ India's External Affairs Minister, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, urged Europe to "move away from the mindset that 'Europe's problems are the world's problems, but the world's problems are not Europe's problems'"³⁸ (Larson, 2022). In the context of the complex and volatile international situation, most countries in the Global South are demonstrating a new trend of non-alignment. The Global South was initially reluctant to choose sides among the major powers and has since preferred cooperation based on development issues.

The Global South views relations with China and the EU as a means of diversifying partnerships and reducing dependence on traditional Western powers. While there is a willingness to engage with China and the EU, there is also a desire to

protect national interests and initiatives. The Global South views China as a crucial economic partner. China's Belt and Road Initiative has provided these countries with substantial infrastructure investment and development opportunities, resulting in notable improvements in local facilities such as transportation, energy, and communications.³⁹ Concurrently, the Global South espouses China's stance on an expanding array of international matters and articulates a unified set of demands for an enhanced global governance structure. The European Union plays an important role as a partner of the Global South in a number of areas, including trade, education, and environmental protection.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, its protectionist and conditionality-laden trade policies and aid have been met with resentment by the majority of countries in the Global South. In some instances, the legacy of historical colonialism and cultural dissimilarities may impede the exchange and collaboration between the two parties.

Furthermore, the specific circumstances of individual countries within the Global South may give rise to disparate perceptions of the relationship between China and the European Union. There are considerable variations within the Global South in terms of levels of economic development, political institutions, social structures, cultural backgrounds and so forth. The Global South comprises countries with relatively high GDPs and large economies, including Brazil, India, and South Africa, as well as least developed countries (LDCs) with lower income levels. Some countries rely mainly on agriculture and resource exports, such as Angola and Niger, and some countries have diversified economic structures, such as Malaysia and Mexico. These countries have disparate international trade and economic concerns. Regarding politics, some countries are still experiencing political instability in the form of religious conflicts, armed struggles, inter-ethnic conflicts, and even civil wars. This makes it challenging for them to form a unified opinion and voice. Concerning the social sphere, countries with disparate population sizes, human development indices (HDI), and levels of science, education, culture, and health diverge, resulting in the countries of the Global South "exhibiting their own perspectives" on the international agenda. Culturally, there is considerable linguistic and religious diversity among countries, and the legacy of colonial history has profoundly impacted the trajectory of modernisation. These differences not only affect the trajectory and rate of development in different countries and regions but also present challenges to cooperation and coordination in the Global South.

5. Conclusions

The term Global South is used to describe a group of developing countries that are undergoing industrialisation. It is not, however, an organisation with a clearly defined scope, tight organisational structure, or institutional constraints. There are evident discrepancies in the conceptualisation of the Global South between China and Europe, as evidenced by their disparate definitions, historical backgrounds, and policy practices. China perceives itself as a member of the Global South, underscores its shared historical trajectory of development and the common challenges it

confronts, and is dedicated to advancing the growth and revitalisation of the Global South through collaborative efforts. In contrast, the European Union has approached its assistance and cooperation with the Global South from the perspective of an external observer and supporter. This has entailed the export of values and a demand for institutional norms.

The discrepancies between China and Europe in the conceptualisation and implementation of Global South policies are a consequence of their disparate historical backgrounds, developmental trajectories, and geopolitical interests. These differences will affect not only how China and Europe engage with one another and their policies towards the Global South but also their far-reaching impact on the international status and development trajectory of the Global South in the future. The distinctive nature of the differences between countries within the Global South means that its impact on China and the EU is multifaceted and complex. In order to understand these dynamics, it is necessary to carefully analyse geopolitical and economic factors, given the different perspectives and interests of the various stakeholders. The Global South is more preoccupied with economic and infrastructural development than with aligning with one side.

In light of the EU's "strategic anxiety" towards China and its collaboration with the US to exclude China from the Global South, it is imperative that China proactively engages with the values and norms underpinning the Global South as espoused by the EU. In light of the growing centrifugal tendencies of the EU towards the US, driven by the latter's unilateral hegemony, China should proactively engage with the values and norms underpinning the Global South agenda advanced by the EU. This entails identifying areas of mutual interest between China and the EU in the Global South and fostering third-party cooperation. ✨

Notes

1. "World Economic Outlook: A Rocky Recovery," IMF, April 11, 2023, IMF, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2023/04/11/world-economic-outlook-april-2023>
2. "African Union in the G20: a geopolitical and economic leap for the continent," Jan 22, 2024, G20 Brasil 2024, <https://www.g20.org/en/news/african-union-in-the-g20-a-geopolitical-and-economic-leap-for-the-continent>
3. "The Republic of South Africa institutes proceedings against the State of Israel and requests the Court to indicate provisional measures," 29 December, 2023, International Court of Justice, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231229-pre-01-00-en.pdf>
4. "US rebukes South Africa for 'meritless' genocide suit against Israel. January 4," January 4, 2024, The Jewish Chronicle, <https://jewishchronicle.timesofisrael.com/us-rebukes-south-africa-for-meritless-genocide-suit-against-israel/>
5. Xi's Speech at the Closing Ceremony of the BRICS Business Forum, Official Website of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, August 23, 2023, https://www.gov.cn/yaowen/liebiao/202308/content_6899641.htm
6. Tobias Bunde, Sophie Eisentraut and Leonard Schütte, eds., "*Munich Security Report 2024: Lose-Lose?*" Munich Security Conference, February 2024, <https://securityconference.org/en/publications/munich-security-report-2024/>

7. Clea Caulcutt, "Macron slams nations staying neutral on Ukraine as 'complicit' with Russia," 20 September, 2022, Politico, <https://www.politico.eu/article/macron-accuses-neutral-nations-complicity-russia-new-imperialism-ukraine-war-un-general-assembly/>
8. For related discussions see Mignolo W D, "The Global South and world disorder," Journal of Anthropological Research, Vol. 67, No. 2, 2011, pp. 165- 188.;
Haug S, Braveboy-Wagner J and Maihold G, "The Global South in the study of world politics: examining a meta category," Third World Quarterly, Vol. 42, No. 9, 2021, pp. 1923-1944.;
Li Anshan, "The Global South in the Transformation of the World Order --Based on the Perspective of Historical Development", People's Forum - Academic Frontier, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2023, pp. 21-34;
Niu Haibin: "The "Global South" is an Important Driving Force for the Evolution of International Order", Contemporary World, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2023, pp. 22-34. Contemporary World 2023, No. 11, pp. 22-27;
Xu Xiujun and Shen Chen, "The Rise of the "Global South" and the Evolution of the World Pattern", Studies on International Issues 2023, No. 4, pp. 64-78+136-137.
9. For related discussions, see Kwet M. "Digital colonialism: US empire and the new imperialism in the Global South," Race & Class, Vol. 60, No. 4, 2019, pp. 3-26.;
Li Xiaoyun, Xu Jin, "Can the Global South become China's new strategic depth? Culture Zonghengheng, Vol. 2, No. 2, 2023, pp. 38-46;
Ma Hanzhi "Japan's Policy towards Africa in the Perspective of the "Global South," Studies in International Affairs", Vol. 3, No. 3, 2023, pp.117-137+142);
Wu Lin, "The Remodeling of Great-Power Identity Narrative and India's New "Global South" Diplomacy", Pacific Journal of International Studies, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2023, pp. 1-15;
Guo Rui and Zhao Junjie, "Analysis of Russia-Africa "Special Relationship Model" under the Perspective of "Global South"". "Analysis of the Russian-African "Special Relations Model" in the Perspective of the "Global South""", Russian Studies, No. 2, 2024, pp. 118-145.
10. For related discussions see Parnell S and Robinson J, "(Re)theorizing cities from the Global South: looking beyond neoliberalism," Urban geography, Vol. 33, No. 4, 2012, pp. 593-617.;
Gray K and Gills B K, "South-South cooperation and the rise of the Global South. " Third World Quarterly, Vol. 37, No. 4, 2016, pp. 557-574.;
Singh J N and Ovadia J S, "The theory and practice of building developmental states in the Global South," Developmental States beyond East Asia, 2020, pp. 1-23.;
Li Lengqun, "The "Global South "Role in International Ocean Governance - Taking the Marine Biodiversity Agreement Negotiations as an Example," Asia-Pacific Security and Ocean Studies, 2023, no. 6, pp. 68-89+3-4;
Yin Zhiguang, "The "Global South " and a new type of globalization", People's Forum - Academic Frontiers, No. 23, 2023, pp. 35-49.
11. See Liu Debin and Li Dongqi, "The Rise of the "Global South" and Its Importance", Thought Theory Front, No. 1, 2023, pp. 79-90+141;
Huang Zhong, "The "New Non-Aligned" Movement of the Global South", Modern International Relations, No. 5, 2023, pp. 111-130+151;
Men Honghua, "The Rise of the "Global South" and a New Picture of International Game", Modern International Relations, No. 5, 2023, pp. 111-130+151; and Men Honghua, "The Rise of the "Global South" and a New Picture of International Game". Modern International Relations, Vol. 5, No. 5, 2023, pp. 111-130+151;
Honghua Men, "The Rise of the "Global South" and the New Landscape of the International Game: China's Strategic Response", Teaching and Research, No. 1, 2024, pp. 104-113. pp. 104-113;
Yang Hui, "The Rise of the "Global South", Divisions, and China's Choice," Diplomatic Review , 2024, no. 2, pp. 1-23+165;

- Dirlik A, "Global South. predicament and promise," *The Global South*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007, pp. 12-23.; Dados N and Connell R, "The Global South. " Contexts, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2012, pp. 12-13.
12. Oglesby C, "*Vietnamism has failed... The revolution can only be mauled, not defeated.*" *Commonweal*, Vol.90, 1969, pp.11-12.
 13. Global South Countries (Group 77 and China), http://www.fc-ssc.org/en/partnership_program/south_south_countries
 14. Today in Diplomatic History, August 6", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/historytoday_674971/200308/t20030806_9284616.shtml
 15. Literature Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, *Collected Works of Mao Zedong* (vol. 8), People's Publishing House, 1999 edition, p. 343.
 16. Today in Diplomatic History, February 22", Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/historytoday_674971/200302/t20030222_9284515.shtml
 17. Deng Xiaoping, *Selected Writings of Deng Xiaoping* (vol. 3), *People's Publishing House*, 1993 edition, pp. 104-106.
 18. Wang Yi Attends the 13th Meeting of BRICS High Representatives on Security Affairs", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, July 25, 2023, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/wjdt_674879/gjldrh_674881/202307/t20230725_11117690.shtml
 19. Shada Islam, "*Europe and the Global South. How to gain influence and credibility in a complex world.*" *Real Instituto Elcano*, 25 April, 2024, <https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/en/analyses/europe-and-the-global-south-how-to-gain-influence-and-credibility-in-a-complex-world/>
 20. Anthony Dworkin, "*Multilateral development in flux: Strengthening European cooperation with the Global South.*" *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 22 November, 2023, <https://ecfr.eu/publication/multilateral-development-in-flux-strengthening-european-cooperation-with-the-global-south/>
 21. "North-South, a Programme for Survival," *Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980.
 22. EEAS Press Team, "*European Diplomatic Academy: Opening remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell at the inauguration of the pilot programme.*" *European Union External Action*, 13 October, 2022, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/european-diplomatic-academy-opening-remarks-high-representative-josep-borrell-inauguration-pilot_en
 23. Micaela Iveson and David McNair, "*Multilateral development: How Europeans can get real with the Global South.*" *European Council on Foreign Relations*, 12 June, 2023, <https://ecfr.eu/article/multilateral-development-how-europeans-can-get-real-with-the-global-south/>
 24. Xi's Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Third "*The Belt and Road Initiative International Cooperation Summit.*" *Xinhua*, October 18, 2023, <http://www.beltandroadforum.org/n101/2023/1018/c132-1174.html>.
 25. White Paper on China's International Development Cooperation in the New Era, Information Office of the State Council, January 10, 2021, <http://www.scio.gov.cn/gxzt/dtzt/2021/xsddzg-gjfhzfbps/>
 26. "Cotonou Agreement," *Eur-lex*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:r12101>
 27. "Cotonou Agreement," *Eur-lex*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:r12101>
 28. "2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen," *European Commission*, 15 September, 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_21_4701

29. Tagliapietra S, “*The European Union’s Global Gateway: An institutional and economic overview*,” *The World Economy*, Vol.47, No.4, 2024, pp.1326-1335.
30. Katarína Javorceková, “*The Delusion of Lula’s ‘Peace Club’*,” *Globsec*, 18 September, 2023, <https://www.globsec.org/what-we-do/commentaries/delusion-lulas-peace-club>
31. Mared Gwyn Jones, “*Why is the EU mostly silent on South Africa’s genocide case against Israel?*” *Euro News*, 12 Jan, 2024, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/01/12/where-do-eu-countries-stand-on-south-africas-genocide-case-against-israel>
32. De Genova N, “*The ‘migrant crisis’ as racial crisis: do Black Lives Matter in Europe?*” *Race and Crisis*, 2020, pp.19-36.
33. Dixon-Declève et al., “*Directorate-General for Research and Innovation*,” Research, innovation, and technology policy in times of geopolitical competition, Publications Office of the European Union, 2023, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6dc11e64-6bd6-11ee-9220-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>
34. China-Africa Cooperation in the New Era, Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, November 26, 2021, https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2021-11/26/content_5653540.htm
35. Alden C, “*The Global South and Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine*,” *LSE Public Policy Review*, Vol.3, No.1, 2023, pp. 16.
36. “UN General Assembly votes to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council,” *UN Affairs*, 7 April, 2022,
37. Krista Larson, “*Africa leader warns of pressure to choose sides in Ukraine*,” *AP News*, 21 September, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-united-nations-general-assembly-macky-sall-f7b8ec5e6092dc439adc1230e4f64d1d>
38. “GLOBSEC 2022: Day 2 Highlights,” *Globsec 2022 Bratislava Forum*, 3 June, 2022, <https://forum2022.globsec.org/globsec-2022-day-2-highlights/>
39. István Tarrósy; Zoltán Vörös, “*China and Ethiopia, Part 1: The Light Railway System*” *Paper: 2018/02/china-and-ethiopia-part-1-the-light-railway-system/*, *The Diplomat*, February 13, 2018, <https://m2.mtmt.hu/api/publication/3333722?&labelLang=eng>
40. István Tarrósy; Loránd Szabó; Goran Hyden, “*The African State in a Changing Global Context*” *LIT*, London, United Kingdom, 2011, 216p. pp. 17-33., 17p. <https://m2.mtmt.hu/api/publication/1436308>

Bibliography

- Tobias Bunde, Sophie Eisentraut and Leonard Schütte, eds., “*Munich Security Report 2024: Lose-Lose?*” *Munich Security Conference*, February 2024, <https://securityconference.org/en/publications/munich-security-report-2024/>
- Clea Caulcutt, “*Macron slams nations staying neutral on Ukraine as ‘complicit’ with Russia*,” 20 September, 2022, *Politico*, <https://www.politico.eu/article/macron-accuses-neutral-nations-complicity-russia-new-imperialism-ukraine-war-un-general-assembly/>
- For related discussions see Mignolo W D, “*The Global South and world disorder*,” *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 67, No. 2, 2011, pp. 165- 188.;
Haug S, Braveboy-Wagner J and Maihold G, “*The Global South in the study of world politics: examining a meta category*,” *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 42, No. 9, 2021, pp. 1923-1944.;
Li Anshan, “*The Global South in the Transformation of the World Order --Based on the Perspective of Historical Development*”, *People’s Forum - Academic Frontier*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 2023, pp. 21-34;
Niu Haibin: “*The “Global South” is an Important Driving Force for the Evolution of International Order*”, *Contemporary World*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 2023, pp. 22-34. *Contemporary World* 2023, No. 11, pp. 22-27;

- Xu Xiujun and Shen Chen, “*The Rise of the “Global South” and the Evolution of the World Pattern*”, Studies on International Issues 2023, No. 4, pp. 64-78+136-137.
- For related discussions, see Kwet M. “*Digital colonialism: US empire and the new imperialism in the Global South*,” Race & Class, Vol. 60, No. 4, 2019, pp. 3-26.;
Li Xiaoyun, Xu Jin, “*Can the Global South become China’s new strategic depth? Culture Zonghengheng*,” Vol. 2, No. 2, 2023, pp. 38-46;
Ma Hanzhi “*Japan’s Policy towards Africa in the Perspective of the “Global South*,” Studies in International Affairs”, Vol. 3, No. 3, 2023, pp.117-137+142);
Wu Lin, “*The Remodeling of Great-Power Identity Narrative and India’s New “Global South” Diplomacy*”, Pacific Journal of International Studies, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2023, pp. 1-15;
Guo Rui and Zhao Junjie, “*Analysis of Russia-Africa “Special Relationship Model” under the Perspective of “Global South”*”. “Analysis of the Russian-African “Special Relations Model” in the Perspective of the “Global South””, Russian Studies, No. 2, 2024, pp. 118-145.
 - For related discussions see Parnell S and Robinson J, “*(Re)theorizing cities from the Global South: looking beyond neoliberalism*,” Urban geography, Vol. 33, No. 4, 2012, pp. 593-617.;
Gray K and Gills B K, “*South-South cooperation and the rise of the Global South*. “ Third World Quarterly, Vol. 37, No. 4, 2016, pp. 557-574.;
Singh J N and Ovadia J S, “*The theory and practice of building developmental states in the Global South*,” Developmental States beyond East Asia, 2020, pp. 1-23.;
Li Lengqun, “*The “Global South” Role in International Ocean Governance - Taking the Marine Biodiversity Agreement Negotiations as an Example*,” Asia-Pacific Security and Ocean Studies, 2023, no. 6, pp. 68-89+3-4;
Yin Zhiguang, “*The “Global South” “ and a new type of globalization”*”, People’s Forum - Academic Frontiers, No. 23, 2023, pp. 35-49.
 - See Liu Debin and Li Dongqi, “*The Rise of the “Global South” and Its Importance*”, Thought Theory Front, No. 1, 2023, pp. 79-90+141;
Huang Zhong, “*The “New Non-Aligned” Movement of the Global South*”, Modern International Relations, No. 5, 2023, pp. 111-130+151;
Men Honghua, “*The Rise of the “Global South” and a New Picture of International Game*”, Modern International Relations, No. 5, 2023, pp. 111-130+151; and Men Honghua, “*The Rise of the “Global South” and a New Picture of International Game*”. Modern International Relations, Vol. 5, No. 5, 2023, pp. 111-130+151;
Honghua Men, “*The Rise of the “Global South” and the New Landscape of the International Game: China’s Strategic Response*”, Teaching and Research, No. 1, 2024, pp. 104-113. pp. 104-113;
Yang Hui, “*The Rise of the “Global South”, Divisions, and China’s Choice*,” Diplomatic Review , 2024, no. 2, pp. 1-23+165;
Dirlik A, “*Global South. predicament and promise*,” The Global South, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2007, pp. 12-23.; Dados N and Connell R, “*The Global South*. “ Contexts, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2012, pp. 12-13.
 - Oglesby C, “*Vietnamism has failed... The revolution can only be mauled, not defeated*.” Commonweal, Vol.90, 1969, pp.11-12.
 - Literature Research Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Collected Works of Mao Zedong (vol. 8), People’s Publishing House, 1999 edition, p. 343.
 - Deng Xiaoping, Selected Writings of Deng Xiaoping (vol. 3), People’s Publishing House, 1993 edition, pp. 104-106.
 - Anthony Dworkin, “*Multilateral development in flux: Strengthening European cooperation with the Global South*,” European Council on Foreign Relations, 22 November, 2023, <https://ecfr.eu/publication/multilateral-development-in-flux-strengthening-european-cooperation-with-the-global-south/>

- “North-South, a Programme for Survival,” Report of the Independent Commission on International Development Issues, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1980.
- De Genova N, “*The ‘migrant crisis’ as racial crisis: do Black Lives Matter in Europe?*” Race and Crisis, 2020, pp.19-36.
- Alden C, “*The Global South and Russia’s Invasion of Ukraine*,” LSE Public Policy Review, Vol.3, No.1, 2023, pp. 16
- “UN General Assembly votes to suspend Russia from the Human Rights Council,” UN Affairs, 7 April, 2022,

Online resources

- “World Economic Outlook: A Rocky Recovery,” IMF, April 11, 2023, IMF, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO/Issues/2023/04/11/world-economic-outlook-april-2023>
- “African Union in the G20: a geopolitical and economic leap for the continent,” Jan 22, 2024, G20 Brasil 2024, <https://www.g20.org/en/news/african-union-in-the-g20-a-geopolitical-and-economic-leap-for-the-continent>
- “The Republic of South Africa institutes proceedings against the State of Israel and requests the Court to indicate provisional measures,” 29 December, 2023, International Court of Justice, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20231229-pre-01-00-en.pdf>
- “US rebukes South Africa for ‘meritless’ genocide suit against Israel. January 4,” January 4, 2024, The Jewish Chronicle, <https://jewishchronicle.timesofisrael.com/us-rebukes-south-africa-for-meritless-genocide-suit-against-israel/>
- Xi’s Speech at the Closing Ceremony of the BRICS Business Forum, Official Website of the Central People’s Government of the People’s Republic of China, August 23, 2023, https://www.gov.cn/yaowen/liebiao/202308/content_6899641.htm
- Tobias Bunde, Sophie Eisentraut and Leonard Schütte, eds., “*Munich Security Report 2024: Lose-Lose?*” Munich Security Conference, February 2024, <https://securityconference.org/en/publications/munich-security-report-2024/>
- Clea Caulcutt, “*Macron slams nations staying neutral on Ukraine as ‘complicit’ with Russia*,” 20 September, 2022, Politico, <https://www.politico.eu/article/macron-accuses-neutral-nations-complicity-russia-new-imperialism-ukraine-war-un-general-assembly/>
- Global South Countries (Group 77 and China), http://www.fc-ssc.org/en/partnership_program/south_south_countries
- Today in Diplomatic History, August 6”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/historytoday_674971/200308/t20030806_9284616.shtml
- Today in Diplomatic History, February 22”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, https://www.mfa.gov.cn/web/ziliao_674904/historytoday_674971/200302/t20030222_9284515.shtml
- Wang Yi Attends the 13th Meeting of BRICS High Representatives on Security Affairs”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China*, July 25, 2023, https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/wjdt_674879/gjldrhd_674881/202307/t20230725_11117690.shtml
- Shada Islam, “*Europe and the Global South. How to gain influence and credibility in a complex world*,” Real Instituto Elcano, 25 April, 2024, <https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/en/analyses/europe-and-the-global-south-how-to-gain-influence-and-credibility-in-a-complex-world/>
- Anthony Dworkin, “*Multilateral development in flux: Strengthening European cooperation with the Global South*,” European Council on Foreign Relations, 22 November, 2023, <https://>

ecfr.eu/publication/multilateral-development-in-flux-strengthening-european-cooperation-with-the-global-south/

- EEAS Press Team, “*European Diplomatic Academy: Opening remarks by High Representative Josep Borrell at the inauguration of the pilot programme*,” European Union External Action, 13 October, 2022, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/european-diplomatic-academy-opening-remarks-high-representative-josep-borrell-inauguration-pilot_en
- Micaela Iveson and David McNair, “*Multilateral development: How Europeans can get real with the Global South*,” European Council on Foreign Relations, 12 June, 2023, <https://ecfr.eu/article/multilateral-development-how-europeans-can-get-real-with-the-global-south/>
- Xi’s Keynote Speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Third “*The Belt and Road Initiative International Cooperation Summit*,” Xinhua, October 18, 2023, <http://www.beltandroadforum.org/n101/2023/1018/c132-1174.html>
- White Paper on China’s International Development Cooperation in the New Era, Information Office of the State Council, January 10, 2021, <http://www.scio.gov.cn/gxzt/dtzt/2021/xsddzg-gjfhzfbps/>
- “Cotonou Agreement,” Eur-lex, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:r12101>
- “Cotonou Agreement,” Eur-lex, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:r12101>
- “2021 State of the Union Address by President von der Leyen,” European Commission, 15 September, 2021, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/speech_21_4701
- Katarína Javorceková, “*The Delusion of Lula’s ‘Peace Club’*,” Globsec, 18 September, 2023, <https://www.globsec.org/what-we-do/commentaries/delusion-lulas-peace-club>
- Marek Gwyn Jones, “*Why is the EU mostly silent on South Africa’s genocide case against Israel?*” Euro News, 12 Jan, 2024, <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/01/12/where-do-eu-countries-stand-on-south-africas-genocide-case-against-israel>
- Dixon-Declève et al., “*Directorate-General for Research and Innovation*,” Research, innovation, and technology policy in times of geopolitical competition, Publications Office of the European Union, 2023, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6dc11e64-6bd6-11ee-9220-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>
- China-Africa Cooperation in the New Era, Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, November 26, 2021, https://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2021-11/26/content_5653540.htm
- Krista Larson, “*Africa leader warns of pressure to choose sides in Ukraine*,” AP News, 21 September, 2022, <https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-united-nations-general-assembly-macky-sall-f7b8ec5e6092dc439adc1230e4f64d1d>
- “GLOBSEC 2022: Day 2 Highlights,” Globsec 2022 Bratislava Forum, 3 June, 2022, <https://forum2022.globsec.org/globsec-2022-day-2-highlights/>



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS IN AFRICA BETWEEN 1900 AND 1910

NIKOLETTA EVELIN ZSIGA

PHD STUDENT, DOCTORAL SCHOOL IN HISTORY,

UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED

NIKOLETTA.ZSIGA.SZTE@GMAIL.COM

Abstract

Colonialism brought extensive suffering to Africans. One manifestation of this was the concentration camp systems established in German South West Africa and the British-controlled areas of Southern Africa. The British colonialists fought the mostly Dutch-born Boers, who had settled in South Africa in the 19th century, while the Germans fought the indigenous Herero and Nama. Both conflicts were motivated by a desire to secure the dominance and economic growth of the respective imperial powers. The concentration camp model, which previously had been seen in Cuba, served as a tool for this purpose. Between 1900 and 1910, approximately 28,000 Boers and 20,000 Africans died in these camps in the southern African territories, while nearly 8,000 Africans, mostly children, died in the German colony.

This paper seeks to answer, among other questions, the following: What conflicts led to establishing concentration camps in the colonies under discussion, and what purpose did they serve? The comparative analysis focuses on the conditions in the camps, the treatment of internees, and the resulting mortality figures.

Keywords

Colonialism, concentration camps, comparative study, crimes against humanity

Received: February 24, 2024 | 1st Revision: August 7, 2024 | Accepted: December 15, 2024

Zsiga, Nikolettá Evelin (2024). Comparative analysis of concentration camps in Africa between 1900 and 1910. Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 79-93.

1. Introduction

The concept of concentration camps is very often associated with Nazi death camps, but the Germans had already established these types of camps long before. Indeed, concentration camps were not a new phenomenon. However, Nazi Germany was not the first to use these facilities. A concentration camp is not synonymous with a death camp. In the former, people were detained and subjected to forced labour, starvation, and torture, among other things. In the latter, the aim was to exterminate detainees as quickly and efficiently as possible (Holokauszt Enciklopédia, 2024).

The first isolation camp in the United States was established in 1838 for the Cherokee Indians, but it functioned more as a reservation. The very first concentration camp (from the word ‘reconcentracio’, meaning to re-concentrate) is associated with the Second War of Independence in Cuba (1895–1898), during which Spanish colonialists confined civilians in concentration camps. The purpose and consequence were similar for the camps established then and used since isolation and surveillance, crowding people together, and poor conditions, leading to mass deaths (Papp, 2013: 235–236).

In the years following the Cuban camps, this system of segregation was also used in two colonies in Africa during the period under review. The British established such camps for the Boers and the Africans in southern Africa and the Germans in German South West Africa against the Herero and the Nama.

This paper will give a historical overview of the colonial activities of the British and Germans in the areas under study and then briefly describe how the conflict between the colonizers and the Africans escalated into the establishment of concentration camps. After that, attention will turn to a comparison of concentration camps. First, I use the individualising comparative study to highlight the specificities of the two cases, thus examining the correlation between the retributive aspects (concentration camps) of German and British colonialism. Therefore, I am mainly comparing the research results of secondary sources - for which the findings of experts on African history are indispensable - and adding my own ideas. In my work, I employ the deductive method. This involves developing a set of criteria based on the existing literature, which enables me to make comparisons. By using these criteria, I can either confirm or reject the research questions I formulate and provide answers to them.

My goal is to create a concise summary that will examine the connections between the discussed cases, thereby contributing to comparative genocide research and research in Africa.

The uniqueness of this comparison lies in its inclusion of both human factors and the impact of genocide. It emphasizes the significant losses suffered by the African population at the turn of the century. This allows us to assert that genocides and massacres occurred in Africa during the second half of the 19th century and the early 20th century. However, these acts were primarily driven by colonisation and the actions of colonialists rather than by Africans who were deemed inferior. As I will examine both Lemkinian and the “modern” interpretation of genocide through

the concentration camps, it is essential to juxtapose the two cases, thus showing the similarities and differences.

In Lemkin's view, there is a link between genocide and colonialism: '*Genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. The objectives of such a plan would be disintegration of the political and social institutions, of culture, language, national feelings, religion, and the economic existence of national groups, and the destruction of the personal security, liberty, health, dignity, and even the lives of the individuals belonging to such groups.*' (Lemkin, 1944: 79). It also reveals what Lemkin identifies as the method of genocide: '*physical – massacre and mutilation, deprivation of livelihood (starvation, exposure, etc. often by deportation); slavery – exposure to death; biological – separation of families (...); cultural – (...) destruction of cultural leadership (...)*' (McDonnell – Moses, 2005: 504–505).

In contrast, the current definition of genocide – in force since 1948 – is: '*genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.*' (Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948: Article II).

On this basis, therefore, we have two slightly different definitions of colonial massacres and concentration camps.

The comparative analysis will be carried out by asking the following research questions: (1) Who were the victims, and approximately how many Africans were interned by the colonialists? (2) How long were they in operation, and what were the reasons and objectives of the concentration camps? (3) What were the conditions, how many people died, and how were these 'facilities' liquidated? Finally, a consideration of whether genocide was committed or not in the concentration camps will be examined. I examine the comparison from four perspectives: human factors, political and economic influences, the infrastructures built in the concentration camp system, and genocide.

2. Historical background

In the 17th century, the Dutch settlers, the Boers, founded the first trading settlement in South Africa under the name of Cape Town (Nagyné, 2010: 115). However, the Congress of Vienna (1814–1815) awarded Cape Town, acquired from the Netherlands, to the British (Papp, 2013: 237). The British expansion and the arrival of British settlers marked the beginning of the conflict, as the newcomers could not

assimilate and were therefore called uitlanders or foreigners. (Rosta, 2012: 95). On the other hand, the British posed a threat to the Boer way of life, which revolved around farming and herding (Papp, 2013: 237). The situation was exacerbated by the slave emancipation in 1833 in the British Empire and its colonies. This was to the disadvantage of the Boers; on the one hand, they lost the local labour force that the Africans represented (as they lived as slaves under the control of the Dutch settlers). However, emancipation also had a financial disadvantage for the Boers, as the compensation for the freed slaves was found to be insufficient. The British annexation, which prevented the expansion of the Boers, was the final 'blow.' In the wake of these events, the Boers emigrated between 1835 and 1837 in the so-called 'great trek.' Some five thousand Boers and an equal number of servants left Cape Town, and a republic was established in the Port Natal area. In 1843, the British also annexed this area, and some of the Boers founded two more states, the Transvaal Republic and the Oranje Free State (Rosta, 2012: 95–97). The British also recognised these as independent states in the first half of the 1850s (Fage – Tordoff, 2004: 302).

In 1867, diamonds were found in Grikva, on the border of Cape Colony, Transvaal, and Oranje, and all three states, wanted to claim it. In 1871, Cape Colony succeeded. In 1886, a gold field was discovered in the Transvaal, which the Boers hoped to use to gain independence from the British economy. The Anglo-Boer conflict was further deepened because the Boers were convinced that the British wanted to destroy them. This belief was reinforced by the efforts of Cecil Rhodes – British businessman and Prime Minister of Cape Town (1890–1896) – to unite the British and Boers throughout South Africa. The Transvaal rejected this due to growing Afrikaner nationalism and the need to protect its sovereignty (Fage – Tordoff, 2004: 321–326).

The wealth of the Southern African region, the struggles for prestige and power between the colonisers, and the economic interests of the Europeans eventually led to the Second Boer War¹ between 1899 and 1902.

The first German in German South West Africa was Adolf Lüderitz, a Bremen merchant who bought land around Angra Pequena Bay from the local chiefs in 1883 and later founded a town there under the name Lüderitz (Pálfi, 2019: 164). In 1884, Lüderitz had obtained more land, but due to concerns about British involvement, the German Reich took over the previously acquired 'private colony' as a protected territory, establishing it as a German protectorate (Molnár, 2013: 213).

In 1887, Heinrich Ernst Göring, the first German head of government in South West Africa, passed a law granting different rights to Europeans and Africans. By 1890, the bankruptcy of German companies in South West Africa led German Chancellor Bismarck to decide in favour of state intervention, and the protectorate status was replaced by the Crown Colony status, where a direct territorial rule was implemented. With the signing of the Heligoland-Zanzibar Treaty in 1890, German South West Africa reached its final extent (Németh – Juhász, 2012: 38; Molnár, 2013: 213–214).

In the territory colonised by the Germans, the Africans, including the Herero and the Nama, were incessantly at war with each other, and the colonisers took advantage of this. In 1893, however, Hendrik Witbooi, the chief of a Nama tribe, abandoned

tribal warfare and rebelled against the Germans because of the arbitrary nature of German rule, which led to the murder of many Africans (Pálfi, 2019: 164). By 1894, the new governor of the colony, Theodor Leutwein, and the troops of the colonial protection force, the Schutztruppe, which had

been established in 1888 and increased by several hundred, had successfully put down this rebellion (Németh – Juhász, 2012: 26; Leanza, 2020: 381).

The Herero and Nama peoples traditionally engaged in animal husbandry (Németh – Juhász, 2012: 28). However, the arrival of settlers and missionaries in the colony led to the occupation of African lands. Additionally, the construction of a railway line further exacerbated the land disruptions for the local population (Molnár, 2013: 215). In 1897, a cattle plague and locust epidemic swept through the region, resulting in mass cattle deaths and driving up meat prices. German settlers exploited this situation by raising cattle on the pastures of the Africans, who were forced to sell their land due to their impoverished circumstances. The traders' less-than-honest dealings and the usury interest charged on loans to Hereros and Namas, often collected by force, created an additional economic problem. The Germans also set up reservations to which they tried to force the Africans. This led to a military confrontation between the Herero and the Germans in January 1904, followed by the Nama uprising in July 1904 (Németh – Juhász, 2012: 28–35). However, the literature has no consensus on when the Nama uprising can be dated. Some authors place the uprising after the publication of the extermination order² of German commander Lothar von Trotha (October 1904), which coincides with the official report of the German army general staff (Bachmann, 2018: 78).

In the territory colonised by the Germans, the Africans, including the Herero and the Nama, were incessantly at war with each other, and the colonisers took advantage of this.

3. Comparison of concentration camps

The comparison of the two sets of camps shows that they were operational for about the same length of time. The British operated camps from September 1900 to the summer of 1902, while the Germans held Africans between 1905 and 1907–1908. This means that the camps were primarily in operation during the war. A December 21, 1900 British memorandum officially sanctioned the Boer camps. However, in reality, refugee camps were established earlier, in the summer of 1900, and were replaced by concentration camps in September of the same year (Kotek – Rigoutot, 2005: 53–54). Meanwhile, for the Germans, the term *Konzentrationslagern* first appeared in a telegram on January 14, 1905 (Gewald, 1999: 186).

The number of camps set up for Boers and Africans is slightly different; 116,000 Boers were crammed into 40–58 camps, while 115,700 Africans were interned in

60–66 camps (Warwick, 1983: 145; Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 52–54; Papp, 2013: 240). For the Herero and Nama, the Germans established larger camps at five locations: Okahandja, Windhoek, Karibib, Swakopmund, and Lüderitzbucht. Still, the 1906 Schutztruppe record suggests that there may have been several smaller camps where Africans lived. According to records in the Namibian National Archives, 17,018 people were held in these camps. The Germans probably had to set up additional camps because some of the Herero and Nama surrendered only later, in 1906, when the Germans released some prisoners to inform their fellow fugitives (for example, about the revocation of the extermination order) (Bachmann, 2018: 106–108).

The concentration camps established by the British and the Germans show many similarities in their operation and aims, mainly because the Germans took their cues from the Spanish and the British and adopted, among other things, the term concentration camp and the use of barbed wire (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 69). The Germans, however, took this system further, and it was the Herero and the Nama who were the first to be subjected to forced labour in such camps (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 65). It was in German South West Africa that the unity of labour and concentration camps was first achieved (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 69).

The Boer camps were set up for the purpose of isolation, partly because guerrilla tactics characterised the Boer warfare, and the British feared that they would gain support from the civilian population (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 51–52). On the other hand, the systematic destruction of Boer homes by the British in their scorched earth tactics led to their being rounded up and forcibly confined in concentration camps (Ribeiro, 2020: 2). The camps were not established in the same way, and conditions varied depending on the attitude and behaviour of the British supervisors (Dampier, 2005: 203).

Reports by Emily Hobhouse, the wife of a British MP, after she visited the Boer camps, paint a clearer picture of how the camps operated. Hobhouse visited some camps in the Cape Colony in late December 1900. She intended to repeat the visit shortly afterwards, but the authorities no longer allowed her to go ashore. After the failure, she wrote a book based on the testimonies of those in the camps and letters from interned women. These revealed that daily life in the camps included the fact that the prisoners received very little food, not enough even to survive when the camps began operating (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 55–56). She describes the conditions in the camps as follows: people lived in tents – or, according to other sources, in tin and sod houses (Dampier, 2005: 203) – where dozens of people were crammed together. Hygiene conditions were poor, with a lack of soap available. In some camps, latrine receptacles were set up in the hot sun, which resulted in a strong, unpleasant odour. Water and fuel shortages also posed significant challenges due to extreme weather conditions. Winters were harsh and cold, while summers were hot. Hobhouse's work also shows, however, that Boer women often complained that they could not bring their African servants with them, so they had to do the 'household chores' of cooking and washing themselves (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 55). Other sources, however, suggest that the Boers could keep servants, but they

did not benefit from food rations, so their numbers were minimal. In addition, the camps had hospitals, shops, and schools, and the Boers were allowed to visit the town, where they could buy food and other items and receive visitors and food parcels. The Boers also had the opportunity to earn money, as some internees found work with the camp authorities while the wealthier Boers employed others. The employment opportunities included gardening, carpentry, shoemaking, clothes washing, sewing, and caring for the elderly or working as a nurse. (Dampier, 2005: 203). All this confirms that the British camps were much more permissive than the camps for Herero and Nama, but especially more so than the Soviet gulags and Nazi concentration camps, with which no parallels can be drawn. In the Soviet and German camps, the aim was work or extermination.

As a result of the reports, the book by Emily Hobhouse, and several international organisations (such as the *Women's League for International Disarmament* and the *Swiss Evangelical Alliance*), international public opinion increasingly condemned this method of isolation by the British. The Boers received food aid, political support and international press coverage. This led, for example, to changes in food rations (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 56).

During the war, some Africans supported the British colonial army in their rapid advance. They contributed by actions such as destroying Boer-owned farms and crops. Additionally, they played an active role in the internment of Boer civilians in concentration camps (Warwick, 1983: 22). However, these operations severely disrupted the livelihoods of the Africans. In response to their assistance to the British, Boer commandos carried out punitive raids, making the local population feel threatened. As a result, in July 1900, many Africans fled to the British lines and garrison towns in search of protection. Initially, they settled in or near the Boer camps, but eventually, separate camps were established for them (Warwick, 1983: 146–149). Much less information has survived about the camps for Africans, as most of the records have been destroyed (van Heyningen, 2010: 2). The Africans camps were more lethal than those for the Boers, as they served a different purpose, namely to enforce labour. For this reason, the camps were established along railway lines, which meant easier access to centres requiring labour. Once in the camps, the ‘refugees’ were segregated by ethnicity and separated into distinct camps by the British soldiers, with the Africans camps often located a mile and a half from the Boer camps. According to one source, the British were trying to cut costs at the expense of the Africans, as the war against the Boers was financially burdensome. As a result, the Africans camps were denied the most basic services, which the Boers were provided with, so they were officially denied food, medical care, and the materials needed to build shelters. This was in line with colonial policies that forced Africans to work in exchange for food. Under the policy of *no work, no food*, if they did not work, they were subject to starvation (Benneyworth, 2020: 74–78). This was borne out by the British expectation that the camps should be as self-sustaining as possible (Warwick, 1983: 149).

According to another source, the Africans, similar to the Boers, either worked for the British armed forces or served as administrators in the Boer camps. Africans were adaptable, taking on various roles, from cleaning latrines to working in mines during the final hours of operation. Their wages were deducted from the amount needed to support their families in the latter case. However, some Africans were allowed to keep their cattle, thus leading a self-sustaining life (Benneyworth, 2020: 78–79).

The comparison shows that the most inhuman and cruel conditions of all the concentration camps discussed were those for Herero and Nama; with the primary purpose of these facilities being punishment (Nielsen, 2022: 31).

Following the revocation of the extermination order, German colonial policy changed. Those Herero, and the Nama who later rebelled, who surrendered were imprisoned in concentration camps and sentenced to forced labour (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 68). The Africans interned in the camps were tattooed with the inscription ‘GH’ *Gefangene Herero*, or imprisoned Herero (Stone, 2001: 34). The German soldiers initially kept the locals for their own benefit, and from 1905 onwards made a certain number of prisoners available to civilian companies operating in the colony as labour. Unlike the Boers and the Africans in the British colonies, the Herero and the Nama were not paid (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 69).

According to one source, after the concentration camps were set up and before the extermination order was revoked, the Germans separated the Herero and the Nama. The Nama were to be punished, while the Herero were to be exterminated. This remained in place until 1907³ when the extermination order was revoked, and the colonial policy changed. After this point, prisoners were only used as labourers (Pálfi, 2019: 172).

According to another source, however, the Germans made no distinction between the two ethnic groups during the internment. Prisoners were only provided for after the needs of the soldiers or troops had been met, including, for example, food and medical care. This resulted in low rations for the Africans and the fact that they could not maintain the dietary habits they had previously acquired from herding, led to diseases. They were also unable to adequately protect themselves against weather conditions such as sea winds and damp winters, as soldiers were also given priority for clothing and blankets (Kuss, 2017: 53–54).

One of the most notorious camps was Shark Island, off the coast of Lüderitz,⁴ which was characterized by substandard living conditions and a high mortality rate (Kuss, 2017: 54). Here, prisoners were guarded behind barbed wire with machine guns; beatings and sexual violence were also common. On the island, prisoners were involved in construction projects such as building railways and breakwaters. The construction of the breakwater required the blasting of rocks, which the Germans did without regard for the safety of the Africans. This is shown by the fact that many people died during such occasions, but the Germans were only concerned about the issue of maintaining their workforce (Nielsen, 2022: 31–32). During the construction of the railway line from Lüderitz, a British eyewitness reported that

prisoners were in a terrible state, with many trying to escape by swimming away. They were barely able to walk due to weakness and malnutrition, and cruel treatment was commonplace (Bridgman – Worley, 2004: 49–50). In addition to Shark Island, two other camps were known for their inhumane conditions: the camps at Swakopmund and the camps at Karibib. When comparing the accounts of eyewitnesses who visited the camps, it is clear that the atrocities committed against the Africans are unanimously highlighted (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 70).

The primary purpose of the camps was thus to gather the colonizers' 'enemies,' to prevent resupply or assistance, and, in the case of the Herero and Boer, to hasten the abandonment of the fighting (for example, to force Boer men to surrender by interning their family members) (Papp, 2013: 239; Kuss, 2017: 53; Bachmann, 2018: 98). However, the British made a distinction between the Boers and the Africans, categorising them as an 'inferior race' and exploiting the camps to force Africans into forced labour. Forced labour was also a significant factor in the detention of Herero and Nama, and the British and German camps can be seen as an attempt to reduce labour shortages. In the case of the Germans, however, forced labour was seen as a means, an opportunity, through which the Germans were 'empowered' to punish the Africans and to retaliate against the uprising. A comparison of the death rates of the prisoners and the treatment meted out also shows that for the British, it was an unintended consequence. At the same time, for the Germans, it was a partially intended result of the reduction in the number of Africans, their 'extermination' (Nielsen, 2022: 31–32).

Comparing the mortality figures, all three camp systems resulted in tremendous loss of lives, but in terms of size, the German camps were the deadliest. Approximately 28,000 of the 116,000 Boers interned died, while 14,154 of the 115,700 Africans perished (Warwick, 1983: 145; Hall, 1999: 119). Of the 17,000 Africans – 15,000 Herero and 2,000 Nama – detained by the Germans, 7,682 died (Bachmann, 2018: 107). However, these figures become telling when looking at the proportions: 24% of the Boers interned died, while 17% of the Africans perished. In the case of the former, it is estimated that 10% of the Boer population of Transvaal died in the camps, and therefore, the British were right to think that they were being exterminated (Papp, 2013: 242). The Germans detained far fewer Herero and Nama, but they still had the highest mortality rate, with 45% of the camp 'inhabitants' dying.

In all three camp systems, the majority of the population were women and children (Surányi, 2000: 44; Leanza, 2020: 383; Benneyworth, 2020: 87). The high mortality rate is attributed to the fact that children's bodies are less resistant than those of adults. Additionally, the terrible conditions in the camps favoured the development

The primary purpose of the camps was thus to gather the colonizers' 'enemies,' to prevent resupply or assistance, and, in the case of the Herero and Boer, to hasten the abandonment of the fighting.

and spread of diseases, with children being the most exposed and the most affected. Overall, infectious diseases were widespread among the internees. In the case of Boers, deaths were mainly due to dysentery, pneumonia, diarrhoea, measles, and enteritis. (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 57). Conditions were even worse in the African camps, where not only did internees have to contend with diseases such as dysentery, chickenpox, measles, and pneumonia, but malnutrition and exposure further weakened the bodies of the natives, making them less resistant to disease (Warwick, 1983: 152; Benneyworth, 2020: 80). The situation was most unfavourable for the Herero and the Nama, as the location of the camps was a factor that exacerbated conditions. In general, scurvy, bronchitis, chickenpox and pneumonia decimated the Africans. The weather conditions on Shark Island, including strong, stormy winds and temperatures around 12 degrees Celsius in winter, have caused deaths from hypothermia (Kuss, 2017: 54; Bachmann, 101–102). Female prisoners on Shark Island, suffered disproportionately more, as they were often raped and thus also exposed to sexually transmitted diseases (Kuss, 2017: 54).

As we have seen, one of the German objectives was to punish the Herero and the Nama, so it is not surprising that physical violence was used on several occasions. In this case, too, Shark Island should be singled out, as it was the place where beatings were most common (Nielsen, 2022: 32). A British citizen who arrived in Lüderitzbucht reported: *‘Every morning and towards evening four women carried a stretcher containing about four or five corpses (...) I discovered bodies of native women lying between stones and devoured by birds of prey. Some bore signs of having been beaten to death ... If a prisoner were found outside the Herero prisoners’ camp, he would be brought before the Lieutenant and flogged with a sjambok. Fifty lashes were generally imposed. The manner in which the flogging was carried out was the most cruel imaginable ... pieces of flesh would fly from the victim’s body into the air ... My observations during my stay in the country [in the German time] gave me the opinion that the Germans are absolutely unfit to colonise, as their atrocious crimes and cold-blooded murders were committed with one object — to extinguish the native race.’* (Bridgman – Worley, 2004: 46).

Comparing mortality rates for adults and children, although the information on the number of deaths varies almost from source to source, it can be concluded that about 80% of those who died in Boer camps were children (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 58). For the Africans, this figure was 81% (Warwick, 1983: 152). For the Herero and the Nama, no precise data are available, but the number of children who died in the camps was probably about twice as high as the number of adults (Kuss, 2017: 54–55).

Emily Hobhouse wrote of child deaths in a letter dated 29 September 1901: *‘In the past month of August, 1,878 deaths occurred among the whites, of which, 1,545 were children. The total number of deaths for the three months for which we have returns is 4,067, of which 3,245 were children.’* (Hobhouse, 1902: 137)

The camps holding the Boers were permanently dismantled after the end of the fighting in 1902 (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 60). For the Africans, also after the end of the fighting, the British dismantled the camp system and the people were released

(Mongalo – du Pisani, 1999: 169). However, as a result of the scorched earth policy, the lands of the Boers were devastated during the war and their property was destroyed or stolen (Sík, 1964a: 404). For this reason, after the Treaty of Vereeniging, the British provided financial support for the return of Boer farmers to their former estates (Sík, 1964b: 35). In addition to the Boers, the Africans were also assisted; the British spent a total of £16.5 million on post-war reconstruction and compensation for the colonies and Africans. In addition to financial support, landowners were provided with the tools and seeds needed to cultivate the land (Gillings, 2008).

The camps set up by the Germans were demolished in 1908, partly due to political pressure, as the parliamentary opposition did not support their operation (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 71). Not all camps were dismantled at this time, for example, the camp on Shark Island was ‘already’ dismantled in 1907 (Pálfi, 2019: 171). However, the survivors were not allowed to return to where they had lived before the war, so they settled on farms (Kotek – Rigoulot, 2005: 71). Despite regaining their freedom in the areas under German control, all Africans over the age of eight were required to wear a metal badge around their necks embossed with the imperial crown, administrative district, and work number. In addition, the Herero’s life, which had hitherto been based on animal husbandry and agriculture, was rendered untenable by the Germans’ prohibition on Herero ownership of land and cattle (Gewald, 2004: 61).

4. Conclusion

The definition of genocide remains challenging today due, in part, to the difficulty of establishing genocidal intent and the lack of action from the international community. Determining whether certain atrocities from the early 20th century constitute genocide is even more problematic as the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention) was only ratified in 1948 (United Nations, 2024). For this reason, the convention is not retroactive at the international level, but state practice does not limit its retroactive effect, thus giving national courts jurisdiction over past genocides (Schabas, 2012:65).

The Second Boer War and the concentration camps were not recognized as genocide, based on the Genocide Convention, but the atrocities committed against the Herero and the Nama between 1904 and 1907 are considered the first genocide of the 20th century and the precursor to the 20th-century genocides (Molnár, 2013: 220).

If we look at the cases according to the Lemkinian interpretation, we get a slightly more nuanced picture. In the case of the Herero and the Nama, it can also be said that genocide was committed since the aim was extermination. In the case of the British, however, the aim was not total annihilation, but with the operation of the concentration camps, certain genocidal elements and methods were introduced, such as deportation, separation of families, deprivation of livelihoods and exposure to death.

The Boer population in the colony, estimated at 200,000, was reduced to around 180–172,000. In 1900, an estimated 3–4 million Africans lived in South Africa, a decrease of about 20,000, but since the first census was taken in 1911, the exact extent

of the population decline cannot be accurately determined. These figures reflect the number of people who died in concentration camps (Búr, 2002: 95; Andrew, 2000: 636; Statista, 2024). Following the suppression of the Herero and the Nama uprisings and the dismantling of the concentration camps, the number of Herero in German South West Africa fell from 80,000 to around 15,130, and that of the Nama from 20,000 to 9,781. (This is around 73 African deaths per day over three years, compared to 33 per day in the British colony.) This represented a population decrease of more than 80 percent for the Herero and more than 50 percent for the Nama (Rubinstein, 2014: 108). As a consequence, the Herero as a political community ceased to exist (Bachmann, 2018: 89).

Events in German South West Africa (now Namibia) between 1904 and 1907 redrew the ethnic map of the country. At the beginning of the 20th century, Herero comprised about 40 percent of the population and Nama 10 percent (Som, 2013: 167). Today, Herero comprise about seven percent of the population, and Nama around five percent (The World Factbook, 2024). By contrast, a minority of Ovambos exceeded 50 percent during colonialism (Boer, 2011: 218).

In 2001, the political leaders of the Herero family filed a \$4 million lawsuit against the Federal Republic of Germany (successor to the German Empire). However, the issue of compensation was dismissed by the then-German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer (Búr, 2011: 219). The first official apology was made in 2004 on the occasion of the centenary of the rebellion, and in 2021, the German government declared the events a genocide and provided the Namibian government with over a billion dollars in reconstruction and development aid (Jantsek, 2015; Onishi – Eddy, 2021). ☀

Notes

- 1 The first Boer or Transvaal War took place between 1880 and 1881. The reasons for the war were, on the one hand, the British desire to unify the southern African territories. On the other hand, the Boers opposed the increasing immigration of the British, and in the Transvaal and Oranje they resented the fact that Cape Colony had been given the diamond fields, which made it impossible, for example, to replenish the Transvaal treasury. The British saw an opportunity to occupy the Transvaal, which was waging a costly war against the Africans, and in 1877 a British contingent invaded the country, thus losing its independence. However, the British had to pay the price for this land grab by launching a campaign against the Zulu people in neighbouring areas in 1879. The Boers took advantage of this to launch a war against the British in 1880, which they won, giving Transvaal partial independence and the right to manage its own internal affairs.
- 2 *'I, the great general of the German soldiers, send this letter to the Herero people. The Herero are no longer German subjects. They have murdered and robbed, cut off the ears and noses and other parts of the bodies of wounded soldiers, and now they cowardly refuse to continue the fight. I say to the people: whoever brings a captain to one of my stations as a prisoner will get a thousand marks, and whoever brings Samuel Maharer will get five thousand marks. But the Herero people must leave the country. If the people will not do so, I will force them to do so with the butt of my rifle. Every Herero within the German frontiers, with or without arms, with or without animals, will be shot to death, and no woman or child will be admitted any longer, but will be driven back to her people or shot to death. These are my words to the herero people. Great general of the mighty German emperor.'*

'I believe that the nation, as such, must be destroyed [...] The racial struggle that has broken out can only end with the destruction of one of the parties.'

- 3 Lothar von Trotha's extermination order was lifted by Emperor Wilhelm II in November 1905, at the intervention of Chancellor Bernhard von Bülow. In reality, however, it took until December for the news of the revocation to reach all offices and positions.
- 4 The town is named after Adolf Lüderitz.

References

- Bachmann, Klaus (2018) Genocidal Empires: German Colonialism in Africa and the Third Reich, Berlin, Peter Lang Retrieved from: <https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/ada31c50-35a2-4907-968d-80e35d501937/9783631752784.pdf> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Benneyworth, Garth (2020): A case study of four South African War (1899-1902). Black concentration camps. New Contree. (84) July, 74–91. pp. Retrieved from: <https://newcontree.org.za/index.php/nc/article/view/41/41> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Bridgman, Jon – Worley, Leslie J. (2004): Genocide of Hereros. In: Totten, Samuel – Parsons, William S. – Charny, Israel W. (eds.): Century of Genocide: Critical Essays and Eyewitness Accounts. London - New York, Routledge
- Britannica (2024): Boer people. Retrieved from: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Boer-people> (2024. 02. 20.)
- Búr, Gábor (2011): Afrika-történeti tanulmányok. Budapest, Mundus Novus
- Búr, Gábor (2002): Nemzeti eszmék és folyamatok Afrikában. In: Balogh, András et al.: Nemzeti eszmék és folyamatok az Európán kívüli világban. Budapest, Korona Kiadó.
- Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (1948): Article II. Retrieved from: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/genocide-conv-1948/article-2?activeTab=undefined> (2024. 08. 06.)
- Dampier, Helen (2005): 'Everyday life' in Boer women's testimonies of the concentration camps of the South African War, 1899–1902. In: Godfrey, Barry S. – Dunstall, Graeme (eds.): Crime and Empire 1840–1940: Criminal justice in local and global context, Cullompton, Willan Publishing
- Fage, J. D. – Tordoff, William (2004): Afrika története. Budapest, Osiris Kiadó
- Gewald, Jan-Bart (1999): Herero Heroes: A Socio-Political History of the Herero of Namibia, 1890–1923. Oxford, James Currey Ltd. Retrieved from: https://www.sahistory.org.za/sites/default/files/archive-files3/jan-bart_gewald_herero_heroes_a_socio-politicalbook4you.pdf (2024. 02. 19.)
- Gewald, Jan-Bart (2004): Imperial Germany and the Herero of Southern Africa: Genocide and the Quest for Recompense. In: Jones, Adam (ed.): Genocide, War Crimes and the West - History and Complicity, London – New York, Zed Books
- Gillings, Ken (2008): The Aftermath of Anglo-Boer War. The South African Military History Society. Retrieved from: <http://samilitaryhistory.org/lectures/aftermath.html> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Hall, Darell (1999): The Hall Handbook of the Anglo-Boer War 1899–1902. Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press.
- Hobhouse, Emily (1902): The Brunt Of The War And Where It Fell. London, Methuen and Co.
- Holocaust Encyclopedia (2024): Haláltáborok: áttekintés. Retrieved from: <https://encyclopedia.ushmm.org/content/hu/article/killing-centers-an-overview> (2024. 02. 20.)
- Jantsek, Sarolta (2015): A németek követték el a XX. század első népirtását Namíbiában. Afrikablog. Retrieved from: <https://gepeskonyv.btk.elte.hu/adatok/Tortenelem/Afrikanisztika/MA/b%FARG%Elbor/12.b%FAR.Herer%F3khal%Ellmen.pdf> (2024. 02. 22.)
- Kotek, Joël - Rigoulot, Pierre (2005): A táborok évszázada: fogva tartás, koncentráció, megsemmisítés: a radikális bűn száz éve. Budapest, Napvilág

- Kuss, Susanne (2017): *German Colonial Wars and the Context of Military Violence*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press
- Leanza, Matthias (2020): Colonial Trajectories: On the Evolution of the German Protectorate of Southwest Africa. *Comparativ*. 30(3/4), 372–386. pp. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.26014/j.comp.2020.03-04.12> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Lemkin, Raphael (1944): *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, Proposals for Redress*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Division of International Law, Washington.
- McDonnell, Michael A. – Moses, A. Dirk (2005): Raphael Lemkin as historian of genocide in the Americas. *Journal of Genocide Research*. 7(4), 501–529. pp. Retrieved from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14623520500349951#d1e150> (2024. 08. 07.)
- Molnár, Erik (2013): A namíbiai történelem sötét foltja: a herero népirtás. *Sereg Szemle*. 11(2-3) április–szeptember, 212–220. pp. Retrieved from: https://honvedelem.hu/files/files/39133/seregszemle-2-3_internet.pdf (2024. 02. 19.)
- Mongalo, B. E. – du Pisani, Kobus (1999): Victims of a white man's war: blacks in concentration camps during the South African War (1899–1902). *Historia*. 44(1) May, 148–182. pp. Retrieved from: <https://journals.co.za/doi/epdf/10.10520/EJC37937> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Nagyné, Rózsa Erzsébet (2010): *Bevezetés a civilizációs tanulmányokba*. Budapest, Zrínyi Miklós Nemzetvédelmi Egyetem. Retrieved from: <https://tudasportal.uni-nke.hu/xmlui/handle/20.500.12944/8539> (2024. 02. 18.)
- Németh, István – Juhász, Dániel (2012): Német gyarmatpolitika a 19–20. század fordulóján. *Grotius E-könyvtár*. Retrieved from: http://www.grotius.hu/doc/pub/SIQUOQ/2012_9_nemeth-juhasz_grotius_e-konyvtar_47.pdf (2024. 02. 19.)
- Nielsen, Mads Bomholt (2022): *Britain, Germany and Colonial Violence in South-West Africa, 1884–1919: The Herero and Nama Genocide*. London, Palgrave Macmillan
- Onishi, Norimitsu – Eddy, Melissa (2021): A Forgotten Genocide: What Germany Did in Namibia, and What It's Saying Now. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/28/world/europe/germany-namibia-genocide.html> (2024. 02. 22.)
- Pálfi, László (2019): „Koponyák helye” – A német-namíbiai kapcsolatok helyzete a namák és a hererók ellen vívott gyarmati háború kontextusába. *Külügyi Műhely*. (1), 162–181. pp. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.36817/KM.2019.1.9> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Papp, László (2013): Koncentrációs táborok az angol–búr háborúban. *Acta Academiae Agriensis, Sectio Historiae* 40. 235–244. pp. Retrieved from: <https://publikacio.uni-eszterhazy.hu/3389/> (2024. 02. 18.)
- Porter, Andrew (2000): The South African War and the Historians. *African Affairs*. 99(397), 633–638. pp. Retrieved from: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/723319?seq=3> (2024. 08. 07.)
- Ribeiro, Hector (2020): Did the Confinement of Boer Civilians in Concentration Camps by the British Army during the Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902) Constitute an Act of Genocide? *Sprawy Narodowościowe: Seria nowa/ Nationalities Affairs New series*. (52), 1–12. pp. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.11649/sn.2274> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Rosta, Máté (2012): Az angol–búr konfliktus gyökerei, az 1899–1902-es Dél-Afrikai háború előzményei. *Afrika Tanulmányok / Hungarian Journal of African Studies*. 6(2), 94–114. pp. Retrieved from: <https://journals.lib.pte.hu/index.php/afrikatanulmanyok/article/view/4335> (2024. 02. 18.)
- Rubinstein, William D. (2014) *Genocide: A History*. London – New York, Routledge
- Statista (2024): *Population of South Africa from 1800 until 2020*. Retrieved from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1067083/population-south-africa-historical/#statisticContainer> (2024. 08. 07.)
- Schabas, William (2012): *Unimaginable Atrocities: Justice, Politics, and Rights at the War Crimes Tribunals*. Oxford, Oxford University Press

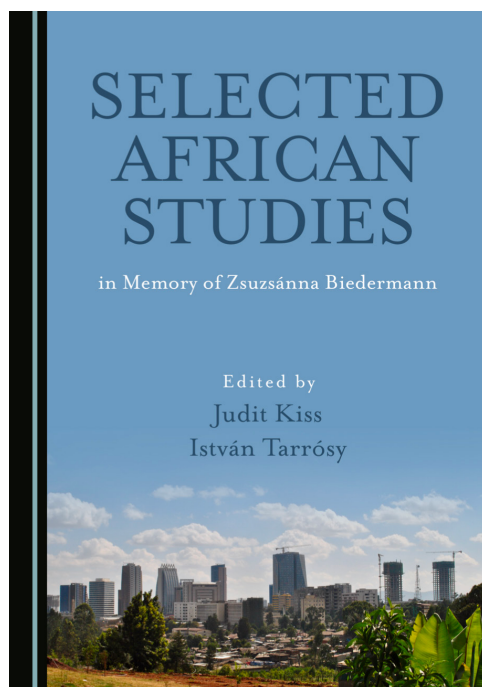
- Sik, Endre (1964a): Fekete-Afrika története I. Budapest, Akadémia Kiadó
- Sik, Endre (1964b): Fekete-Afrika története II. Budapest, Akadémia Kiadó
- Som, Krisztián (2013): A német gyarmatok rendvédelmi erői. *Rendvédelmi-történeti Füzetek* (Acta Historiae Preasidii Ordinis). 23(27–30), 161–168. pp. Retrieved from: <https://doi.org/10.31627/RTF.XXIII.2013.27-28-29-3...> (2024. 02. 22.)
- Stone, Dan (2001): White men with low moral standards? German anthropology and the Herero genocide. *Patterns of Prejudice*. 35(2), 33–45. pp. Retrieved from: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/003132201128811133> (2024. 02. 22.)
- Surányi, Róbert (2000): A viktoriánus Anglia. *História*. 22(9–10), 41–47. pp. Retrieved from: https://adt.arcanum.com/hu/view/Historia_2000/?pg=332&layout=s (2024. 02. 20)
- The World Factbook (2024): Namibia – Country Summary. Retrieved from: <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/namibia/summaries/> (2024. 02. 22.)
- United Nations (2024): Genocide. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/genocide.shtml> (2024. 02. 21.)
- van Heyningen, Elizabeth (2010): A tool for modernisation? The Boer concentration camps of the South African War, 1900–1902. *South African Journal of Science*. 106(5/6), 1–10. pp. Retrieved from: <https://sajs.co.za/article/view/10148> (2024. 02. 19.)
- Warwick, Peter (1983): *Black People and the South African War 1899–1902*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

SELECTED AFRICAN STUDIES IN MEMORY OF ZSUZSÁNNA BIEDERMANN

EDITED BY JUDIT KISS AND ISTVÁN TARRÓSY

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE: CAMBRIDGE SCHOLARS PUBLISHING, XIII + 345 PP, 2024.

ISBN (10): 1-0364-0445-5 AND ISBN (13): 978-1-0364-0445-1.



REVIEW BY: MOHAMED SALIH

EMERITUS PROFESSOR, INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES,

ERASMUS UNIVERSITY ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

MS01011952@GMAIL.COM

Salih, Mohamed (2024). Selected African Studies in Memory of Zsuzsanna Biedermann. Hungarian Journal of African Studies [Afrika Tanulmányok], 18(3), 95-99.

In this globalized world not many collections of edited books are authored by scholars from the same region or country. The chapters in *Selected African Studies in Memory of Zsuzsánna Biedermann* are written by scholars from Eastern Europe, with the majority from Hungary. It offers rare worldviews of post-Communist Eastern European scholars specializing in African Studies, showcasing intra-generational scholarship in a vibrant research community. Dedicating this *Liber Amicorum* to Zsuzsánna Biedermann is befitting the life and times of a young researcher who refused to succumb to rampant pessimism about Africa even in the most treacherous circumstances.

The book consists of four thematic sections as well as an elaborate introduction that introduces the reader to the objectives and scope of this collection's unique East European contribution to African Studies. Part one explores continuity and change in Eastern European and African relations following the end of the Cold War and moving in the present day with its tumultuous fast-changing global order. There is tension between the United State's inclination to retain its coveted position as the world's only superpower while being challenged by emergent regional and global powers that aspire to retain the end of the Cold War's promise of a multipolar world order.

In Chapter 1, Zoltán Vörös and István Tarrósy articulate a convincing case illustrating that the economic ties between Central Eastern European Countries and Africa (CEEC–Africa) are not as strong now as there were compared to during the Cold War. CEE membership in the EU and NATO means that these countries have less geopolitical and geoeconomic significance for Africa as demonstrated by the trade figures of the authors, and the consolidation of trade and development relations with core EU former colonies, the United States, China, Brazil, Russia, India, Turkey and the Middle East. Geoeconomics and geopolitics resonate with Africa, and the fact that it has maintained only small number of embassies signifies the weakness of diplomatic relations.

In Chapter 2, Judit Ricz revisits the re-emergence of the developmental state in some African countries. She elaborates on three factors that set the immediate post-independence Sub-Saharan African version of the developmental state apart from its South East Asian counterpart: 1) The influence of Confucianist culture in Asia (particularly China), the presence of high-quality institutions, and the existence of homogeneous societies; 2) African South of the Sahara developmental states focusing on interventionist models based on redistributing political legitimacy rather than aligning with international market mechanisms; and 3) Africa South of the Sahara lacking a strong state to discipline the business sector. At the beginning of the 21st century, African developmental states emerged in a globalized world and offered many opportunities for countries to be amongst the fastest growing economies in the world. Judit Ricz divides these states into three categories: old successful states such as Botswana and Mauritius; contemporary experiments such as Rwanda's developmental neopatrimonialism; and aspiring newcomer developmental states such as Ethiopia and South Africa that show interest in developmental measures but have yet to fully implement them.

In contrast to Judit Ricz' optimism, in Chapter 3 Szabolcs Pásztor details the Ethiopian developmental state compared to the East Asian counterpart. The author concludes that the political setting is tightly constrained by the ruling political party (EPRDF) because the state does not permit the private sector freedom to generate the required levels of production. The answer to the question "whether a well-intentioned developmental state has been created or the ruling party (the government) has only overheated the economy with injecting money into the different sectors" (p. ix), is yes.

In Chapter 4, the deployment of a post-development perspective to unravel international development involvement in African urban segregate policies is discussed by Daniel Solymári and Ráhel Czirják. They present three cases of poverty in squatter settlements in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, highlighting developmental interventions and engaging in the complex issue of well-intended external policies and local reality. The authors claim that their research is based on a post-development approach, which is difficult to grasp in light of these desperate contexts.

Part two of the collection explores three cases of African relations with the world system: African dependence on food imports, irregular migration, and remittances. Each of these relationships are dynamic, stubbornly entrenched and hardly indispensable. In Chapter 5, Gábor Búr examines food insecurity, which is an ever-present existential issue on the African continent since the great Sahelian famine in the early 1970s. The Russia war in Ukraine has disrupted African food imports from these two countries, while the African countries are ill-prepared to compensate with grain exports from within the continent and imports from alternative trading partners. While this chapter stands on its own, it gives credence to Chapter 1's depiction of how Africa is entangled in interlocked regional and global geopolitical and geoeconomic food value chains. The African diplomatic effort to mediate peace between Russia and the Ukraine should be considered a sign of desperation considering the centrality of Russia food exports to the continent. Africa was used by the UN and OECD negotiators as the 'pitiful' continent that would suffer most from the food blockade on the Black Sea both for regular consumption and Africa's expanding humanitarian food crisis. This chapter analyses why Africa should relieve itself from food import dependence and embark on using its large fertile arable lands to feed people residing on the world's most food deficit continent.

The issues of irregular migration to Europe and remittances in Africa are discussed in Chapter 6 by Viktor Marsai. Since the 1990s, Europe has failed to curb the steady flow of irregular migrants from other world regions and in particular Africa, which is the closest in geographic proximity to Europe. The author begins his search for a solution to irregular migration by constructing a grand strategy that begins with determining the EU's geographic sphere of interest, using political, social, diplomatic, informational and economic instruments while operating within "Cooperative Regional Orders" (p. 174). For example, the EU cooperates with Africa Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on issues of irregular migration, including illegal migration. Marsai's grand strategy hinges on the EU lending more support

to migration transformation through economic and social development and good governance in the countries of origin. This is a noble but challenging proposal to sell during times of rising anti-migration sentiments among some sectors of the European public, political parties and anti-systemic movements.

In Chapter 7, Judit Kiss turns her attention to the positive and negative socioeconomic and developmental role of remittances, an issue ultimately linked to the role of the United States' annual \$50 billion remittances transferred to the continent by African migrants. The findings of the study were provided in the abstract:

The study considers the causes and uses of remittances and concludes that Africa should encourage and sustain remittance inflows as an alternative source of financing for development, minimizing the negative effects of corruption, inflation, moral hazard, brain drain, and the Dutch disease, while maximizing positive outcomes such as economic growth, savings, investment, financial and human development, and poverty and inequality reduction (p. 196).

This chapter includes current and comprehensive data, utilizing a dialectical method and political economy approach supported with in-depth analysis and explanations. This approach deserves attention in the academic and policy debates on remittances and development.

Part three is devoted to Africa and universal human rights values, focusing on gender, war ethics and the right to language. In Chapter 8, Judit Bagi and István Tarrósy examine gender equality in post-genocide Rwanda. The chapter is an attempt to go beyond rhetoric and examine reality beyond statistic data by showing gender parity achievements. In order to achieve this objective, the authors conducted fieldwork to reveal whether attitudes and behavioural patterns have also shifted and produced the intended effects. Rwanda has made considerable achievements in women representation in parliament and public life. Genocide still weighs heavily on gender equality as some women are ethnically more equal than others. Additionally, the election of the political elite to public office depends on loyalty and the pro-anti-genocide divide. Sadly, violence against women persists, casting doubt on how far traditional attitudes about the existence of authentic change vis-à-vis female social status have changed. Powerful position are still male dominated even though women have made impressive gender equality gains in political areas compared to social and cultural development related to this issue.

In Chapter 9, Lanna Lakor addresses sexual violence in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, including Uganda, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Echoing the sentiments expressed by Judit Bagi and István Tarrósy in Chapter 8, the author covers the phenomenon of sexual violence in great depth. Two arguments merit considerable attention: 1) The analogy between sexual violence as an expression of behavioural patterns that persist in times of peace as an extension of socialized war time activity is telling; 2) The author's lamentation on the gravity on the gruesome barbarity of sexual violence, revealing that "even during times of peace, the war

will partly be fought through the bodies of women” (p. 302).

In Chapter 10, Attila Horváth discusses Rwanda’s language policy after 1994 and the transition from French to English and Swahili as official languages. The official reasoning for this change is based on two arguments: regional integration with the English and Swahili East African Community (EAC) and an aspiration to make Global Rwanda integrated into the world through the English language. The author’s view is that not using Kinyarwanda – Rwanda’s *lingua franca* as the language of education – has exposed Rwanda to challenges emanating from frequent regulatory and linguistic changes, while entrenched society, economy and policy in the regional community. Meticulous details of Rwanda’s language policy rooting in colonialism is competently presented and analysed, leading to the conclusion that Kinyarwanda should play a leading role in fostering the stability needed

for a better functioning education system, while retaining the positive aspects of Swahili as a regional language and English as a global language.

Part four features Zsuzsánna Biedermann impressive bibliography and avid seminal contributions to the field of African Studies. Some of her collaborative unfinished work with her colleagues at the University of Pecs has been completed, included in this collection, and alluded to in some chapters.

Selected African Studies in Memory of Zsuzsánna Biedermann comprises an important contribution to contemporary African Studies in Central and Eastern Europe, provides an assessment of the past, and offers a window to the future. It is a must read for academics, policy makers, and students of African Studies at the graduate and postgraduate levels. It also offers invaluable insights for international relations professionals, NGOs, and civil society and democracy activists concerned with African issues and their related global implications. ☀

It is a must read for academics, policy makers, and students of African Studies at the graduate and postgraduate levels. It also offers invaluable insights for international relations professionals, NGOs, and civil society and democracy activists concerned with African issues and their related global implications.

