



Why are ethnicities exiled?

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Abstract

This dissertation discusses the reasons why ethnicities are exiled from a country. It takes the Malthusian perspective that resources are scarce and hence fighting ensues. To understand the concept, it makes use of two case-studies the on-going expulsion of Rohingyas from Myanmar and the expulsion of Indians from Uganda. It aims to find the motivating factors behind these expulsions. It also aims to find whether these actions had a negative impact on the host countries. This is done by comparing the economies of each case-study with its economy prior to the taking place of the expulsion.

¹ Picture shows the ethnic cleansing of Acadians by the British from Present day Canada in 1758.
Available at: <http://lewis-parker.ca/selectedworks/ExpulsionoftheAcadians.html> [Accessed 20 May 2018].

Acknowledgement

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Glossary

Terms	Description
Arakan	Ancient name for the Rakhine Province in Myanmar. Situated on the western coast of Myanmar bordered by Chin Province. [ref. to map on page 9]
Burma	The name of Myanmar that was used before 1989 when it was changed to Myanmar. For the purpose of this document, we will use the name “Burma” when referring to the period before 1989.
Myanmar	The modern name of Burma. The name was changed in 1989 and for the purpose of this document, the name “Myanmar” will be used to refer to the Country after 1989.
Rohingya	The definition taken from Kiragu et al. (2013, 7) UNHCR report: “generic term referring to the Sunni Muslim inhabitants of Arakan”
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

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Table 1: Glossary

Map of Myanmar²



Figure 1: Map of Rakhine Province

² Map taken from the Fortify Rights Report (2014). “Policies of Persecution Ending Abusive State Policies Against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar.”. Available at: http://www.fortifyrights.org/downloads/Policies_of_Persecution_Feb_25_Fortify_Rights.pdf [Accessed 1 May 2018]

Timeline of the birth of Xenophobia in Myanmar³

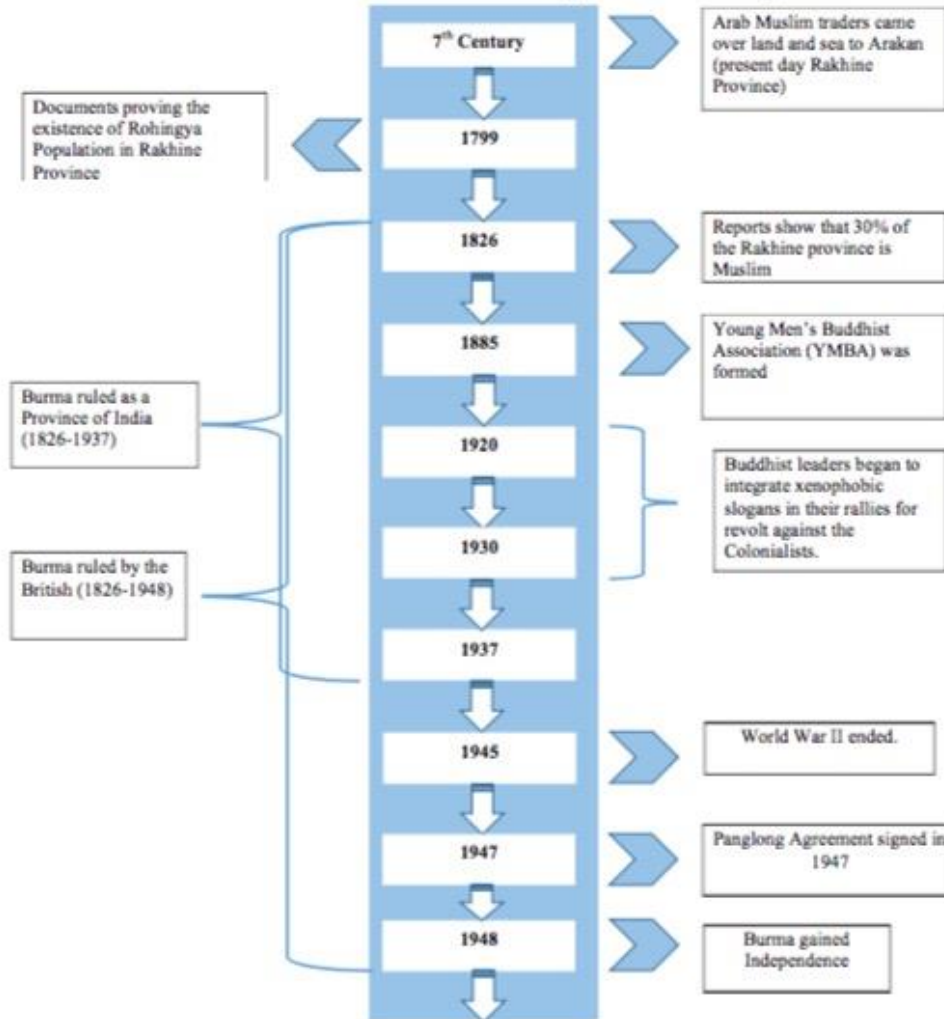


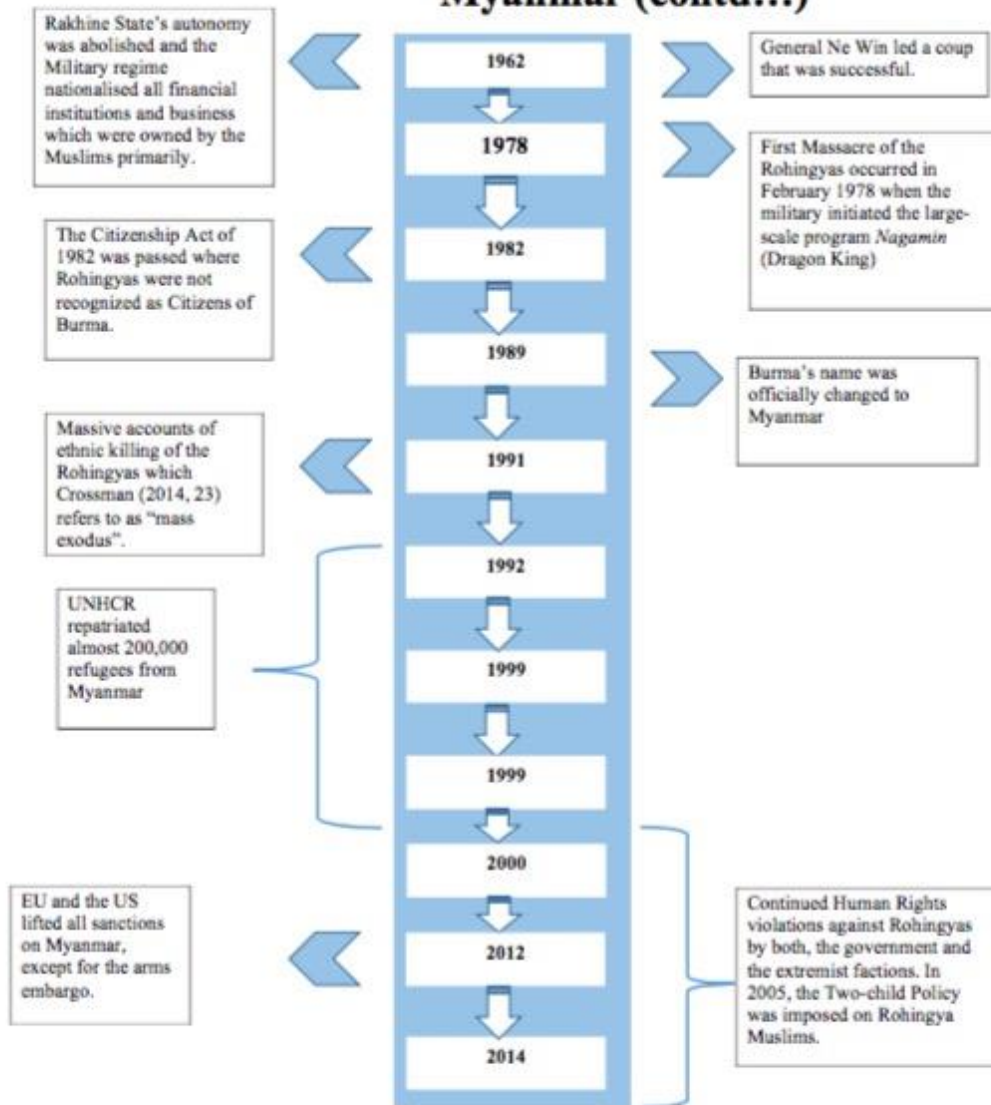
Figure 2: Timeline of the Birth of Xenophobia in Myanmar

³ Material taken from Feigenbaum (2013), Elvey (1998), Patgiri (2017), Yuc and Mansah (2017), Simpson (2014), Human Rights Watch (2013), Fortify Rights (2014), Crossman (2014), Li (2002)

Timeline of the Birth of Xenophobia in Myanmar

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Timeline of the birth of Xenophobia in Myanmar (contd...)



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2018

Timeline of the Indian Expulsion from Uganda⁴

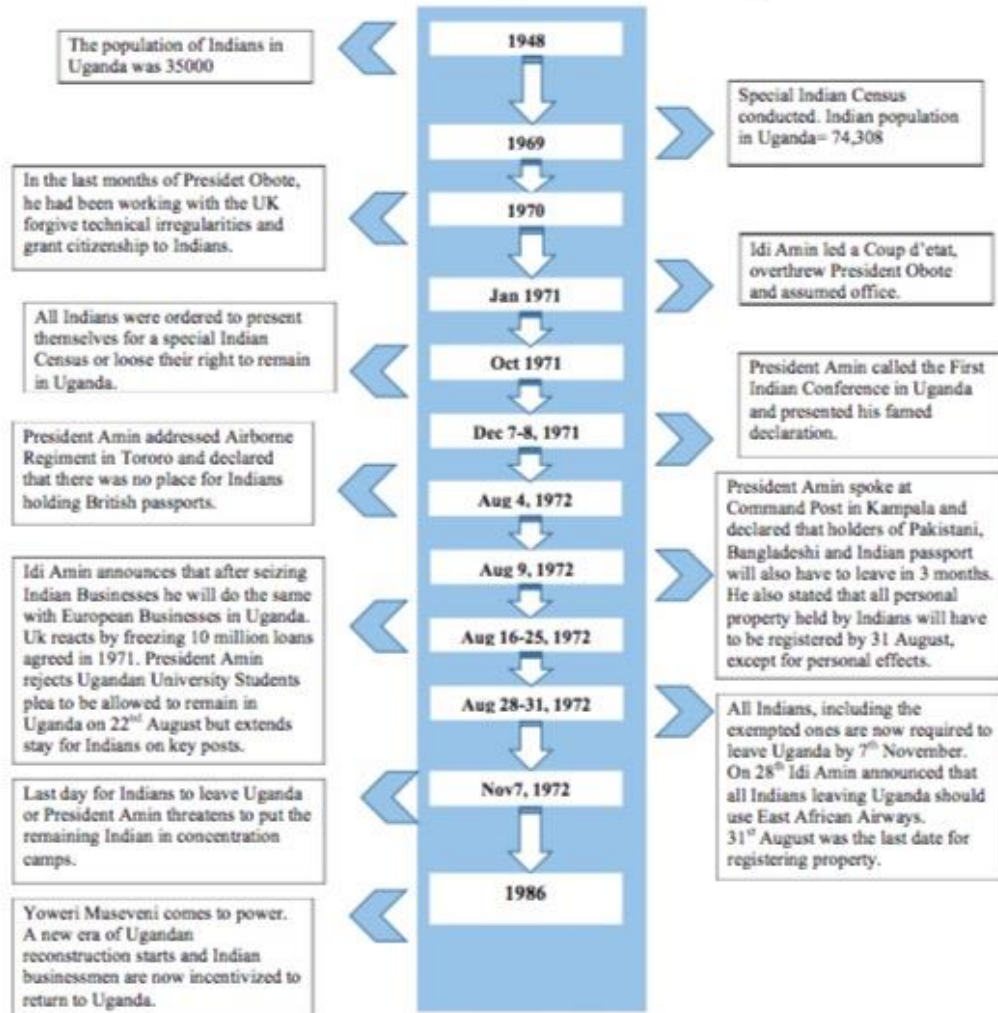


Figure 3: Timeline of Indian Expulsion from Uganda

⁴ Material taken from: Farhana (2016); Sorwalkar (2018); Coastwork (2018); Patel (1972); Asian From Uganda (2012); Himbani and Sultan (1995)

Timeline of Indian Expulsion from Uganda

Chapter 1: Introduction

“The Individual is no longer industrially independent; he no longer exists and labors simply for himself and those dependent upon him. So close is his dependence upon other of his race that his conduct is dictated and his nature transformed by it.”—Charles Tuttle
“The Wealth Concept. A Study in Economic Theory.’ (1891, pp.626)

Economic stereotyping is a rampant phenomenon. It was there when the Acadians were pushed out of Canada by the British in 1758. It was there when the Germans massacred Jews because they feared the economic success of the Jewish society (amongst other reasons). It was also there when Idi Amin pushed out the Asian business tycoons of Uganda. And it can be seen in the devastations of the Rohingyas.

Larson (2015, 1) aptly explains in the early days people often saw that it was an individual’s job to earn fortune and his hard work was to pay for it. Yet with further developments the term “fortune” became associated with luck and hence are not “earned” (p.2). Yet as time passed, wealth began to be associated to group activities (14). It was not the individual who became wealthy but a group of people, first it was the nation. Yet, when resources started to get scarce and everyone wanted to become wealthy nations started to be viewed as ethnicities (Tölölyan,1991,4). It was the mentality that since resources are scarce and we need them, only people like us should be allowed to make use of them. This is a very Malthusian perspective on resources, yet you will find evidence to support this argument in the pages below. Hence started the ethnic violence and expulsion of ethnicities from various lands (Pedersen, 2012).

This initiated the ‘Us v them’ mentality which led to people being categorised as aliens who had been not living on a land long enough and hence were not considered worthy to reap the benefits of the land. Lisa Malki (1992) and Li (2002) in their writing describe the concept of “sedentary metaphysics” which is importance that nativity and soil are held in. Li (2002, 368) aptly puts it when she states:

“We convince ourselves that people who have a shared history of exploitation and impoverishment will work together to overcome their common adversaries and live together in peace and harmony.”

This thesis looks at the motivating factors behind “denationalization” of a certain ethnicity by the government of a country. It will discuss the case-studies of Uganda and Myanmar and find that the one factor the expulsion of Indians from Uganda and the Rohingyas from Myanmar had in common was the economic factor. Of course the analogies of Uganda and Myanmar are quite difference. This is certainly because the Rohingyas belong to the under-privileged classes and have lived highly disadvantaged lives. In juxtaposition, the Indians of Uganda had lived a privileged life, they were economically better off on average than the Ugandans. However, this difference in the economic status of the two populations will provide us with an interesting perspective that will help us further understand the aim of the thesis and bolster the empirical analysis carried out in the next few pages.

The purpose of this study is to find how out the reason for the expulsion of Rohingyas and Indians and how this expulsion affected the economies of Myanmar and Uganda. Was Myanmar able to gain economic and socio-political improvements after it refused to offer Rohingyas citizenship in 1982? Were the Ugandan Africans able to gain better living standards after the expulsion of Indian businessmen in 1972?

The thesis will start with first discussing the research methodology. It will then discuss the points of concern and the limitations faced in researching this area.

Chapter 2 of the thesis will discuss the Rohingya situation and its background. It will then go onto discussing the socio-political and economic effects of denial of citizenship to Rohingyas. It will also clarify why the situation is different from that of the Ugandan situation. The same procedure will be used as in Chapter one to gain a better understanding of the position of the Myanmar economy in today’s world by comparing

the economic condition of Burma prior to 1982 Citizen Act to the economic condition of Myanmar after the Act and the declaration of Rohingyas as non-citizens.

Chapter 3 of the thesis will firstly discuss a background of the Ugandan expulsion of the Indian businessmen and its significance with a literature review. It will then go onto discussing the socio-political effects of this expulsion. This chapter will also tackle the economic effects of this act. Here data from the World Bank data source will be used, amongst newspaper article and academic writing to find out the impact of the expulsion of Indians from Uganda. It will then compare this with the Ugandan economy of 1972, i.e. prior to the expulsion of the Indians. This will help us in analysis and allow us to gain a better understanding out finding.

Chapter 4 will be the conclusion of this dissertation where the arguments of the document will be summarized and concluding remarks will be added.

1.1 Research Methodology

The data used for this research includes quantitative as well as qualitative data. To answer the question, two case studies are going to be used: that of Myanmar declaring Rohingyas stateless in the early 1980s and its ongoing aftermath and the Uganda's deportation of the ethnic Indians in the early 1970s.

The dissertation, in the first chapter, is going to discuss the reasons for the supposed declaration of Rohingyas as stateless. Then it will be discussed why declaring a significant portion of a population stateless can have an impact on a country's economy. The resources used here will be academic and journalistic. A detailed critical analysis and literature review of both sides of the argument will be conducted. Some resources claim that one of the main reasons for the Rohingyas to be declared stateless, was the fact that the Myanmar government wanted to benefit economically by declaring a significant part

of their population (~1 million), stateless. This meant that approximately 1 million of the Myanmar population would not need to be provided with healthcare, education and other benefits that are availed by citizens of a nation. This will be further supported by the another case study on the precedent set by Idi Amin in Uganda, where he declared a significant Indian population, in Uganda, stateless to nationalise their flourishing businesses.

In the main body of the thesis, it is going to draw out comparison between the economy of Myanmar before 1982 (In 1982 the Rohingyas were declared stateless) and the projections from 1982 against the current state of Myanmar economy. For this, newspaper articles, academic resources and other governmental documents will be used. I am also going to carry out a detailed data analysis of data on GDP taken from the databank of the World Bank website. This will allow us to see what impact the two denationalization had on a country's economy.

The hypothesis is that the economy has actually become worse off due to the fact that declaring Rohingya stateless has had a worse impact on Myanmar's reputation. It has created an instable environment for investment and presented a "closed off" view of the Myanmar's economy to the World. Which has led to Myanmar not reaching its projected targets. Had the Rohingyas not been declared stateless and the subsequent upheaval and instability had not followed, Myanmar would have been in a better condition, economically, at present.

The thesis will then discuss the case study of the Ugandan economy. The Ugandan economy faced a similar situation when Idi Amin decided to deport a significant ethnic Indian population from Uganda. The difference between the two situations is that Rohingyas were predominantly poor whereas, the Indians in Uganda were well- established businessmen. However, with the help of World Bank data on GDP the thesis will once again compare the current Ugandan economy to that of the early 1970s and the projections at that time. This will surely show a worse off condition in Uganda.

The thesis will then compare the data from both Uganda and Myanmar and see whether the hypotheses can be supported.

1.2 Limitations

It was aimed that extensive data analysis with the help of STATA will be conducted for this project. However, due to time constraints and an error in coding that aspect of the project has not been added to this document.

A premise that is often used is that the difference between the situation of Myanmar and that of Ugandan is that in Myanmar's situation the economy became worse off because investment into the country stopped. Whereas, in the case of Uganda investment within the country had stopped that led to its downfall. While this is an interesting question, it is not the full story since Idi Amin's expulsion of Indians led to a cease in foreign investment in Uganda too due to lack of trust by foreign investors in the Ugandan government.

Another problem that was faced while researching this thesis was that Myanmar is a very closed off economy which means that not a lot of data is not available online. Therefore, many obscure sources have been used, yet all sources that seem unsure have been backed by at least two reference. This problem was harder when we had to compare the economies of Myanmar prior to 1982, when Rohingyas were declared stateless, because prior to 1982 Myanmar had a socialist regime which it transitioned to only in the late 80s. This means that very little data on the economic condition of Myanmar was available. Similarly, in the case of Uganda, data prior to 1972, the date when Indian's were exiled, was extremely hard to find.

An interesting fact that was point out was that while Myanmaris could be considered natives, Indians could not. Yet what is little known is that Indians had been in

Uganda for almost a century. It is true that there were not residents of Uganda for as long as the Rohingyas were. Yet under any humanitarian law, a 100 year should entitle citizenship. This in the case of 90,000 Indians in Uganda was only granted 12,000 Indians.

Chapter 2: The Plight of the Rohingyas of Myanmar

As discussed in the introduction, there are various motivations for a country to abandon a certain percentage of its population. And one of the biggest motivating factors is the scarcity of resources in the economy. This scarcity creates competition and jealousies. People then begin to wonder what they can do to gain a greater proportion of these resources. That's when they start thinking about the "outsider" or those that don't belong to the land and hence should not reap benefits of the land. The interesting question that arises is: what does it take to belong to the land? Are you indigenous enough if you are born on the land or do your grandparents or great-grandparents need to be born on the land too? This is a question that academics often grapple with.

This problem is also faced by the Rohingyas. However, if we consider the fact that the Rohingya origin dates back to the 7th Century, we might be more convinced to consider them natives. Alas the root of the Rohingya crisis is that the Government fails to recognize the Rohingya as Citizens of Myanmar and instead calls them illegal Bengali migrants.

This chapter will firstly discuss the background of the Rohingya situation in Myanmar and talk about the various reasons for ethnic cleansing in the region. It will then, with the help of empirical data and academic sources look at the economic and socio-political situation in Burma prior to the passing of the Citizen Act 1982 which basically declared Rohingyas stateless. It will then look at the economic condition of present day Myanmar since 1982. In the conclusion it will compare the two economies, one prior to the declaration of Rohingyas as stateless and one after the Act to find out

whether this action had a positive impact on Myanmar's Economy or has it been a set back to the economy.

2.1 Background

The origins of the Rohingyas in Burma (refer to Timeline on pg.10) can be traced to 7th Century³ Arab Muslim traders who came to the Arakan Province via land or sea settled in the region (Crossman, 2014, pp.12; Kipgen, 2013, 235; Kiragu et al., 2013, 7). Feigenbaum (2013, 8) writes that during the early years of Arab settlement in the Arakan Province, the relations between the Arab settlers and the indigenous people were harmonious. He supports his evidence with documents from the 1400s and later which suggest peaceful trade and co-existence took place. Ironclad documents prove the existence of Rohingyas back in 1799 in the Rakhine State (Crossman, 2014, 13). An 1826 report estimated that at least 30% of the population of the Rakhine Province was Muslim (Kristoff as mentioned in Crossman, 2014, 13). The rest of the Rakhine population spoke a language quite similar to Burmese and practised Theravada Buddhism which helped them claim ties to the ethnic group that was in majority in Burma (Patgiri, 2017; Crossman, 2014; Feigenbaum, 2013). However, this difference in ethnicities did not spark any resentment amongst the locals. In fact, for many centuries they thrived side by side and the Rakhine province was highly influenced by the Bengali Sultanate (Yue and Mensah, 2017, 475; Crossman, 2014, 13; Feigenbaum, 2013).

The problem started with the British colonial rule of Burma. As you can see from the timeline above, from 1826 until 1937 Burma was ruled as a Province of the Indian subcontinent. This created resentment amongst the local Burmese populations since the Colonial Masters used a divide and rule policy. Under this policy, local Burmese were hardly ever hired as Civil Servants, instead the jobs went to Indian and Muslims (Feigenbaum, 2013, 11). Furthermore, the Colonists sought to school Buddhism by

³ Crossman in her paper mentions reference of Parnini, "The Crisis of the Rohingya as a Muslim Minority in Myanmar and Bilateral Relations with Bangladesh," pp. 281. However, Feigenbaum (2013, pp. 8) mentions the reference of Yunus (9) which states that the earliest Arab Muslim traders arrived in Burma in the 8th Century when they suffered a shipwreck and started to inhabit the land.

bringing forth changes such as eliminating the position of the senior most monk (Crossman, 2014, 17; Feigenbaum, 2013). This angered the people and created in them a sense of “‘we-ness’ as opposed to ‘they-ness’”, as aptly stated by Yue and Mensah (2017, 475).

Burma had been an autocratic country and political awakening came after the colonialists came to Burma. The first expression of such awakening was in the form of Young Men’s Buddhist Association (YMBA) in 1885 which was initially created as a non-violent boycott movement created to object the Christian dominance in Burma (Yue and Mensah, 2017, 478, Crossman, 2014, Feigenbaum, 2013). This further fractured the relations between ethnicities, since the YMBA, as the name suggested catered only to the Buddhists of Burma.

Furthermore, Crossman (2014, 19) writes that during the colonial rule, economic inequality was also felt because most Burmese were farmers who owed money to Indian lenders. He states that 30-40% of farmers had lost land to Indian debtors and almost 75% were in debt. Furthermore, by World War II more than 50% of Rangoon’s population was Indian and Indian Hindus and Muslims were clearly favoured over the local Burmese by the British colonial masters. This, mixed with threat to religion initiated a campaign in which “Freedom and independence from colonial rule became inextricably linked with the purge of all foreign influences.” Even though the Rohingya Muslims of Rakhine region benefitted little from these developments, since they were not civil servants but businessmen, they were enveloped in the same cloak since their features and religion resembled the Indians who were openly advantaged over the Burmese. Between the 1920s and 1930s Buddhist leaders created xenophobic slogans and led rallies. The Rohingyas were further secluded from political representation when they were not included in the Panglong Conference, as Frieigenbaum (2013,11) writes:

“Form the psychological perspective, communities remained fractured and persecuted, resorting to in-group solidarity to protect against the dominion of relatively privileged out-group, which in turn led to a form of ethnic nationalism that would play out during the Panglong Agreement.”

The Rohingyas reacted with thoughts of an independent Rakhine State (Friedgenbaum, 2011). However, this was not manifested and in 1948 Burma became an independent state led by Prime Minister U Nu.

In the new Union of Burma, all ethnicities were given equal status as citizens and the Rakhine state was granted autonomy; two Muslim members were also appointed to the Parliament. However, this lasted only 2 decades and in 1962 General Ne Win led a successful. He abolished the autonomy of the Rakhine state and since then no Muslim representatives have been elected to the Parliament (Patgiri, 2017). Under his oppressive regime he nationalised all financial institutions and businesses. This greatly affected the Rohingyas since most financial institutions and businesses were owned by them while the majority of Burmese population were farmers (Kipgen, 2013, 245). Crossman (2014, 21) states that the new military government ruled in a way that was bent on “intentionally creat[ing] communal violence” through xenophobic policies.

The first massacre of Rohingyas occurred in 1978 when the Military launched operation Nagamin, during which Rohingyas underwent mass rapes, murders, arbitrary arrests and tortuous treatment (Crossman, 2014, 23; Kipgen, 2013; Council on Foreign Relations, 2018). This was all justified by the military which stated that Rohingyas were basically illegal Bengali immigrants who did not belong in Burma (Patgiri, 2017). The further explained that these illegal immigrants were bandits bent on ruining the Burmese society (Human Rights watch, 2013, 23). Consequently, the Citizenship Act of 1982 was passed. This Act recognized 135 ethnicities in Burma and Rohingyas were not one of them (Kiragu et al., 2011).

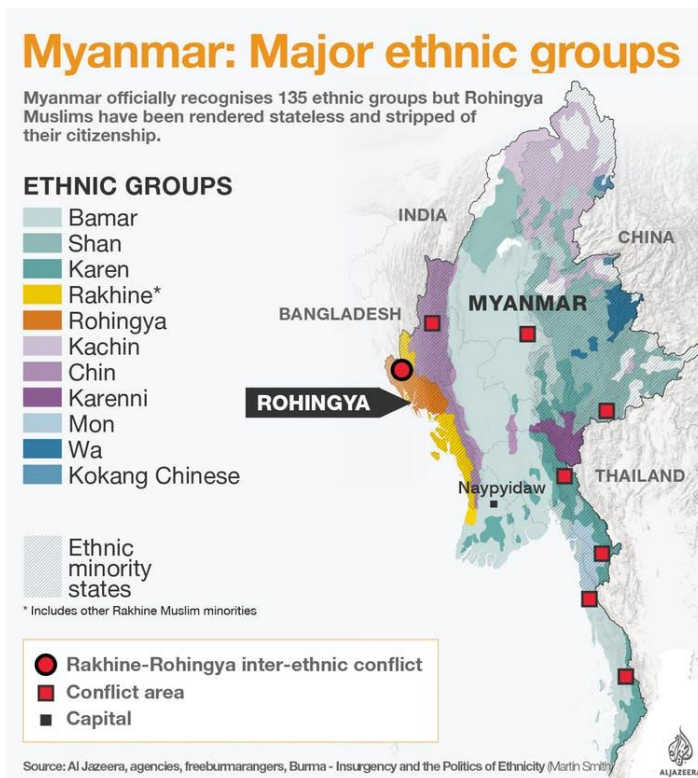


Figure 2: Myanmar Major Ethnicities

Consequently, almost 1 million people were left stateless within a day. This meant that Rohingyas were declared illegal in Burma and hence did not have a right to own property or business, enrol in educational institutions, access healthcare services, protection against arbitrary detention and many other protections that are normally guaranteed to a citizen of a nation (Kipgen, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2013, Fortify Rights, 2014, Minorities

at Risk, 2004). Hence Rohingyas were left economically crippled and stateless.

This was only the start of Rohingya's misery. Their loss of citizenship opened the floodgates to torture and inhumane treatment by the government, Buddhist extremists and other residents of the Rakhine Province. In 1991 there was a "mass exodus" (Crossman, 2014, 24) of Rohingyas and between 1992 and 1999 almost 200,000 Rohingyas were repatriated from a land that they had called their own for centuries. And the human rights violations, in Myanmar, have continued to this day. And in 2005, a strict Two child policy was implemented on Rohingyas only (Council on Foreign Relations, 2018, Crossman, 2014). This policy is so invasive that upon marriage couples are asked to sign an affidavit conforming they will not have more than two children. And if suspicion arises that more children were born the instructions, as stated in Fortify Rights (2014, 24) report state:

“If there is suspicion of someone being substituted [in the family registry], children in the household will be compared in age and in appearance. If the child is an infant, the mother will be made to breastfeed the child. Young children will be questioned separately.”⁴

Though this is a regional level law and has received a mixed response from the national government. At times the national government has denied the Two Child Policy, such as at the UN in 2013 (Fortify Rights, 2014, 26). Whereas at other times it has outright stated that it exists and is a good policy to control population. Khin Muwang Shwe, a government appointed member of Rakhine Inquiry commission supported the Two Child Policy in these words (Fortify Rights, 2014, 27):

“This policy is part of a plan to provide more development for everyone.”⁵ He also went on to state that this policy will help the ‘Bengali woman’ who tends to have many children. When asked why the Two Child Policy is not implemented uniformly on all ethnicities instead of just Rohingyas, Win Myang, a Government spokesperson, stated that it was only implemented on Muslims since Buddhists only have one wife (Fortify Rights, 2014, 26). Unrealistically implying that one could not have more than two children with one partner. The central government’s response to the Rohingya situation has often been filled with inconsistencies and failed attempts to envelope the truth in *holier than thou* reasons.

In the recent time, scholars such as Siegfried O. Wolf (2015) have claimed that the Rohingya problem goes far beyond a mere ethnic conflict. It has socio-political and economic roots too. He states, in an interview with Duetsche Wells (2015):

“Rakhine state is one of the country's poorest areas, despite being rich in natural resources. The Rohingyas are thus considered an additional economic burden on

⁴ Addendum to internal order 1/2005, “Drawing Maps, Making a Record of Buildings, and Reviewing Household Registrations,” Letter No.: 3/24-1/U 6 (1057), May 1, 2005, number 5 as mentioned in the Fortify Rights 2014 Report referenced in the bibliography

⁵ as mentioned in the Fortify Right report: “Myanmar’s Opposition Parties Split on Contentious Two-Child Policy,” *Radio Free Asia*, June 3, 2013, available at <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/myan-mar/debate-06032013182340.html> (accessed January 7, 2014).

the state, as they compete for the few available jobs and opportunities to do business. The jobs and businesses in the state are mostly occupied by the Burmese elite. As a result, we can say that Buddhist resentment against the Rohingyas is not only religious; it is also political and economically driven.” Hence supporting the premise mentioned above, that ethnic cleansing takes place due to a scarcity of resources. This scarcity leads to competition between those who are different in ethnicities and unites those who are similar. This unity arises only because people realise the value of strength in numbers.

In their September 2017 article, Forino et al. claim that the issue of de-nationalization of Rohingyas goes far beyond their ethnicities, low economic status and high population growth-rates. The article claims that one of the major reasons for pushing Rohingyas out of Rakhine is because of the resource-rich land.

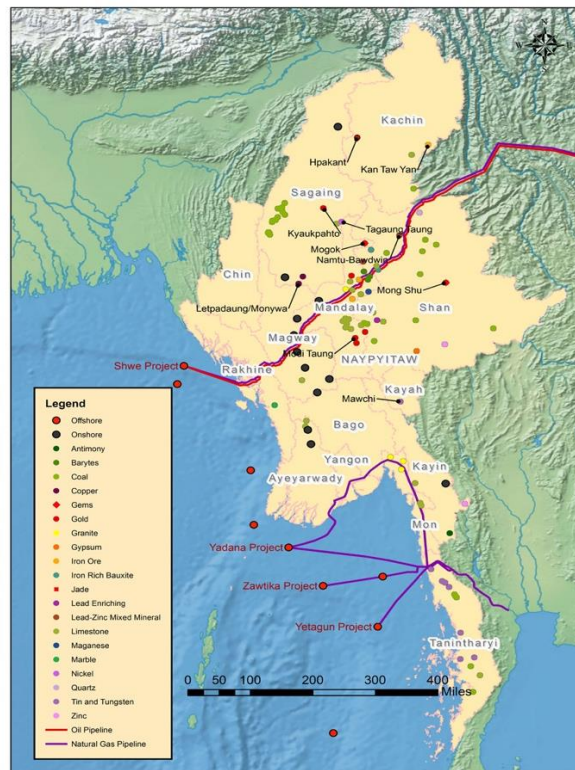


Figure 3: Wealth Map of Rakhine Region⁶

⁶ Source: Bauer, A. (2017) *Wealth Map of Rakhine Region*. [image] Available at: https://resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/sharing-wealth_map.jpg [Accessed 27 May 2018]

Land grabbing in Myanmar is not a recent phenomenon. However, there has been evidence that land grabbing and violence against the Rohingyas has increased since Myanmar opened Asia's final frontier project in 2011 that allows foreign investment in the region (Forino et al., 2017; South China Morning Post, 2017). Council on Foreign Relations (2018) report also states that:

“Since the start of 2018, Myanmar authorities have reportedly cleared abandoned Rohingya villages and farmlands to build homes, security bases, and infrastructure.”
South China Morning Post (2017, Forino et al., 2011; Batrawy, 2017) article claims that the reason the Rohingyas are being pushed out and India, China, Saudi Arabia, remain silent is because all these country have a stake in the oil pipeline being built in the Rakhine region. Since such a huge project (see figure 3), has an adverse effect on the local population and a lot if land is need for the fulfilment of this project, Rohingyas are being pushed out (Batrawy, 2017). However, the South China Morning Post (2017) article states that though the pipeline is not being built in the troublesome region all these actors might feel that spill over effect can take place and endanger the project. Hence it is imperative to push the Rohingyas out.

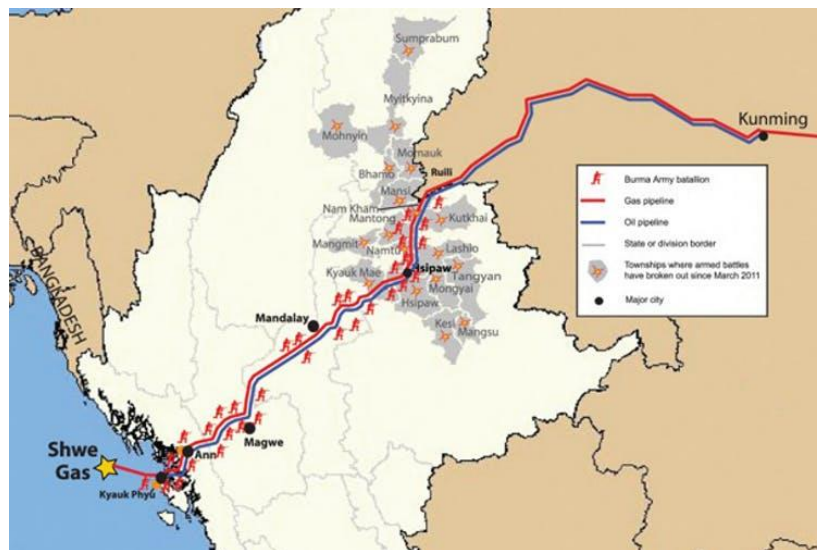


Figure 4: The oil pipeline project in the Rakhine Region⁷

⁷ The Conversation (2017). *Pipeline from the Shwe gas field to China..* [image] Available at: <https://images.theconversation.com/files/185352/original/file-20170910-3138-11370ec.jpg?ixlib=rb-1.1.0&q=45&auto=format&w=754&fit=clip> [Accessed 31 May 2018].

2.2 The Economic Condition of Burma after independence Prior to 1982

Table 2: The Condition of Burma's Economy between 1947 to 1952⁸

	1947-48	1949-50	1951-52
GDP	72	61	74
GDP per capita	66	55	64
Agricultural production	77	65	75

Source: Walinsky, *Economic Development of Burma 1951-1960*. New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1962.

Burma's economic condition has been precarious since its independence in 1948. Table 2, above, supports this premise by showing that a year after independence the economic condition of Myanmar deteriorated instead of improving. It was able to stabilise in the next two years but the improvement can not be considered significant enough since GDP per capita remained lower than in the fiscal year of 1947-48 which shows that the increase in GDP was not proportionate to the increase in population and agricultural production even remained lower than before independence.

Democracy in Burma last only till 1962 after which a string of military coups ensued (Xu and Albert, 2016). Maung Kyi et al. (2000, 2) in their book point out that even though Burma had been disrupted by the two world wars it was almost at par with Thailand in terms of economic and development indicators. They call the time between 1950 and 62 the "golden age" of Myanmar (Maung Kyi et al., 2000, 2): "The eight-year "Pyidawtha" Plan saw solid achievements in infrastructure, agriculture and industry,

⁸ Table was taken from: Maung Kyi et al., 2000, 6

despite failing to meet its ambitious targets because of the collapse in the price of rice after the Korean War boom.”

However, it all came to pass in 1962 when the military took over and General U Ne Win started more isolationist policies (Xi and Albert, 2016; Kubo, 2013) by nationalising all businesses and financial institutions. As explained above this nationalisation policy had a significant impact on the Rohingyas of Burma. Rampant corruption and black market trade ensued and then economy around the 1980s was at an all time low (Maung Kyi et al., 2000, 12).

During this time, when the government had taken away Rohingya businesses, they now decided to pass the 1982 Citizenship Act, as mentioned above. 135 nationalities were recognized under this Act for an almost 1 million population living in Myanmar by the name of the ‘Rohingyas’. Claims were made that Rohingyas were not essentially Burmese because they shared similar features with Bangladeshis and had only recently illegally migrated from Bangladesh and settled in Burma. Having distinct features, different religion, culture and ethnicity did give the Rohingyas a major disadvantage. Hence with in a day, Rohingyas were made stateless with no recourse to justice.

As mentioned above, the scholar Siegfried O. Wolf does believe that the major reason for such a move was because the low economic status of Rohingyas and their inability to contribute to much to the economy. Looking at the economic and socio-political condition of Burma prior to 1982 does make us wonder if this was the case. Yet then how can we explain the expulsion of Indians from Uganda who were drivers of economic activity in the country, as we will see in the next chapter?

2.3 The Economic Condition of Burma Since 1982

This section will look at the aftermath of the 1982 Citizen Act and try to find out whether Myanmar's actions can be justified because they helped improve the economy or not.

The dwindling condition of the Burmese Economy not only led to corruption, extreme ethnic violence but also demonstrations against the military government. The US government placed sanction on Burma when the government tried to repress protests and arrest protesters (Xi and Albert, 2016). One of the moves to stimulate the economy and create feelings of patriotism amongst people was to change the name "Burma" which had been handed down by the colonialists to Myanmar, a year after thousands died to protest against the military government in 1988.

The military government was finally put down in 1988 and this ushered an era of more openness (Maung Kyi et al., 2000, 15; Kubo, 2013). Yet this 'openness' was not quite open since the government kept a very strict hold on most areas of the economy. The government did start the tourism project "Visit Myanmar" but that failed and the only active export from Myanmar for a time was natural gas to Thailand (Maung Kyi et al., 2000, 15). In their book, Maung Kyi and his fellow Burmese economists summarise this situation well when they state:

"Under the present regime, the open market policy was imperfectly introduced, while some of the controls introduced under the socialist regime remained."

While a more open economy was promised, Rohingyas still received the worst kind of treatment and a "mass exodus", in the words of Crossman (2014, 23) took place in 1991. The Rohingyas were still considered as illegal migrants and hence there is not much reference to how the stateless status of Rohingyas affected Myanmar's economy. However, throughout the years the international community has recognised the problem

and EU countries as well as the US has placed various sanctions on Burma (Kipgen, 2013; Crossman, 2014; Maung Kyi, 2000).

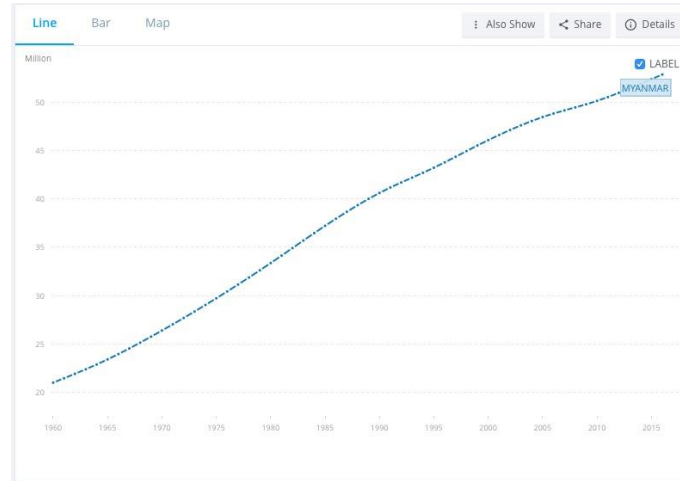


Figure 5: The total population of Myanmar since 1960⁹

Figure 7 is an interesting graph to see, as we can see that the population of Myanmar has been steadily rising since 1960. This makes us question whether the Two Child Policy on the Rohingyas was even effective since the results do not seem to have manifested and perhaps it certainly was a discriminatory policy as argued above. Figure 8, shows a more zoomed in version of this map to truly understand the nuances between 2005 and 2015.

⁹ World Bank. (2018). *Data Bank*. [online] Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.TOTL?contextual=default&end=2016&locations=MM&start=2005> [Accessed 3 May 2018].

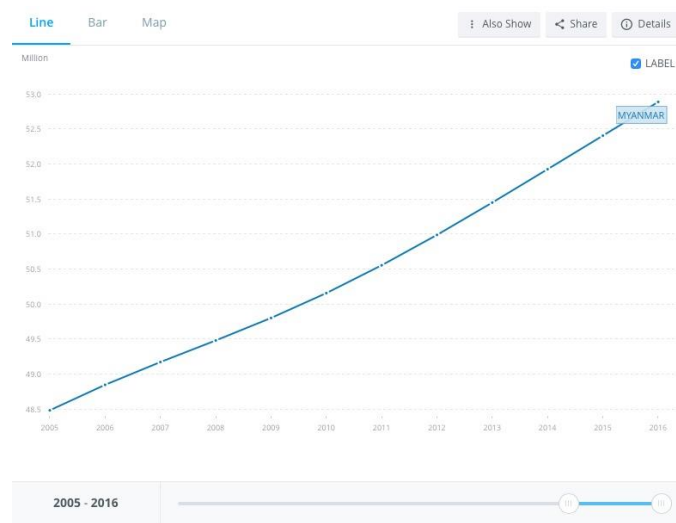


Figure 6: The Total Population of Myanmar between 2005 and 2015¹⁰

Apart from the Rohingya crisis, Myanmar has also faced other problems such as the Saffron Revolution that left the country unstable and its economy disrupted, cyclone Nargis which killed 140,000 people in 2008 and transition to a new democratic regime in 2010. Yet it can not be denied that the economic condition of Myanmar is improving. Rieffel, in his 2018 article writes:

“In December 2017, the World Bank and the Myanmar Ministry of Planning and Finance published the results of a nationwide survey carried out in early 2015. It found major improvements in living standards across the country since 2009/10. Remarkably, poverty had declined from 42 % of the population to 32% in just five years.”

While these facts are true and the GDP is also on the rise (see table 3, below) due to investment from India, China and Saudi Arabia in the pipeline project and development of the extractive industry in the Rakhine; One can not help but wonder how much of this is because of the fact that 1 million Myanmaris have been made stateless and hence do not have to be counted in these development indicators.

¹⁰ Ibid.

	1990	2000	2010	2016
GDP (current US\$) (billions)	...	8.91	49.54	63.23
GDP growth (annual %)	2.8	13.7	9.6	5.9
Inflation, GDP deflator (annual %)	18.5	2.5	7.0	3.6

Table 3: Myanmar's Economic Condition¹¹

Furthermore, Rieffel adds in his article that mistreatment of Rohingya does not have a largely insignificant impact on the economy since Myanmar is still facing many sanctions from the West and in 2016 the tourism to Myanmar dropped to almost 11%. For example, in October 2017, the World Bank froze its \$200 million funding budget for Myanmar in the wake of the Rohingya crisis (Reuters, 2017).

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the Rohingya situation in today's Myanmar and tries to find the various reasons for ethnic cleansing. The main reason that the chapter talks about is the scarcity of resources that fuels the 'Us vs Them' phenomenon. While this plays a major role in the Rohingya situation, another reason for exile of Rohingyas is Myanmar's colonial roots and how it was treated as a subsidiary of Indian subcontinent while clearly being a different country, this along with British divide and rule policy further widened the schism between the Rohingyas and the Myanmaris. To add to this, the government's constant denial to accept Rohingyas as an ethnicity belonging to Myanmar rather than illegal Bengali immigrants, while clear evidence is available to Rohingya roots since 7th

¹¹ data source: Databank.worldbank.org. (2018). *CountryProfile: Myanmar*. [online] Available at: http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/reportwidget.aspx?Report_Name=CountryProfile&Id=b450fd57&tbar=y&dd=y&inf=n&zm=n&country=MMR [Accessed 3 May 2018].

century, makes the Rohingyas situation worse and fuels further ethnic violence. The 1982 Citizenship Act and the Two Child Policy have also stripped the Rohingyas of their fundamental rights.

Furthermore, scholars such as Wolf claim that the Rohingya issue is not only political but also economic, since Rohingyas belong to a poorer faction of the society and hence the Myanmar government does not want to have to bear the burden of those that don't contribute to the economy. This was seen above in the recent figures of Myanmar's economy whose prospects look bright. Yet what is missing is the 1 million destitute people in Myanmar who have been declared stateless and hence are not counted in economic figures.

To add to this, this chapter finds evidence that Rohingyas are being pushed out forcefully so that the government can grab their mineral rich lands. This is being done by hideous forms of torture and inhumane behaviour by not only the extremist factions but also the government and the military. There are claims that the military has already cleared lands where Rohingya villages once thrived.

Still reports claim that though foreign investment is rampant in Myanmar and the region is facing positive growth cycle the Rohingya issue does hinder complete growth. This can be seen by sanctions and shunning of Myanmar by the West and the lack of tourism in the country. Hence if Myanmar needs to prosper fully it will have to find a permanent and peaceful solution for the Rohingya especially.

Chapter 3: The Ugandan Indians

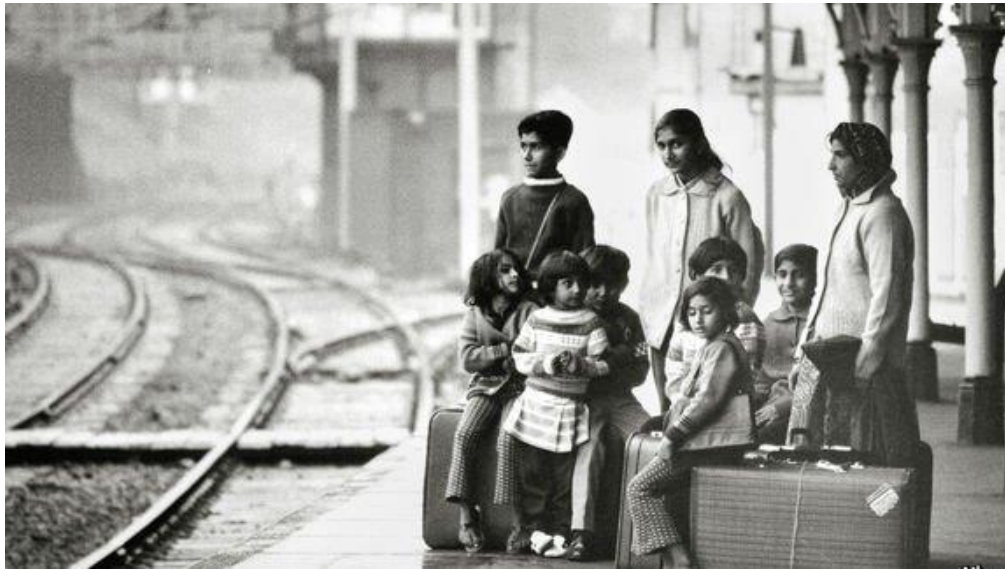


Figure 7: The expulsion of Indians from Uganda by Idi Amin¹²

This chapter starts with a brief background of the Indians in Uganda and how they were exiled with a three-month notice. The background will discuss the process of expulsion and the reasons behind such an action. The chapter will then discuss the economic and socio-political condition of Uganda prior to the expulsion in 1972. It will then move onto discussing the economic and socio-political condition of Uganda since 1972 to present day. In conclusion it will summarize the chapter and give concluding arguments.

While the Ugandan expulsion of Indians might seem like a completely different analogy from the Rohingya expulsion from Myanmar, plenty of comparisons can still be drawn between the two situations. Firstly, both ethnic groups were in minority in their respective regions. Both ethnic groups worked in the spheres of trade and financial institutions and were not involved in the administration of countries. Consequently, both groups have suffered from racism and the ‘us vs them’ phenomenon that one begins to suffer in case of a scarcity of resources. It is true however, that the Indians in Uganda

¹² Source: The Economist: <https://t.co/xEPpNp16ov>

belonged to stronger financial backgrounds than the Rohingyas. This chapter will discuss how their business acumen and resourcefulness did not help their living situation.

3.1 Background

The earliest known existence of Indian migrations to Africa are known to be the mid-1870s and they were mostly Hindus and Muslims from the West Coast of India (Natalia, 2008, 27). And in 1948, the population of Indians in Uganda was close to 35,000 (Morris, 1975, 307). An interesting to phenomenon to note here is that while in the case of Myanmar, above, ethnic boundaries were made mainly on looks, religion and a false claim to lack of nativity; the ethnic boundaries that were formed in Uganda were on looks, language and nativity (Morris, 1975, 307). These were all businessmen families who formed their business and they prospered in Uganda.

However, over time ethnic tensions began to rise. The normal Ugandan was not as prosperous as the Indian businessman and hence the Indians had better living standard and employed Ugandans (Patel, 1972,12; Himbara and Sultan, 1995). This mixed with the esteem of ‘white skin’ passed down by the Colonial Masters, which the Indian—used to avoid classism—followed religiously, led to Indians in some instances mistreating or looking down on their Ugandan employees (Himbara and Sultan, 1995, 86, Morris, 1975). While Ugandans resented their Indian—alien—masters who had come to lord over them after the Colonialists had left. This resentment grew slowly and the government felt the need to act.

In 1969, during President Obote’s rule Indians were asked to present themselves for an Indian-only census (Patel, 1972,17). The census showed that 74,308 Indians of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian origin were residing in Uganda at the time. This and other increasing tensions amongst the communities left a feeling of unease in the minds of Indians. The British were aware of the situation and tried to encourage President Obote to accept the citizenship applications of Indians, especially the 12,000 Indians who had

applied for years and their applications had not been processed due to technical irregularities (Patel, 1972). However, many Indians did not believe that Obote was willing to grant citizenship and hence were relieved with Idi Amin's military coup since he was known as a more modern and dynamic leader (Himbara and Sultan, 1995; Sonwalker, 2018). Since Obote had often stated that "Uganda would not agree to act as a refugee camp for British Indians" (Patel, 1972,12).



Figure 8: Europeans Diplomats Kneeling before President Amin to take Pledge to Protect Uganda in 1975¹³

However, their hopes would soon be crushed. Idi Amin seemed to agree with his predecessor. And in October 1971, all Indians were ordered to gather at an Indian camp for census or lose their right to remain in India (Himabara and Sultan, 1995; Patel, 1972). What is interesting to note here is that only an Indian census was held and no other ethnicity was counted. On the 7th of December of the same year, Idi Amin called the first ever, two day Indian Conference and presented his declaration. This declaration seemed more of a letter of complaints against "some" of the elements of Indian population (Patel, 1972,15). President Amin was careful to clarify that misconduct in various aspects of life was only limited to "some" factions of the Indian population. This was well-received by

¹³ source: CBS News: <https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/idi-amin/16/>

the Indian leaders, who counter-presented their proposals which included right to enter Civil services and right to be given citizenship to those who had applied so many years prior and had been often promised one for decade (Himbara and Sultan, 1995, 87). However, when Amin spoke again it seemed that he had not even read the proposal (Patel, 1972, 16). None of these proposals were given any thought after the conference.

Almost a year later, on 4th August 1972, when President Amin was addressing the Airborne Regiment in Tororo, a town in eastern Uganda, bordering Kenya (check map in appendix), he stated that all Indians with British passports will be deported, with the exception of Indians in certain professional categories such as doctors who were actively working in Uganda. (Patel, 1972; Himbara, 1995). At this point it only seemed that the British national Indians were the only ones in danger of deportation.

On 8th August, he then spoke at the Makerere University where he went onto say that all the Indians, were to register their personal property and businesses, with the exception of personal effects such as radio, clothes and furniture, before 31st August. He also read parts of his declaration from the Indian Conference in 1971 and pointed out the crimes of the Indian community, this time atrociously stereotyping the community. His speech was well-received by the students who saw it as a step towards “Ugandanisation of the country’s economy” (Patel, 1972,17). However, in the following days when the University pled to let Indian students, who were in the middle of their studies stay, and Amin rejected this, the Universities were not happy.

Only a day later, when President Amin spoke to the Command Post in Kampala on the 9th of August, he stated that all Indians that were non-citizens would be expelled from Uganda (Patel, 1972, 17). This led to a lot of confusion and some assumed that Idi Amin was confused between the difference between British Indians and those not having Ugandan nationality.

Then in another address, a few days later he stated that now he had decided to include those 23,000 citizen Indians who had been previously left out (Patel, 1972,

Downden, 1992). Hence now he wanted Uganda to be rid of all Indians, even if they were nationals. This, he claimed was because of “arson and sabotage that Indians had started to or planned to commit.” (Patel, 1972, 18). He further stated that Indians in categories he has exempted in his 4th August would now also have to leave Uganda in 3 months’ time i.e. by the 7th of November 1972 (Himabara and Sultan, 1995, 87) since he felt that they would not be faithful in serving Uganda after their fellow Indians are deported from the country (Patel, 1972, 18).

Hence proving once again that sometimes nationalities, which are a human’s fundamental right, can be precariously snatched from them in order to promote political socio-economic goals. In the same speech he also announced that all Indians were required to register their personal property and businesses with the exception of personal effects, such as radios, clothes and furniture (Patel, 1972, 19). Hence paving the way for mass nationalisation, as the one that took place in Burma under the military regime. In his next speech he even added that after the takeover of Indian businesses he will go after the European ones. To this statement, the UK reacted by freezing a \$10 million loan that had been agreed on in 1971 (Patel, 1972, 18).

In a cable interview to President Nyerere of Tanzania, he stated that the “Indian problem was a British problem” and he felt that Uganda should not be used as a dumping ground (Patel, 1972, 18). In a letter to the Canadian Prime Minister (attached in the appendix), Idi Amin claimed that the “economic reorganisation” he had undertaken in order to rid Uganda of the Criminal elements in its society. Yet there was no significant evidence that majority of the Indians were criminals. In fact, since they were economically better off than the Ugandans they were statistically more likely to be well-behaved.

Yet since President Amin had often accused Indians of “milking Uganda’s money” (Farhana, 2016), under his rule 60,000 Indians were forced to leave Uganda with only \$50 each in cash (Sonwalker, 2018). This would have quite a significant impact on

Uganda because these Indians owned 90% of Ugandan businesses and accounted for 90% of the Ugandan tax revenue. This will be seen in section 3.3.

What is interesting to note is that in his letter (see appendix) to the Canadian Prime Minister, President Amin puts a special emphasis on sounding ‘the victim’. He states, as mentioned above, that he was forced to carry out the move for the economic and social prosperity of Uganda which was being hampered by the criminal Indians. He also promises that after the Indian property and businesses are sold, the money generated will be placed in people’s bank accounts for them to access. Yet, none of the Indians saw a single dime of that money after they left Uganda (Coast Week, 2018; Daily Monitor, 2010).

3.2 The Economic Condition of Uganda Prior to 1972

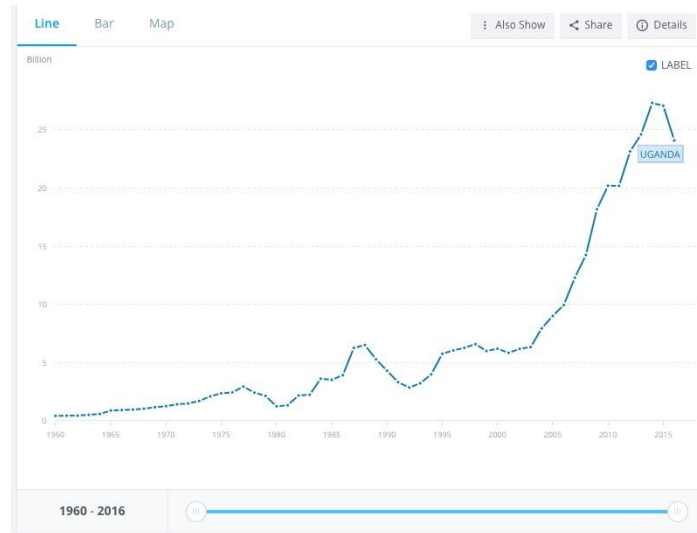


Figure 9: Total GDP of Uganda (Current US\$)¹⁴

As you can see from figure 11, prior to 1972, the Ugandan GDP was rising slowly but steadily. This can easily be attributed to the boom brought about by Ugandan businesses who in 1972 were paying 90% of the total tax revenue contributions (Farhana, 2016).

¹⁴ source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?end=1971&locations=UG&start=1960>

In the years prior to 1972, Uganda enjoyed a strong and stable economy with strong Agricultural economy and an ever expanding manufacturing industry largely thanks to the Asian businessmen (Rita Barnes, 1990). Hence the prospects for Uganda and its economy prior to 1972 was quite satisfactory.

3.3 The Economic Condition of Uganda Since 1972

However, If we try to see a close-up of the GDP after 1972 we will find out that the GDP in Uganda dropped dramatically in 1980, which can probably be explained by the expulsion of Indians and Businesses from Uganda, as seen in figure 12. Indians were the backbone of the Ugandan society and they contributed almost 90% to the total tax revenue receipts of Uganda in the year 1972 (Farhana, 2016).

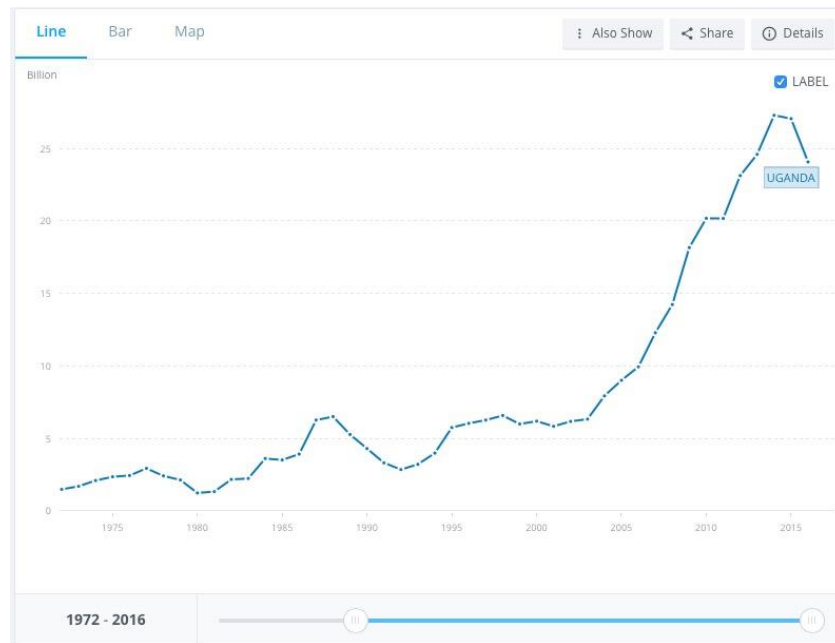


Figure 10: Total GDP of Uganda from 1972 to Present (Current US\$)

The delay in the response in GDP is probably because after the Indians were exiled, the firms were nationalised and it took some time for them to go under. The scale of the

nationalization and confiscation of property can be seen in the words of Coast Week's 2018 article where it was stated that:

“In total, some 5,655 firms, ranches, farms, and agricultural estates were reallocated, along with cars, homes and other household goods. For political reasons, most businesses around 5,500, were reallocated to individuals, with 176 going to government bodies, 33 to semi-state organisations and 2 going to charities.”

Hence the impact on the economy took almost a decade after the Indian expulsion to manifest.

The Ugandan economy during Amin's time was after 1972 plagued contractions and precariously quick policy changes (Hansen, 2012). This left the economy weaker and vulnerable to the Tanzanian Defence Force. The war that ensued brought the economy to an almost stand-still (Himbara and Sultan, 1995, 88).

A series of regimes came and went, including a second Obote regime and then finally Museveni came to power. He decided to use expansionary policies. And his first action was to encourage Indian businessmen to come back to Uganda and set up businesses in 1986. While Indians were reluctant to come back, some did (Logan, 2017; Oluka, 2010) and as we can see from figure 12, the economy certainly seems to have picked up the pace.

Hence it is interesting to see how one ethnically fuelled action can have such a great impact on an economy.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the case study of the expulsion of Indians from Uganda in 1972. It was able to conclude that the expulsion did take place because of Malthusian

perspective of scarcity of resources. However, while in the case of Myanmar the results are not so obvious, the results in this case are straight forward, i.e. Uganda was adversely affected by the expulsion of Indians and their economy suffered greatly. The intensity of this was so much that only a decade later Indians were invited back to Uganda to do business.

Hence President Amin's 1972 acts, while done so that African can take better control of their economy and obtain better living standards proved to be more detrimental for Uganda and ensued a decade of instability and strife. Had the Indians been allowed to Uganda would have been able to develop better rather than falling in the slump in the late 70s. However with the return of Indians, the Ugandan economy has a very positive future.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This thesis deems to not only understand the motivations behind declaring a certain portion of a country's population stateless, but also the impact on a country after such an act. It hypothesizes that a country would surely be worse off if such an act takes place. Hence surmising that declaring ethnicities stateless is not only harmful for the human but also the nation. It does this by taking two case: the case of the de-nationalization and the subsequent and on-going expulsion of Rohingyas from Myanmar and the case of the expulsion of 90,000 Indians from Uganda in early 1970s.

It does this by first by discussing the generic reasons for expulsion of ethnicities from land. The best fit theory for this instance is the Malthusian perspective that states that resources are finite and hence similar people fight together against different groups to gain a larger proportion of the resources. This premise was certainly supported by the Rohingya and Ugandan case-studies.

The Rohingyas had been residing in the Rakhine province since the 7th Century and there is evidence to prove so. Yet the Myanmar government systematically ignores the evidence and claims that Rohingyas are actually illegal Bengali immigrants. However, this is only a recent phenomenon because prior to colonial rule the Rohingya Muslims and Burmese had co-existed peacefully. Only during the colonial and British divide and rule policies did the feelings of resentment against the Rohingyas arose. By the time of Burma's independence in 1948, the issue of ethnic hatred was rampant. Throughout the 1920s and 30s xenophobic slogans were cried. Yet upon independence the Rakhine state was given autonomy and two Rohingyas Muslims were given seat in the Parliament. In 1962, however military coup led by General Ne Win started the downfall of the Rohingyas and the first massacre took place in 1978. So aloof was the government that in 1982 they passed a Citizenship Act where 135 ethnicities were

recognized in Burma and Rohingyas were not amongst them. Since then massacres have been taking place almost regularly against Rohingyas.

The major reasons for these massacres are often considered to be economic factors. This because Rohingyas belong to a low-income stratum in the economy which means that they seem to take more than contribute to it. Hence evidence, discussed above, suggests that it is more beneficial for the government to declare them stateless and not have them weighing down the economy. Another reason is considered to the fact that the Rakhine Province is rich in minerals and oil. By pushing Rohingyas off the lands, the government can reap benefits of the rich land. While the recent data suggests that the Myanmar economy is booming, one can not deny that the Rohingya problem hangs over it like a dark cloud and Myanmar will not be able to make proper use of its boom unless it solves the problem.

The case-study of Uganda further supports the Malthusian perspective on ethnic violence and expulsion due to scarcity in resources. The Indians were residing in Uganda for a good Century before they were pushed out, while some had recourse to other nationalities, almost 12,000 Indians were left stateless. Ugandan Indians were economically better off than the Ugandan Africans. This created jealousies. Hence President Idi Amin decided to expel all Indians from Uganda and confiscate their businesses.

This, as can be seen above had an adverse impact almost directly on the Ugandan economy since the contributions of Indians to the economy were larger than African contributions. This measure left the country so weak that it was strife with contraction in the economy, war and instable governments. This took place until 1986, when President Museveni came to power. As President, one of his earliest moves was to offer Indians to come back to Uganda and set up businesses. Hence showing that expulsion based on ethnicity has a very adverse impact on the Ugandan economy, so much so that they were willing to have the Indians back after just a couple of years.

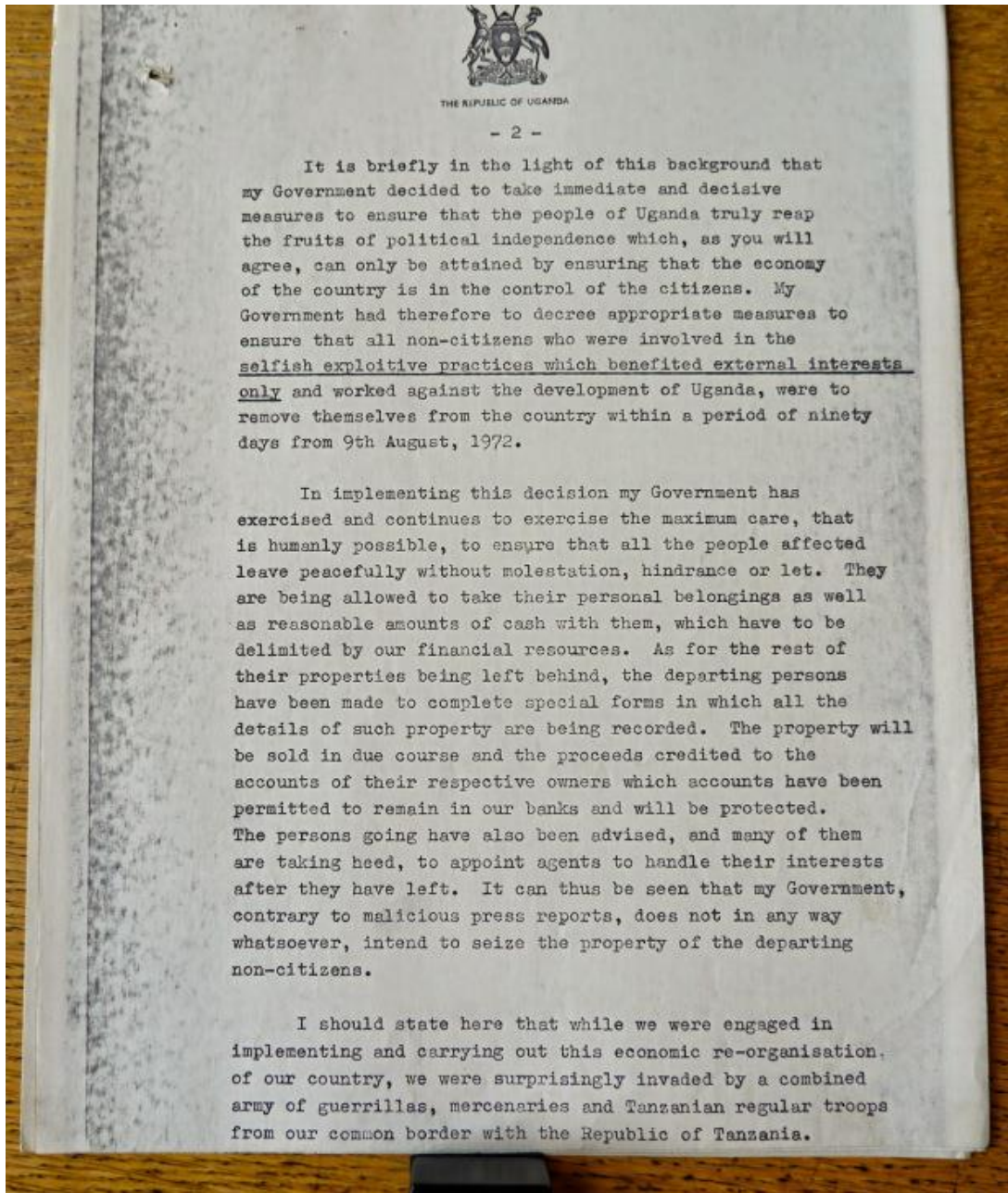
The above two case-studies prove the Malthusian perspective. Ethnic cleansing and ethnic expulsion does take place due to the scarcity of resources. The results may not be as obvious, as in the case of Myanmar, but the problems that come with ethnic expulsion are large enough to have a negative impact on countries.

Hence while the Malthusian perspective does a great job of explaining the reason behind the expulsion, it does not mean that such an expulsion will increase the resources that go around. This is because Indians were great contributors of the economy and expelling them left the economy stagnant. While this is not apparent in the case of Myanmar, we can definitely see that because of this expulsion had affect on external sources of funding such as sanctions from the West and downfall of tourism. Therefore, the dissertation reiterates that expulsion of ethnicities is not the answer.

The End.

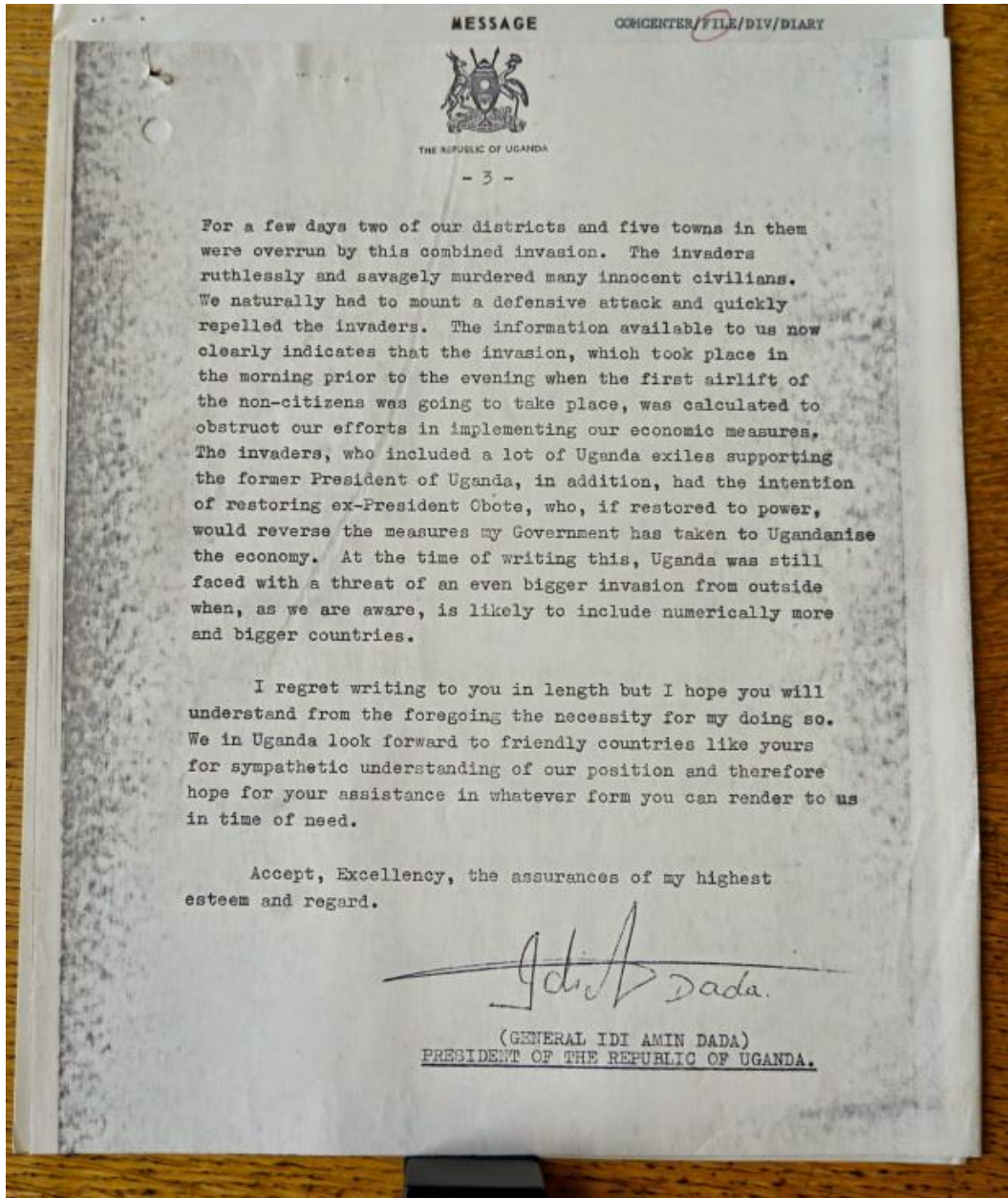
Appendix

1. Idi Amin's Letter to the Canadian Prime Minister (page 1 of 2)¹⁵



¹⁵ Source: <https://ugandansatheart.wordpress.com/2014/08/06/letter-from-the-idi-amin-dada-to-canadian-prime-minister/>

1. Idi Amin's Letter to the Canadian Prime Minister (page 2 of 2)



2. Map of Uganda¹⁶



¹⁶ Source:: <http://www.besttourism.com/medias/dfp/9801>

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Why are ethnicities exiled?
Central European University
Thesis submitted for M.A. in Global Economic Relations

Picture shows the ethnic cleansing of Acadians by the British from Present day Canada in 1758.
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