


THE PSYCHOSOCIAL AND STRUCTURAL IMPACTS OF NEOCOLONIAL PRACTICES ON CONTEMPORARY EASTERN CONFLICTS IN THE GAZA STRIP AND SUDAN

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ABSTRACT

The conflicts in the Gaza Strip and Sudan have profound psychosocial and structural impacts on local populations. In Gaza, years of violence, blockades and military operations result in collective trauma, anxiety and social disintegration, especially among children and young people, who grow up in an environment of insecurity and deprivation. In Sudan, conflicts, such as those in Darfur and South Sudan, have roots in ethnic, political, and economic divisions, aggravated by neocolonial practices, which lead to forced displacement, hunger, destruction of infrastructure, and marginalization, perpetuating cycles of poverty and violence. In both regions, structural violence and neocolonialism hinder human development and stability. The analysis of the documentary Gaza (2019) reveals the psychological and social impacts of war, highlighting the resilience and survival strategies of the inhabitants, while the book I am Malala (2013) offers reflections on resistance against oppression, the right to education, and empowerment in conflict contexts. These elements show how neocolonial practices perpetuate inequalities, collective traumas, and sociopolitical instability. The analysis uses both quantitative and qualitative approaches to understand the complexity of the data, showing that conflicts not only disrupt societies but also demonstrate human resilience and the need for global action to promote peace and justice. Thus, the narrative exposes the importance of addressing the roots of inequalities to mitigate the impacts of these conflicts.

Keywords: Impacts. Psychosocial. Structural. Conflicts.

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary conflicts in the Gaza Strip and Sudan are complex and deeply rooted in a history of neocolonial practices that perpetuate social, economic, and political tensions. In this context, we will address the psychosocial and structural impacts resulting from these practices, including the physical and psychological shocks faced by affected populations. Neocolonial practices, which manifest themselves through economic exploitation, political intervention, and military control, still shape the dynamics of power in various regions of the world, where instead of liberating these nations, they subject them to new forms of oppression, destabilizing social, political, economic, and local ideals.

In the Gaza Strip, the continued occupation and blockade imposed by Israel, coupled with an international position that often marginalizes Palestinians, result in a series of psychosocial shocks. The local population faces a daily life of extreme violence, resulting in psychological traumas such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorders. In addition, the physical destruction of infrastructure, hospitals, schools or even homes, contributes to an ongoing humanitarian crisis with structural effects that deepen social vulnerability. Sudan has been marked by internal conflicts, such as the wars in Darfur and South Sudan's struggle for independence, exacerbated by a history of British and Egyptian colonialism, followed by neocolonial practices that have shaped the country's political and economic structure. Ethnic division and the exploitation of natural resources, such as oil and minerals, were fundamental to the perpetuation of the conflict. In the context of neocolonialism, many analysts argue that Western and regional powers, by seeking to maintain control over Sudan's resources, especially oil, have sharpened internal conflicts. Thus, this work aims to analyze how these neocolonial dynamics intensify the vulnerability and traumas of affected communities in the Middle East, permeating social instability and continuous marginalization.

Image 1: Conflicts in Darfur



Source: Sudan and conflicts in Darfur. Zen Class, 2028. Available in: Sudan and the Conflict in Darfur - Zen Class. Accessed in: 09/30/2024

Image 2: Conflicts in the Gaza Strip



Source: Gaza Strip. Vatican News, 2024. Available at: <https://www.vaticannews.va/pt/mundo/news/2024-03/medicos-sem-fronteiras-faixa-de-gaza-situacao-geral-catastrofica.html>. Accessed in: 09/30/2024

OBJECTIVES

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To investigate the structural consequences of neocolonial practices on the political and economic systems of the Middle East, seeking to understand how neocolonial practices, such as economic control, political influences, and military interventions, have shaped the formation of governments, the distribution of wealth, access to resources, and power relations in the countries of the region.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Identify the changes in the economic and social structures of the Gaza Strip resulting from neocolonial practices and explore how external influences, particularly from Western and regional powers, have impacted the local economy of Gaza, with an emphasis on trade, infrastructure and employment, also analyzing the reaction of Palestinian society, especially in terms of social cohesion, population displacement and political organization, as a response to these factors.

- Examine the impact of Western military and diplomatic interventions on Sudan's power dynamics, seeking to assess how military and diplomatic interventions, especially from Western countries, have influenced changes in political leadership and control of Sudan's resources.

- Explore the impact of neocolonial practices on education and youth in the Gaza Strip and Sudan, investigating how neocolonial influences affect access to education and the future prospects of young people in the Gaza Strip and Sudan, encompassing educational financing, the formation of curricula aligned with external interests, and how this impacts skills development, in addition to analyzing the role of youth in resisting or adapting to current political structures.

METHODS

The present work was developed outside the classroom by students of the 3rd grade of High School in the Biological Itinerary of ETEC PROFESSOR MASSUYUKI KAWANO, located in the municipality of Tupã - SP, supervised by Professor Aloísio Cássio dos Santo. The training action presents a qualitative strategy through bibliographic data, capable of corroborating the complexity of the details of the information obtained, in order to present thematic questions on the psychosocial and structural impacts consequent to neocolonial practices in contemporary eastern conflicts in the Gaza Strip and Sudan, based on the knowledge acquired in class and research carried out in an extracurricular environment. Thus, the work was divided into four stages: initially the group was formed in the extra-class environment, from a thorough research the theme of great relevance today was selected, then the research topics were divided among the members of the group and later there was a meeting to organize and relate the idea of this article, and finally, the construction of the banner for the presentation that aims to bring relevant information regarding the psychosocial impacts of today's conflicts.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

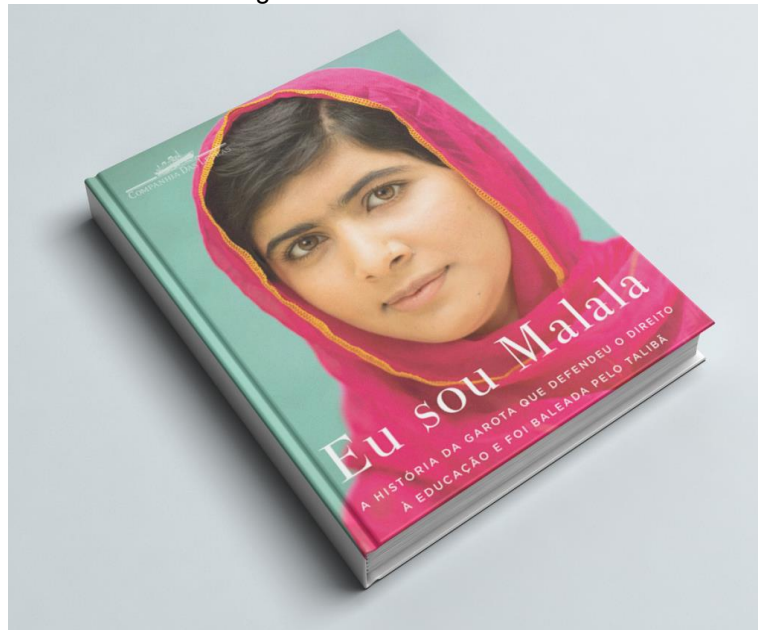
The book *I Am Malala* (2013) narrates the life of Malala Yousafzai, a young Pakistani woman who defends the right to education, even in the face of a reality of Taliban violence and oppression. By drawing a parallel between the psychosocial and structural impacts of the conflicts in the Gaza Strip and Sudan with the experiences portrayed in the book, it is possible to identify similarities in terms of oppression, collective traumas, and the dynamics of resistance in the face of violence. In the Gaza Strip, the constant blockades, bombardments, and military operations generate an environment of deep trauma, where the population, especially children and young people, develop anxiety disorders, depression, and a continuous sense of insecurity. These conditions resemble what Malala describes in her experience in Pakistan, where Taliban violence creates an environment of fear and repression, affecting people's mental health and well-being, especially children living without guarantees of safety. Similarly, in Sudan, internal conflicts perpetuated by ethnic and political divisions, such as in the Darfur and South Sudan regions, result in lasting trauma, highlighting how widespread fear and control over education and individual freedom profoundly affect the minds of young people, who are often deprived of opportunities for personal development and are forced to live in environments of repression and silence. Malala, in her book, highlights how the destruction of schools by the Taliban in Pakistan was a strategy to weaken communities, since without education, the ability to resist oppression and improve social conditions becomes almost impossible.

Similarly, conflicts in Sudan, exacerbated by ethnic and political divisions, lead to the destruction of social infrastructure, such as schools, health centres and transport networks. The war in Darfur, for example, dismantles entire communities, impedes access to education and essential services, and plunges the region into a cycle of poverty and violence. Malala, in her narrative, reflects on the importance of a solid infrastructure to ensure the future of a society, especially with regard to education as a means of empowerment and liberation.

Added to this, the documentary *Gaza* (2019) makes it clear that the situation in Gaza is largely the result of neocolonial practices and external interference, which perpetuate the blockade and prevent any real possibility of development. The film depicts how international power dynamics, combined with occupation and economic siege, create a situation of dependency and marginalization that makes reconstruction difficult. Despite the devastating impacts of the war, the documentary *Gaza* also portrays the extraordinary resilience of the population. In the midst of the destruction, the residents continue their lives, demonstrating an impressive ability to resist and find small forms of hope and normality. Resilience can

also be seen in Sudan. In war-torn regions such as Darfur, displaced communities often try to rebuild their lives, even with limited resources and under the constant threat of violence. In Sudan, as in Gaza, people struggle to maintain a sense of normalcy, investing in education, cultivating small businesses, or simply creating safe spaces for their families, despite the chaotic conditions.

Image 1: Artwork "I am Malala"



Source: I am Malala. Medium, 2020. Available at: <https://www.midalouca.com.br/biografias-e-memorias/47657-eu-sou-malala-malala-yousafzai-9788535923438.html>. Accessed in: 09/30/2024

Image 2: Religious consoling young people



Source: "Right now, we only have God," says a religious woman asking for peace. *Canção Nova*, 2023. Available at: <https://noticias.cancaonova.com/mundo/guerra-israel-hamas/neste-momento-so-temos-deus-desabafa-religiosa-pedindo-paz/>. Accessed in: 09/30/2024

Image 3: Gaza Documentary (2019)



Source: Gaza Documentary. The Glass House, 2024. Available at: <https://acasadevidro.com/cinedebate-gaza2019/>. Accessed in: 09/30/2024

CONCLUSION

It can be inferred, therefore, that the analysis of contemporary conflicts in the Gaza Strip and Sudan reveals the persistence of neocolonial practices that perpetuate social inequalities, collective traumas and political instability. The populations of Gaza and Sudan face not only the immediate impacts of violence, but also the collapse of their social and economic structures, which increases their vulnerability and hinders human development. The narratives in works such as "I am Malala" and the documentary "GAZA" highlight the resilience of communities in the face of adversity, highlighting the struggle for empowerment and education and the desire to be able to obtain their rights. The conflicts in the Gaza Strip and Sudan result in profound psychosocial and structural impacts for local populations, such as anxiety, depression and disintegration of the social fabric, especially affecting children and young people, who grow up in an environment of constant insecurity and deprivation. By emphasizing human resilience in the midst of chaos, this study underlines the need for collective action that ensures dignity and stability in the affected regions.



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