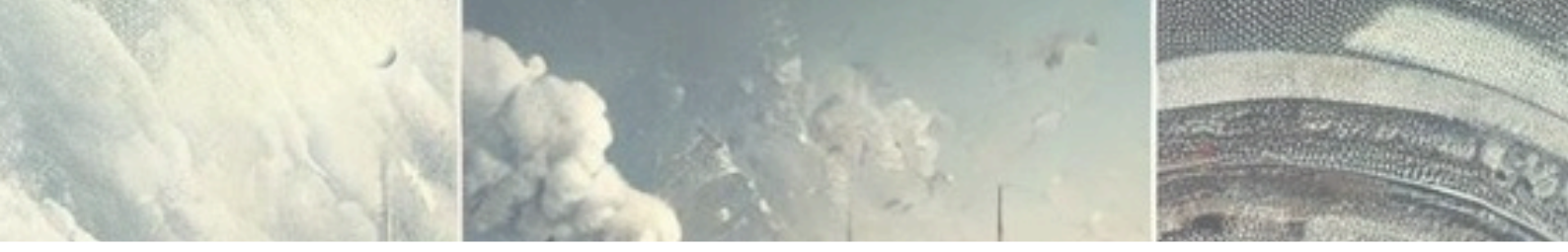


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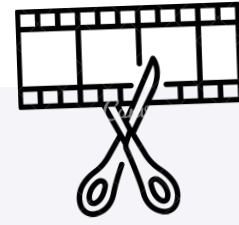
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Dear Readers,

It is with great pride that I present to you the 12th issue of the Journal of International Relations and Political Science Studies, which also marks the final issue of 2024.

This issue opens with an insightful research article by Fatmanur Parlak (Işık University) and Alperen Aktaş (Marmara University), offering a comparative study of governance, institutions, and economic performance in Singapore and South Sudan. Their work sheds light on the contrasting institutional frameworks and economic trajectories of these two nations, offering valuable implications for policy and governance.

In the Book and Article Reviews section, we include two thought-provoking contributions. Dr. Ayşegül Güler (Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University) provides a critical review of Tim Marshall's *Duvar Çağı: Neden Bölünmüş Bir Dünyada Yaşıyoruz?*, exploring the themes of division and belonging in a world shaped by walls. Sinem Arslan (Boğaziçi University) contributes with an incisive review of Ayşe Parla's *Precarious Hope: Migration and the Limits of Belonging in Turkey*, delving into the complexities of migration, hope, and belonging within Turkey's socio-political context.

As we conclude this issue, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the peer-reviewers of the research article. Their thorough and insightful evaluations are integral to maintaining the academic rigor and quality of our journal. I also express my gratitude to our book and article reviewers for their thoughtful critiques and to our contributors for their engaging submissions.

Thank you for your continued engagement with the Journal of International Relations and Political Science Studies.

Sincerely,

Burak Yalım

Managing Editor

Journal of International Relations and Political Science Studies



Research Article - Araştırma Makalesi

GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONS, AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SINGAPORE AND SOUTH SUDAN

ABSTRACT

The ongoing debate between democratic and non-democratic systems has gained significant attention in contemporary political discourse. With the rise of authoritarian regimes, the long-standing assumption that democratic principles are prerequisites for economic development has been increasingly challenged. While some authoritarian regimes, such as China and Singapore, have demonstrated notable economic successes, others, like South Sudan, face persistent economic struggles. This divergence raises critical questions about the relationship between governance systems and economic outcomes. This study aims to address the following research question: How do governance structures, institutional capacities, and historical contexts influence economic development in authoritarian regimes? By employing the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD), the study compares two contrasting authoritarian regimes: Singapore, an economically successful case, and South Sudan, an economically struggling one. The research incorporates a structural-historical approach to examine the factors that differentiate their economic trajectories, such as institutional efficiency, historical legacy, and policy decisions. The findings of this study contribute to the broader literature on authoritarianism and development by offering a nuanced understanding of how governance systems shape economic performance. In doing so, it challenges simplistic assumptions about authoritarian governance and highlights the complexities underlying economic success and failure.

Keywords: Democracy, Authoritarian Regimes, Economy, South Sudan, Singapore

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Introduction

The relationship between governance systems and economic development remains a topic of enduring academic and policy interest, particularly in light of the resurgence of authoritarian regimes in the post-Cold War era. Traditionally, democratic governance has been associated with economic growth due to its emphasis on accountability, transparency, and institutional checks and balances (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006; Sen, 1999). However, the economic achievements of certain authoritarian regimes, most notably in East Asia, have challenged this long-standing narrative. Countries like Singapore and China have demonstrated that substantial economic progress can occur under political systems that restrict civil liberties and political pluralism, raising critical questions about the assumed universality of democracy as a prerequisite for development (Rodrik, 2000; Fukuyama, 2011). In stark contrast, authoritarian states such as South Sudan have experienced economic stagnation and institutional fragility, which underscores the heterogeneity of outcomes within similar governance structures.

This study addresses these contrasting outcomes by investigating the institutional, socio-historical, and policy-driven factors that shape economic development in authoritarian regimes. Specifically, it compares the economic trajectories of two seemingly similar systems—Singapore and South Sudan—through the lens of governance structures and institutional performance. This study compares two contrasting authoritarian regimes—Singapore and South Sudan—by explicitly linking institutional capacity, historical legacies, and policy decisions to economic performance. This analysis builds on existing frameworks, such as Acemoglu and Robinson's (2006) thesis on inclusive versus extractive institutions, Smith's (1966) structuralist approach to economic development, and Rodrik's (2000) emphasis on institutional quality as a determinant of growth.

The salient feature of this study lies in its focused comparative analysis of two authoritarian states with divergent economic outcomes. On one hand, Singapore represents a case of developmental authoritarianism, where strong institutions, policy coherence, and effective state capacity have fostered economic prosperity and global integration (Huff, 1995; Peebles & Wilson, 2002). On the other hand, South Sudan exemplifies a fragile authoritarian state marked by weak institutions, endemic conflict, and policy incoherence, resulting in persistent economic underperformance (De Waal, 2014; Rolandsen, 2015). This dichotomy challenges simplistic assumptions about authoritarian governance, highlighting the need to understand the contextual and institutional underpinnings of economic trajectories.

The study employs the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) as its primary methodological framework to identify and analyze the critical variables that explain the contrasting economic performances of Singapore and South Sudan. While the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD) allows for a structured comparison between Singapore and South Sudan, its limitations in providing in-depth analysis are acknowledged. To address this, the study incorporates additional qualitative case-specific data, such as policy decisions, institutional structures, and socio-historical factors unique to each country. This multi-faceted approach ensures a more comprehensive understanding of economic outcomes within both regimes. However, future studies could benefit from mixed-method approaches, including field interviews, statistical regressions, and longitudinal analyses for greater analytical depth. The MSSD is particularly effective for comparative studies where cases share similar governance structures—such as restricted political freedoms—but exhibit significant variation in outcomes (Landman, 2008). By isolating key variables, including institutional capacity, historical legacies, and policy effectiveness, this study seeks to uncover the mechanisms through which governance structures influence economic development. In addition, a structural-historical approach is integrated to provide a deeper analysis of the institutional frameworks and socio-political conditions shaping economic outcomes in both cases (Smith, 1966; North, 1990). This dual methodological approach enables a nuanced understanding of authoritarian governance and its developmental implications, while addressing potential limitations such as selection bias and generalizability (Lim, 2010; Gerring, 2004). By juxtaposing a high-performing authoritarian regime (Singapore) with a struggling one (South Sudan), the study not only contributes to ongoing debates on authoritarianism and development but also provides insights into the broader question of whether economic success is contingent upon democratic governance or can emerge under alternative political models.

Ultimately, this research underscores the complexity of governance-development dynamics, offering a theoretically informed and empirically grounded analysis of economic trajectories in authoritarian systems. It contributes to the existing literature by moving beyond binary narratives of democracy versus authoritarianism, emphasizing the role of institutional quality, historical contingencies, and policy choices as critical determinants of economic outcomes.

I. Defining Authoritarianism

The contemporary global landscape has ushered in an era where democratic governance is widely recognized as legitimate and enlightened (Caramani, 2020). Despite this, the resilience and spread of authoritarian regimes in the post-Cold War period have raised critical questions regarding their adaptability and influence.

Recent studies highlight the rise of "autocratization," a process where democratic systems gradually erode through subtle authoritarian practices, such as the weakening of checks and balances and the curtailment of civil liberties (Lührmann & Lindberg, 2019).

The varieties of authoritarian systems have evolved significantly. While Juan Linz (2000) historically placed regimes between democracies and totalitarian systems, more contemporary work by Levitsky and Way (2010) emphasizes competitive authoritarianism, where formal democratic institutions exist but are systematically undermined by ruling elites. Modern examples, such as Orban's Hungary, and Putin's Russia, illustrate how leaders consolidate power through electoral manipulation and suppression of dissent (Bermeo, 2016). These regimes blur the lines between democracy and authoritarianism by maintaining institutional facades while subverting their essence.

Recent studies emphasize the role of centralized authority in authoritarian regimes' durability. According to Magara (2024), authoritarian systems like Singapore's thrive due to their ability to suppress dissent while fostering economic growth through technocratic governance. Conversely, fragile states like South Sudan struggle under authoritarianism, as their governance models are plagued by corruption and weak institutional frameworks, which prevent state-building and economic stability.

Furthermore, the role of digital technologies in modern authoritarianism cannot be overlooked. Guriev and Treisman (2020) argue that contemporary autocrats rely less on overt repression and more on "informational autocracy"—a strategy that employs media control, disinformation, and surveillance to manipulate public perception while avoiding the overt violence associated with older forms of dictatorship. This reflects the dynamic adaptability of authoritarian governance in the 21st century. Pye (2023) note that such strategies have enabled some regimes to maintain domestic control while projecting an image of modernity on the global stage, a phenomenon particularly evident in Singapore's authoritarian capitalism. In addition, the global rise of populist leaders in ostensibly democratic systems has further challenged traditional definitions of authoritarianism. Mounk (2018) contends that populist movements often act as gateways to authoritarianism by fostering polarization, delegitimizing opposition, and weakening democratic institutions under the guise of representing the "will of the people." This underscores the growing complexity and fluidity of authoritarian governance, necessitating a more nuanced analytical framework.

Thus, contemporary authoritarian regimes vary widely, both structurally and operationally, ranging from military juntas to hybrid systems that co-opt democratic tools. Scholars increasingly emphasize the importance of understanding these nuances to assess the resilience, adaptability, and societal impacts of authoritarianism in a rapidly changing geopolitical environment. As highlighted by Doboš and Mičko (2024), this complexity is particularly pronounced in regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, where the failure to reconcile historical grievances with modern governance models continues to challenge state legitimacy and institutional coherence.

II. Democracy, Authoritarianism, and Economic Stability

The relationship between governance systems and economic development remains central to political science and development studies. Recent empirical analyses have challenged traditional assumptions about the superiority of democratic systems in fostering economic growth. For example, Przeworski et al. (2000) argue that while democracies tend to promote inclusivity and long-term growth, they are not inherently superior to authoritarian regimes in generating short-term economic gains. Indeed, authoritarian regimes like China, Vietnam, and Singapore have demonstrated remarkable economic success by implementing decisive policies without political opposition (Caramani, 2020). Malesky and London (2014) highlight that Vietnam's economic growth under authoritarian rule was achieved through institutional experimentation and gradual market liberalization, enabling economic adaptation while maintaining tight political control. Similarly, China's "authoritarian capitalism" (He & Thøgersen, 2010) illustrates how centralized governance can drive economic reforms and infrastructure development with speed and efficiency unmatched by democratic systems. However, the authoritarian advantage is not universal. Knutsen (2011) notes that while some authoritarian regimes achieve economic success, others—like South Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Venezuela—are plagued by corruption, conflict, and weak institutions, resulting in economic stagnation. Recent studies emphasize that the quality of institutions, rather than the regime type itself, is the critical determinant of economic stability and growth (North, 1990; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019).

Also, recent research highlights the divergent outcomes of authoritarian governance based on institutional quality. As Haenig and Ji (2024) point out, Singapore exemplifies an authoritarian regime that has successfully leveraged its institutional efficiency and global integration to foster sustained economic growth. In stark contrast, South Sudan's authoritarian system is characterized by weak institutions, endemic corruption, and an inability to capitalize on its resource wealth, leading to economic stagnation and political instability.

A more critical perspective questions the sustainability of authoritarian-led growth. Haber and Menaldo (2011) argue that while authoritarian regimes may achieve short-term economic gains, their lack of political accountability often leads to inefficiencies, elite capture, and economic inequality. For instance, China's rapid industrialization has resulted in significant environmental degradation and widening income disparities, highlighting the trade-offs of authoritarian economic policies. Furthermore, recent global trends demonstrate that democracies, despite their challenges, tend to foster more equitable and inclusive growth (Gerring et al., 2020). Democratic systems prioritize the protection of property rights, political stability, and innovation, which are vital for long-term economic resilience. Conversely, authoritarian regimes face greater risks of economic volatility due to their dependence on centralized decision-making and the absence of mechanisms for institutional correction (Besley & Kudamatsu, 2008). Ariöz and Topdağ (2024) argues that the interplay between governance models and economic outcomes is particularly evident in fragile states like South Sudan, where authoritarian practices exacerbate socio-economic inequality and hinder resource management. Meanwhile, Singapore serves as a counterexample, where institutional coherence and technocratic governance have enabled long-term economic prosperity, despite its lack of democratic freedoms.

Ultimately, the democracy-authoritarianism debate underscores that economic success is not solely contingent on regime type but on institutional capacity, governance quality, and the ability to adapt to global economic changes. As Sen (1999) argues, development must be understood as a multidimensional process encompassing freedoms, equity, and human well-being—factors that authoritarian regimes often struggle to address.

III. Singapore's One-Party Authoritarianism and Economy

Despite its small size, spanning only 716 square kilometers, Singapore holds a significant place in debates on democratization (Verweij & Pelizzo, 2009). Contrary to liberal democratic theory, the nation demonstrates a high level of economic development and rule of law, despite being governed under an authoritarian, one-party system. This illustrates that the rule of law does not inherently guarantee democratic governance. Singapore offers an East Asian alternative to the Western democratic model (Bell, 1997). Since 1965, the country has been governed by the People's Action Party (PAP). Following the 30-year rule of Lee Kuan Yew, his son, Lee Hsien Loong, currently holds power. Although elections are held every four to five years, they are widely regarded as ceremonial. Singapore's authoritarianism is often described as "soft authoritarianism," but fundamental democratic principles, such as freedom of expression, remain limited.

The opposition is subject to suppression, with opponents of the regime frequently facing imprisonment. The government prioritizes societal interests over individual rights in its policy development, which has led critics to accuse the regime of fostering a "culture of fear" (Leong, 2000). Despite this, Singapore remains competitive internationally, thanks to its advancements in technology, capital accumulation, trade policies, and human resources (Toh, 1998). The stability and continued economic growth of the regime have been central to the persistence of the one-party rule.

Economic Consequences of the Singapore's One-Party Rule

Under the 30-year reign of the PAP, Singapore experienced rapid increases in per capita income. This economic progress altered the country's social dynamics, significantly reducing poverty levels while improving welfare through government-supported initiatives in housing, employment, and education (Rodan, 1998). Between 1960 and 2000, Singapore recorded the highest increase in national income globally, and by 1997, it ranked eighth in the world in terms of overall welfare. Per capita income rose from just \$511 in 1965 to \$54,000 in recent years (Ilzins, 2015), increasing the legitimacy and acceptability of the one-party regime among the population. Although the 2008 global financial crisis slowed growth, Singapore remains a magnet for job seekers due to its wealth and prosperity (Verweij & Pelizzo, 2009).

In the 1980s, Singapore's government incorporated information technology into its strategy to transform the country into a manufacturing hub. Economic planners sought to promote the widespread application of IT to boost welfare levels (Rodan, 1998). The government established state-sponsored committees aimed at computerizing public services, with software and telecommunications emerging as key areas for future development, supported directly by the state. As a result, Singapore's economy evolved into a knowledge-based system.

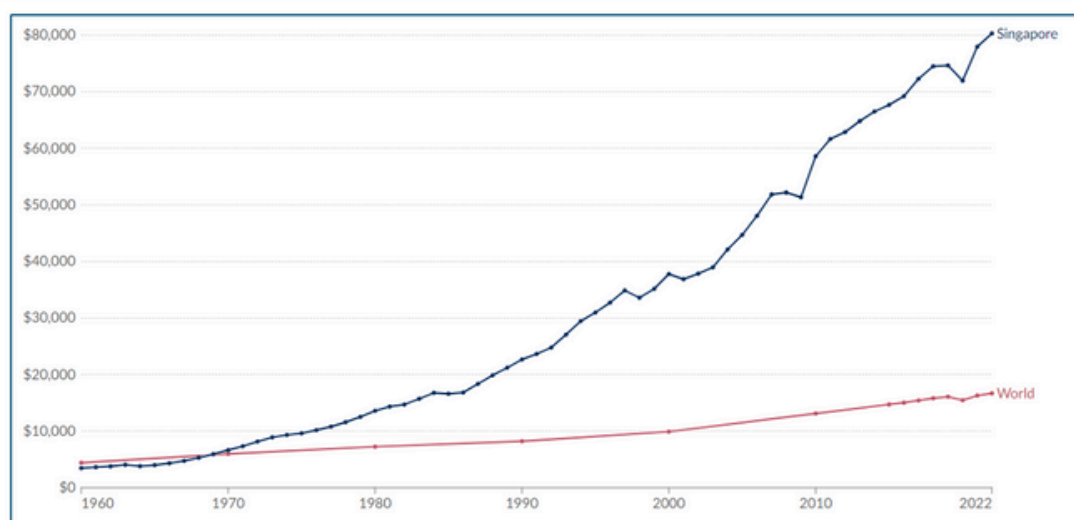


Figure 1: GDP per capita of Singapore, from 1960 to 2022

The island attracted workers not only from regional countries such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, and the Philippines but also from the United States and Europe, lured by the country's advanced IT sector and high wages.

Despite its authoritarian nature, Singapore distinguishes itself from other Asian nations due to its efficient governance, lack of wasteful policies, strong ties between the government and commercial entities, and the absence of cronyism (Low, 2000). This combination of factors has allowed Singapore to maintain a unique position as a prosperous and technologically advanced nation. The GDP per capita of Singapore, from 1960 to 2022 graphic also highlights the country's remarkable economic growth under its one-party rule. Singapore's steady rise in GDP per capita reflects the success of its long-term development strategies, transforming the nation into one of the wealthiest and most competitive economies globally.

IV. South Sudan and Internal Turmoil

South Sudan, which gained independence in 2011, is one of the world's youngest countries. However, the country quickly descended into civil war in 2013, stemming from political tensions between President Salva Kiir Mayardit and his former deputy, Riek Machar (Radon & Logan, 2014). A semblance of peace was restored with the signing of the Khartoum Declaration in 2018. Since independence, the political structure of South Sudan has been largely authoritarian, with President Salva Kiir Mayardit consolidating power by holding the roles of head of state, head of government, and chief of the judiciary (Prunier & Gisselquist, 2003). Despite the lack of a permanent constitution, the interim provisions grant the president the authority to dissolve parliament, while prohibiting his removal from office. According to data from Freedom House (2022), South Sudan ranked among the most repressive countries, scoring just 1 out of 100 points in terms of political and civil liberties. This poor ranking is primarily attributed to the absence of a fair electoral process, ineffective election laws, and limited political pluralism and participation. Elections scheduled for 2015 were postponed to 2018, then to 2021, and finally to 2023, undermining any claims of electoral independence. Although the constitution theoretically guarantees freedom of the press and expression, in practice, the government censors dissent and arrests critical journalists. The civil war has also severely curtailed education, and while the judiciary is nominally independent, it remains largely ineffective. The ongoing political instability and internal conflict have left South Sudan among the least developed nations, according to United Nations criteria, with administrative and socio-historical factors contributing to its economic decline (Husák, 2022).

From South Sudan's Authoritarianism to Economic Problems

South Sudan remains one of the least developed countries globally, despite its considerable natural resources. Decades of military dictatorships, internal conflicts, widespread poverty, and inadequate governance have exacerbated the country's economic struggles. Although endowed with significant resources such as oil, diamonds, and gold, South Sudan has been unable to effectively capitalize on these assets due to the protracted civil war (Baş, 2007). Military interventions have further stifled economic development (Manfredi & Mirghani, 2022). According to International Monetary Fund (IMF) data, average annual per capita income fell from \$1,000 to \$230 following independence in 2011. With limited success in domestic trade, South Sudan has relied heavily on foreign trade, particularly the export of oil. Oil revenues account for nearly all of the country's total exports and over 40% of its GDP (Schull, 1998). Despite numerous conflicts purportedly fought for democratic reforms, the persistence of authoritarian governance and social unrest have hindered the nation's economic progress (Voll, 1992). As a result, South Sudan's largely rural economy has failed to develop, and the country has consistently ranked among the most fragile states in Africa since its independence (Prunier & Gisselquist, 2003).

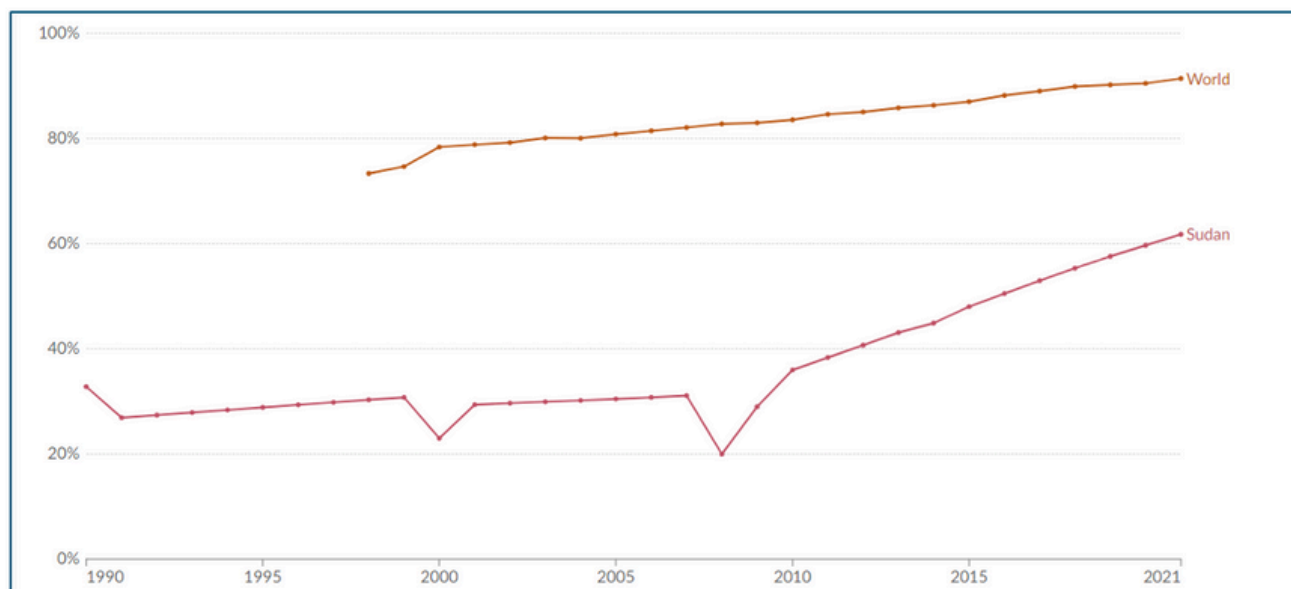


Figure 2: Share of the population with access to electricity of South Sudan from 1990 to 2021

The authoritarian governance of South Sudan, compounded by prolonged internal conflict, has left much of the population in poverty. The civil war that erupted in 2013 caused severe damage to infrastructure and hindered agricultural productivity, pushing nearly 80% of the population below the poverty line (World Bank, 2023). The figure 2 illustrates South Sudan's chronic underdevelopment in basic infrastructure. Despite its natural resources, the country's inability to provide widespread access to electricity reflects the broader economic struggles rooted in weak governance and prolonged internal conflict.

Heavy reliance on oil has made the economy vulnerable to fluctuations in global oil prices, while widespread corruption, reflected in South Sudan's ranking at the bottom of the Corruption Perceptions Index (180 out of 180 countries), has further diverted resources away from critical sectors like healthcare and education. The authoritarian regime's focus on consolidating power, with frequent delays in elections and ineffective governance, has prevented the implementation of meaningful economic reforms, leaving the country's economy undiversified and stagnating.

V. Comparison of Singapore and Sudan: The Relationship Between Authoritarianism and Economic Development

The debate surrounding the relationship between authoritarianism and economic development is marked by two primary perspectives. One view posits that authoritarian states can achieve economic development more efficiently, while the opposing perspective argues that democratic states are more likely to experience sustainable economic growth. The cases of Singapore and South Sudan provide a valuable framework for analyzing the relationship between authoritarian governance and economic development, as they present contrasting outcomes within similar political frameworks.

Singapore, governed by a form of soft authoritarianism under a one-party system, exemplifies an authoritarian state that has achieved considerable economic success. Its policies focused on technological advancement, attracting foreign investment, and fostering innovation have earned widespread acceptance among its citizens (Bell, 1997). The People's Action Party (PAP), which has been in power for over three decades, has implemented policies that prioritize the development of information technologies and transforming the country into a global technological hub, thus fostering significant economic growth.

In contrast, South Sudan, also an authoritarian state, has struggled to achieve comparable economic progress. Known for its political instability, military coups, and internal conflict, South Sudan has yet to establish the political and economic stability necessary for development. Elections in the country are repeatedly postponed, and the state is further destabilized by ongoing rebellions and crises. The country's pre-independence rural economic history, coupled with the lack of technological infrastructure necessary to harness its natural resources, has rendered its economy dependent on foreign trade. Unlike Singapore, South Sudan has failed to develop the internal social and institutional dynamics necessary for economic growth, resulting in a repetitive cycle of socio-historical challenges.

As Smith (1966) suggests in his structuralist perspective, the institution of the state plays a critical role in shaping the political system and its corresponding order. The divergent trajectories of Singapore and South Sudan reflect the impact of structural differentiation within authoritarian regimes on economic development. Within each country, specific factors highlight internal disparities. In Singapore, the alignment of policy coherence with institutional efficiency has fostered technological innovation, foreign investment, and infrastructure growth across different sectors. Comparatively, South Sudan's institutional fragmentation, compounded by regional inequalities and resource mismanagement, has led to varying economic conditions within its provinces. These internal dynamics underscore the need for comparative analysis not only between the two countries but also within their respective governance and institutional frameworks. The results indicate that institutional efficiency and historical continuity in Singapore fostered economic growth, whereas in South Sudan, institutional fragmentation and internal conflict impeded development. Singapore successfully leveraged its governance to integrate into global markets and attract significant investment, which contributed to its sustained economic progress. In contrast, South Sudan's reliance on oil exports, combined with governance weaknesses and prolonged instability, left its economy vulnerable to external shocks and stagnation. These findings underscore the critical role of governance quality in shaping economic trajectories, highlighting how institutional strength and stability can drive growth, while institutional fragility and conflict hinder development. Singapore's ability to establish functional institutions has facilitated its economic success, despite its authoritarian governance. In contrast, South Sudan's authoritarianism, compounded by internal conflict and institutional dysfunction, has hindered its economic development. As Lindstaedt (2020) observes, authoritarian regimes differ in their structures and capacities, which, in turn, shape their social and economic outcomes.

Thus, it is not accurate to assert that authoritarian states are inherently economically developed or underdeveloped. Rather, this assessment must consider the socio-historical foundations of each state and its society (Hosseini, 2005). Singapore's relatively stable authoritarian regime, characterized by effective state-building and positive economic policies, contrasts sharply with South Sudan's more turbulent and economically stagnant authoritarianism. Consequently, the relationship between authoritarianism and economic development is contingent upon the specific political, institutional, and historical contexts of each state. This study builds on existing findings by Acemoglu and Robinson (2006) and Rodrik (2000), reinforcing that institutional quality significantly impacts economic outcomes.

Singapore aligns with developmental authoritarian models like China and Vietnam, where strong institutions and governance have driven economic growth. In contrast, South Sudan mirrors cases of fragile states such as Zimbabwe and Venezuela, where weak institutions and instability have hindered development. Comparative research across other authoritarian states could provide further insights into the complex relationship between governance and economic performance. Future research may explore the role of international organizations in mitigating economic instability within fragile authoritarian regimes, conduct longitudinal studies to analyze shifts in institutional quality and economic outcomes over time, and examine democratic transitions in formerly authoritarian economies to identify pathways for sustainable development.

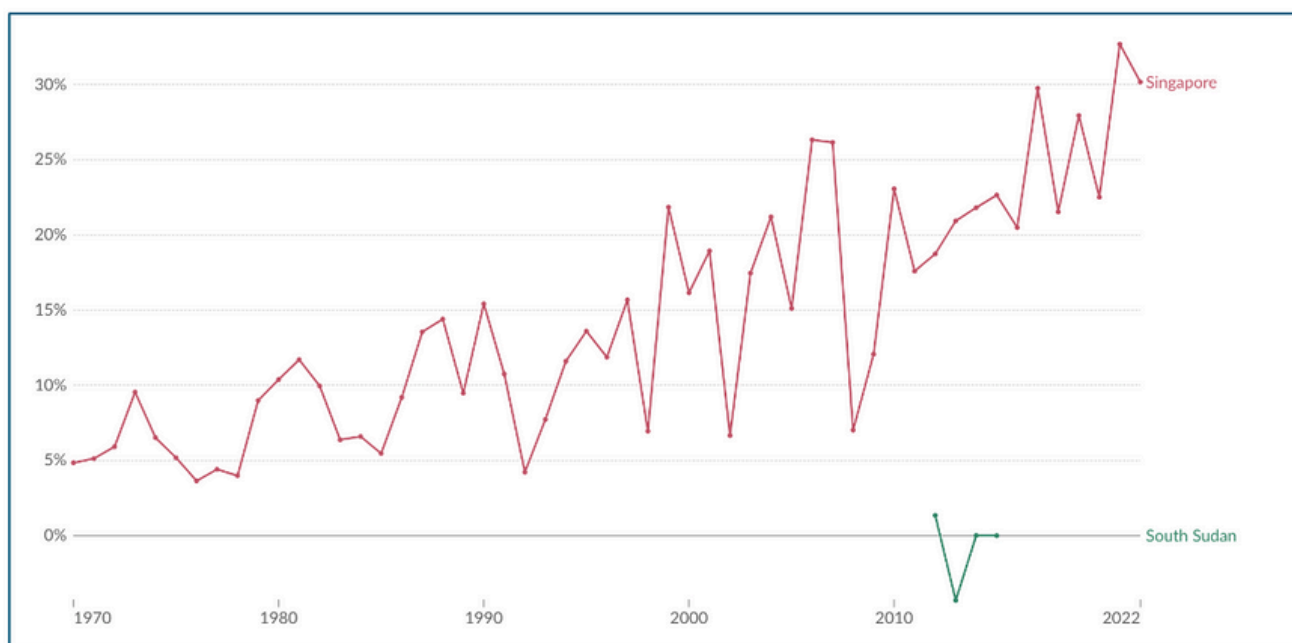


Figure 3: Foreign direct investment, net inflows as share of GDP, 1970 to 2022

In addition to the political and institutional factors shaping the economic outcomes of authoritarian regimes, it is important to consider external influences such as globalization, international trade partnerships, and foreign direct investment. In the case of Singapore, its strategic integration into global markets and ability to attract foreign investments have played a critical role in sustaining its economic growth. South Sudan’s limited engagement with the global economy, compounded by its ongoing internal conflicts, on the contrary, has hindered its ability to leverage such external resources for development. These external dynamics further underscore the complexity of the relationship between governance structures and economic performance, demonstrating that while internal factors are pivotal, the broader geopolitical and economic environment also significantly influences a nation’s developmental trajectory.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is overly simplistic to assert a direct and uniform relationship between authoritarianism and economic development. While theorists such as Samuel Huntington argue that authoritarian regimes can more effectively implement state policies and economic reforms, contemporary examples demonstrate that the relationship is more complex and context-dependent. Authoritarian states such as China and South Korea have successfully challenged Western democratic hegemony, yet the development trajectory of a state is shaped by multiple factors beyond its political regime alone. This dynamic is particularly evident in the cases of Singapore and South Sudan. Singapore's single-party authoritarian government has successfully capitalized on its historical and national resources, significantly increasing per capita income and transforming the nation into a hub of technological advancement and economic prosperity. Conversely, South Sudan represents an example of a fragile authoritarian state, unable to manage internal civil conflicts and socio-political unrest, thus inhibiting its economic growth. Therefore, when comparing the economic outcomes of states in relation to their governance systems, it is essential to consider additional factors intrinsic to each country's socio-political and historical context. Adopting a structural approach provides a more nuanced understanding of these dynamics. States like Singapore, which have established strong institutional frameworks, can achieve economic development despite their authoritarian governance. In contrast, economic development is more challenging in states with unstable internal dynamics, such as South Sudan. The comparison between Singapore and South Sudan highlights the necessity of examining a state's institutional capacity and socio-historical conditions to fully understand the relationship between political regime types and economic development.

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DUVAR ÇAĞI; NEDEN BÖLÜNMÜŞ BİR DÜNYADA YAŞIYORUZ?

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**THE AGE OF WALLS: WHY WE LIVE
IN A DIVIDED WORLD**

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TIM MARSHALL
TRANSLATOR TO TURKISH
BURHAN YÜKSEKKAŞ**

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Tim Marshall uzun dönem muhabirlik yapmış uluslararası ilişkiler uzmanı bir yazardır. The Times, Independent ve Guardian gibi gazetelerde haberler yapmıştır. Uluslararası çok satan Coğrafya Mahkumları kitabının da yazarıdır. Duvar Çağı Neden Bölünmüş Bir Dünyada Yaşyoruz? kitabı milliyetçilik, kimlik politikaları, görünmez bariyerler hakkındadır. Kitap giriş, sekiz bölüm ve sonuç kısmından oluşmaktadır.

Giriş kısmında duvar tabirinin bariyerler, çitler ve bölünmeler için kullandığı ifade edilmiştir. Duvarların hangi tarafında durulursa durulsun yakından bakıldığında duvarlar hem boyut hem de temsil ettikleri yüzünden ezici hissettirmektedir. Fiziksel duvarlar tuğla, beton ve kablolar gibi gözükse de bunlar bölünmenin başlangıcıdır. Bölünmeler küreselleşmiş bir dünyada kimlik mücadelelerine neden olmaktadır. Kimlik mücadeleleri ayrışma oluşturabilecek milliyetçilik ve din ile politikanın kesiştiği yerlerde yaşanmaktadır. Kimlikler diğerleriyle rekabet edip çatışmaya yol açabilir. Kimlik çatışması “onlar ve biz” ekseninde devam etmektedir. Bizleri ayıran şeyin ne olduğunu anlamak bugünü anlamayı sağlayacaktır.

Birinci bölüm “Çin” başlığında ülke tarihsel olarak ele alınarak, ülkenin birleştirilmesinin her dönemde zor bir görev olduğu, farklı etnik kökenlerden insanların farklı diller konuştuğu, beş coğrafi zaman kuşağında bulunduğu anlatılmıştır. Ülkeyi bütünleştiren unsurun uzunluğu 21 bin kilometreden fazla olan Çin Seddi olduğu anlatılmıştır. Ülkeyi çevreleyen Çin Seddi batı ile kuzey arasında tarım alanlarını geliştirerek istikrarı sağlamıştır. Böylece Çin’in güvenliği pekiştirilmiştir. Ancak bazı komünistler duvarın feodal geçmişi hatırlattığını ve tahrip edilmesi gerektiğini düşünmüştür. 1984 yılında Çin Seddi’ni sevme ve restore etme fikri aslında Çin’in turizm ve döviz beklentisinin bir neticesiydi. En büyük bölünme kent ile kırsal, zengin ile fakir arasındadır bundan Komünist Parti endişe duymaktadır. Kişilerin her türlü bilgisinin kayıt altında olduğu sistemde herkes yakından takip edilmektedir. Şehirlere göçü engellemeye yönelik politikalarla insanlar kırsal veya kent sakini olarak sınıflandırılmıştır. Ancak devlet kütüğe geçilen yer ile nerede yaşanacağına ve devlet hizmetlerinin nereden alınacağını da belirler. Örneğin kırsal yerde kayıtlı biri Şangay’da sosyal güvenlik ve sağlık hizmetinden faydalanamaz. Bir diğer duvar halkının dijital bağlantılarını kesmektir. Büyük güvenlik duvarı olarak bilinen durum “Altın Kalkan” olarak adlandırılır. Amaç nüfusu demokrasi, ifade özgürlüğü ve teknolojisiz kültür gibi zararlı fikirlerden korumaktır. Çin’de yaşayanlar Facebook, YouTube, Uluslararası Af Örgütü gibi internet sitelerine erişim sağlayamaz. Yönetime göre internet ekonomik ve toplumsal istikrarı bozabilecek niteliktedir.

İkinci bölüm “ABD” başlığında ise Başkan Trump’ın ilk döneminde ABD-Meksika sınırına izinsiz göçü azaltmak için duvar inşa etme amacından bahsedilmiştir. Duvar Amerikalıları Amerikalı olmayanlardan ayırmayı amaçlarken, önce Amerika yaklaşımını yansıtmaktadır. Amerikalı seçmenlerin bir kısmı nüfus değişiminden, beyaz çoğunluğun azalacağından, İngilizce konuşulan bir ülke olmaktan çıkacaklarından endişelenmektedir. Aslında duvar Trump yönetimiyle gündeme gelmemiştir öncesinde de vardı. 2000’lerin başında başkan George Bush Güvenli Çit Yasasını onaylayarak duvar inşa edilmesini kabul etmiştir. ABD için duvarların ironik bir yönü vardır. Çünkü pek çok kişi ABD’ye turist vizesiyle yasal yollardan girip yerleşmektedir. Ayrıca duvarın ötesindeki Meksika’nın çok katı göç yasaları vardır. Meksika yıllık olarak ABD’nin yaptığından daha fazla kişiyi sınır dışı etmektedir. ABD-Meksika arasında farklılıklar olmasına rağmen ülke ekonomileri birbirine bağlanmaktadır. ABD ırkçılığın büyük mesele olduğu bir yerdir, bu en açık şekilde siyahlarla beyazlar arasında gözlemlenir. Amerika’da siyah olarak doğmak beyaz birine göre büyük ihtimalle daha yoksul, daha az eğitilmiş ve daha az sağlıklı olmak demektir. Dini farklılıkların da fazla olduğu ABD, kimlik siyasetinin yükselişiyle kutuplaşıp ayrışan bir yapıdadır. Duvarlar Amerikan tanımını gerçekleştirme amacı taşısa da ABD giderek bölünmüş hale geldiğinden daha rasyonel ve açık fikirli yaklaşımlara ihtiyaç duymaktadır.

Üçüncü bölüm “İsrail ve Filistin” de ise bu bölgelerin duvarla ayrıldığı anlatılmıştır. İki ülke arasındaki sınır 1948 İsrail’in ortaya çıkmasından bu yana tartışma konusudur. Yeşil Hat ateşkes çizgisi üzerinde anlaşılmasına rağmen İsrail Golan Tepeleri, Sinai bölgesi, Batı Şeria ve Gazze’yi işgal etmiştir. Filistinlilerin görüşü bariyerin haksız yere toprak almak için bahane olduğudur. İsrail tarafında ise duvarı destekleyenler çoğunluktadır ve İsrail duvarın güvenliği için hayati rol oynadığını öne sürmektedir. Gazze hem İsrail hem de Mısır çıkışları kısıtlı çitlerin arasında sıkışmış durumdadır. İki devletli çözümün olma ihtimali sınırın nereden geçeceği, tarafların uzlaşısı gibi zorluklar nedeniyle mümkün gözükmemektedir. Bölünme Yahudiler için Ağlama Duvarı’nda da bulunur. Duvara kadarki açık alanın üçte biri kadınlara, geniş kısmı ise erkeklere ayrılır. Sinagoglarda da durum benzerdir, cemaat kısımlara ayrılmıştır. Ancak herkes bundan hoşnut değildir, bazı kadınların toplu dua, erkekler gibi dua şalları giyme gibi istekleri vardır. Bu tür istekleri dile getiren kadınlar için polis koruması gereken olaylar yaşanmıştır. Dördüncü bölüm “Ortadoğu” da ise küçük duvarların varlığından, bu sayede güvenliğin tesis edilmeye çalışıldığından, risk altındaki kent merkezlerinde duvarların yükseldiğinden bahsedilmiştir. Çatışma nedenlerinin genelde Sünni-Şia arasındaki ayrışmaları olduğundan, Suudi Arabistan’ın kuzey ve güney sınırına çitler ördüğünden, Kuveyt’in cephelerini çitle kapattığından, Tunus, Mısır’ın sınırlarında çitler örmesinden bahsedilmiştir.

Arapların milliyetçilik ve suni sosyalizmi denediği ancak Birleşik Arabistan hayalinin gerçekleşemediği, birleşik bir bölge haline gelemedikleri anlatılmıştır. Şimdi bile Arap ülkeleri ve halkları bölünmüş, çoğu çatışmadan yıpranmış, jeopolitik mücadeleleri sürdüren yerlerdir.

Beşinci bölüm “Hindistan Altkitası” Hindistan’ın Bangladeş cephesinin en uzun sınır çitinden bahsedilmiştir. Çitin gerekçesi silah, eşya kaçakçılığı, sınır ötesindeki isyancıları caydırmak, yasadışı göçü engellemektir. Hindistan ayrıca Pakistan’ın da egemenlik hakkını ilan ettiği Kaşmir boyunca da bariyer inşa etmiştir. Pakistan BM kararları ve yerel anlaşmalara aykırı olduğu gerekçesiyle bariyer inşasını eleştirirken Hindistan ise önlem alma amaçlı olduğunu iddia ederek bariyerleri meşrulaştırmak istemektedir. Hindu toplumundaki kast farkı insanlar arasında derin etkileri olmuş duvar görevi görmüştür. Hatta bu konuda yüksek kasttan olan Mahatma Gandhi “Hindu toplumu ayakta duruyorsa, bunun sebebinin kast sistemi üzerine kurulmuş olduğuna inanıyorum...kast sistemini yok etmek hinduların kast sisteminin ruhu olan kalıtsal meslek prensibinden vazgeçmesi anlamına gelir. Kalıtsal prensip edebi prensiptir. Onu değiştirmek düzensizlik çıkarır” demiştir. Ancak şehirlere göçün artmasıyla hangi kasttan olunduğu daha az belirgin olmaktadır. En aşağılayıcı sosyal sistemlerden biri olan kast sistemi yüzünden oluşan duvarlar göç hareketleriyle zayıflamaya başlamıştır.

Altıncı bölüm “Afrika” Fas duvarından bahsederek başlamıştır. Avrupalı sömürgeciler Afrika kıtasının sınırlarını haritada çizerek ulus devlet oluşturmuş ancak bunlar kıtadaki gelenek, kültür ve etnik kökene dikkat etmemiştir. Afrika’da kabileye ait olma önemlidir. Portekizliler 1485’de kıtada Benin İmparatorluğu’na geldiklerinde kendi başkentlerinden daha büyük kentsel alanlar görüp hayran olmuştur. Şehir yirmi metreye ulaşan duvarlar ve derin hendeklerle çevrilmiştir. Sömürgeciliğin yaşandığı kıtadan sömürgeciler ayrılırken suni ülkeler bırakmıştır. Bu yüzden iç savaşlar kıtada çokça yaşanmıştır. Diğerlerine göre daha zengin olan Afrika ülkeleri yoksul göçmen akışı istememektedir. En zengin ülkelerden Güney Afrika göçmenler için çekim noktasıdır ve sınırları boyunca çit vardır.

Yedinci bölüm “Avrupa” da ise kıtada 20.yüzyılın en büyük bölünmesi olarak Berlin’deki duvarı gösterir. Amaç işgalcileri püskürtmek değil insanları içerde tutmaktır. O dönemde serbest dolaşım özgürlüğü kısıtlanmış, demir perdenin geçilmesi oldukça zorlaştırılmıştı. Ancak zihinlerde oluşan soyut duvarlar da söz konusuydu. Batı ve Doğu Almanya birleşmesinde bu net görüldü. Birleşmeden sonra Batı Almanyalılar memnun olsalar da zamanla başarısız ekonomiye sahip doğu kısmın nüfusunu devralmanın mali bedeli karşısında hoşnutsuz olmuştur.

Ayrıca Doğu Almanyalılar da zorunlu yeniden eğitim nedeniyle aşağılanmış hissettiğinden bahsetmektedir. 2010'da eski doğulu olan Şansölye Merkel'e en sevdiği yemek sorulduğunda et ve turşuyla yapılan Rus kökenli Doğu Almanya çorbası "solyanka" cevabı manşetlere çıkmıştır. Doğu devletleri AB'ye dahil edildiğinde batıya doğru hızlı göç yaşanması göçmenlere yönelik tutumunu sertleştirmiştir. Duvarlar Rusya'yla sınırları olan Estonya ve Letonya'ya yükselir. Avrupa Soğuk Savaş'ta olduğu gibi aynı uzunlukta fiziksel bariyerlere sahiptir. Milliyetçi ve aşırı sağcı partilerin yükselişe geçtiği Avrupa, AB için endişelenmektedir.

Sekizinci bölüm "Birleşik Krallık" Roma'nın fethettiği Britanya'yı kuzey kabilelerinden korumak için MS. 122'de taştan inşa ettiği Hadrian Duvarını anlatır. Duvar medeniyet ile barbarları, İngilizler ile İskoçları ayırırdı. Günümüzde çoğunluğu yok olan duvar sonrasında adada birliktelik hissi oluşturulmaya çalışılmıştır. Brexit derin ayrışmaları ifşa edip eski ayrışmaları şiddetlendirdi. İskoçya ve Kuzey İrlanda, AB'de kalma yönünde oy verdi. İngiliz toplumunda en açık sınırlardan biri sınıfla ilgilidir. Birleşik Krallıkta nüfusun sadece % 7'si bağımsız okullarda eğitim görmüş ve bunlar yargıya, silahlı kuvvetlere, BBC'ye, siyasi partilerdeki yüksek makamlara hakimdir. Örneğin yüksek yargıçların % 71'i özel okul eğitimlidir ve bu kişiler iş dünyasında daha başarılı olacak bağlantılar kazanmaktadır. AB'den ayrılma yönünde oy verenlerin çoğu daha yoksul yerlendendi, bu da zengin ve fakir arasındaki geleneksel sınıf ayrımının bir yansımasıdır. Göç hareketleri ülke açısından değişime yol açmıştır. Birleşik Krallık'a 2015'de Polonya'dan 900 bin kişi gelmiştir. Bazı Britanyalılar bu durumdan rahatsız olmuştur. Ülkede din farklılıkları da belirleyicidir, en yaygın ikinci din olan İslam'ın yükselişinin devam edeceği düşünülmektedir. Krallığın milliyetçi hisler, sınıf ve din ayrımları karşısında sınav verdiği söylenmiştir.

Sonuç kısmında ise duvarların bölünmeleri temsil ettiği, görünüşte aşılamaz olduğu ve bunun korkutucu etkilerinden bahsedilmiştir. Duvar inşa etme eğiliminin hatalı çözüm olduğu varsayımları eleştirilmiştir. Çünkü duvarlar ülkelerin kalıcı çözümler üretmesi için sorunlara geçici ve kısmi hafifleme sağlar. Çatışma yaşanmayan alanlardaki duvarların göç politikasının gereği olarak insan akışını durdurmada gerekliliği belirtilir. Göçü engellemek için Marshall Planı benzeri bir planın uygulanabileceği, böylece göçe karşı önlem alınabileceği anlatılır. Ancak göç devam edecektir ve gelişmiş varlıklı ülkeler bunu kendilerine yönelik tehdit olarak algılayacaktır. Bu da ileride duvar inşa etme planlarına ivme kazandıracaktır.

Yazar fiziki duvarlardan bahsetmiş ancak zihinlerde oluşan duvarlara da yer vermiştir. Kitap bölümlere ayırırken bazı bölümlerde kıta ayrımı yapılmış, bazıları ise ülke bazında ele alınmıştır. Özellikle İsrail ve Filistin bölümü İsrail'in bakış açısına oldukça ağırlık verdiği için yeterince incelenmemiş ve eksik kalmıştır. Afrika bölümü için de durum benzerdir, kıta çok geniş olduğundan her ülkenin incelenmesi mümkün olamamış ve yüzeysel bir bölüm içeriği oluşmuştur. Kitap genel olarak okuyucunun siyasi tarih ve güncel meselelerde fikir sahibi olması için başlangıç aşamasında yeterli bir eser olmuştur.



Book Review - Kitap İncelemesi

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**PRECARIOUS HOPE: MIGRATION
AND THE LIMITS OF BELONGING IN
TURKEY**

**AUTHOR
AYŞE PARLA**

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Migration stories are grounded in two fundamental emotions: hope and fear. While hope threads through these narratives as a shared theme, its expression and experience differ widely among migrants. In *Precarious Hope: Migration and the Limits of Belonging in Turkey*, Ayşe Parla reframes hope not as an individual sentiment but as a collective condition shaped by economic and legal structures. This approach provides a nuanced lens for understanding the emotional and structural complexities of migration. Parla illustrates these dynamics through the case of Bulgaristan migrants[1], a group perceived as relatively privileged in Turkey due to their ethnic ties. She highlights how migrants from various ethnic and religious backgrounds who come to Turkey encounter starkly different capacities for hope under its migration and citizenship regimes. Her focus lies on post-1990 Bulgarian migrants who, driven by economic concerns, often worked in informal sectors and—unlike earlier waves of migrants—were denied automatic citizenship. Through this lens, Parla examines the “precarity” of hope that emerges from Turkey’s ethnic-based migration and citizenship policies, especially during the prolonged citizenship application processes. As she notes: “This book thus invites the reader to rethink the limits of belonging in contemporary Turkey from the perspective of those to whom legal and cultural privilege is intimated, promised, and occasionally delivered.” (p. 21).

Now available in Turkish as *Kırılğan Umut: Türkiye’de Göç ve Aidiyetin Sınırları* (2023)[2], translated by Yunus Çetin and published by İletişim Yayınları, Ayşe Parla’s book represents a remarkable scholarly contribution to migration studies. By seamlessly merging philosophical debates on hope with anthropological methodologies, Parla offers both a historical critique of Turkey’s migration and citizenship regimes and an intimate, ethnographic exploration of the lived experiences of Bulgarian migrants. This interdisciplinary approach provides a fresh and critical perspective on migration studies, challenging the discipline’s traditional focus on nationalism while opening new avenues for examining the intricate interplay of policy, identity, and emotion. The book is thoughtfully structured, featuring an introduction, four richly detailed chapters, and a conclusion, each of which weaves theoretical discussions with empirical data to analyze various dimensions of hope among Bulgaristanlı migrants.

[1] As Ayşe Parla states in the introduction of the book, due to the violent assimilation policies the Turkish minority in Bulgaria endured between 1984 and 1989, Bulgarian Turks avoid ethnic identification by using the term “Bulgaristanlı” (from Bulgaria), which emphasizes geographic origin rather than ethnicity. Therefore, she uses the term “Bulgaristanlı” throughout the book. For instance: Bulgaristanlı (of/from Bulgaria), Bulgaristan göçmeni (migrant of/ from Bulgaria), and Bulgaristan Türkü (Turkish from/in Bulgaria) (p, 10).

[2] Ayşe Parla, *Kırılğan Umut Türkiye’de Göç ve Aidiyetin Sınırları* (Çev.Y.Çetin) İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2023, s 312., ISBN: 978-975-05-3520-8

Parla's meticulous attention to detail shines through in the epilogue, which provides an insightful reflection on her methodology, further enriching the book's academic depth.

Following the collapse of the communist regime in Bulgaria in 1990, an ensuing economic crisis catalyzed a new wave of migration to Turkey. In contrast to earlier migratory movements—those triggered by the violent dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the subsequent social engineering processes of emerging nation-states—the motivations behind these more recent migrations were predominantly economic. This shift in migratory patterns engendered a hierarchy of acceptance, even among migrants hailing from the same region. In the introductory chapter, “Shielding Hope”, Parla delineates the overarching framework of the book, illustrating the limitations of Turkey's migration and citizenship regime, which initially embraced Bulgaristanlı migrants through the rhetoric of kinship but began encountering its structural boundaries by 1990. She explicitly outlines her aim to critically examine the nation-state-driven migration and citizenship policies of Turkey, positioning her work in dialogue with the existing academic discourse on the subject.

“The Historical Production of Hope”, opens with a detailed examination of the transformation of Turkey's migration and citizenship regime, which, for much of the 20th century, favored individuals of “Turkic origin” and readily granted citizenship to groups with cultural affinities to Turkish heritage. However, this preferential treatment culminated in a significant shift with the enactment of the Citizenship Law in 2009. Parla uses this historical juncture to establish a nuanced framework for understanding the relative privileges embedded within Turkey's migration policies, particularly as they pertain to the post-1990 influx of Bulgaristanlı migrants. Drawing on both historical and legal perspectives, she identifies the “hope” that emerged from the relative privilege these migrants experienced in comparison to previous waves. This hope, Parla argues, was grounded in the historical continuity of Turkey's ethnic-based policies, which, although modified by the changing political landscape, continued to offer favorable treatment to those of Turkish descent. Through vivid personal narratives of Gülbiye and Elmas, Parla underscores how regime violence and economic deprivation intertwined to fuel migration from Bulgaria. Moreover, she traces the establishment of migrant associations by earlier Bulgarian migrants, emphasizing their critical role in facilitating the citizenship struggles of their more recent counterparts. In doing so, Parla highlights the complex dynamics of migration as both a legal and social process, shaped by both state policies and the lived experiences of individuals navigating these shifting terrains.

The second chapter, titled *Entitled Hope*, explores the sense of entitlement among Bulgaristanlı migrants, exemplified by Nebaniye, who believes that, unlike migrants from regions such as Georgia, Uzbekistan, or Africa, her ethnic connection to Turkey as “kin” guarantees her inherent right to citizenship (p. 69). Despite the legal challenges they face, Bulgaristanlı migrants continue to perceive themselves as more privileged due to their ethnic ties to Turkey, even though they share the same legal status as other migrant groups in the post-1990 period. By examining the transformation of Turkey’s migration and citizenship regime, Parla underscores how the historical legacy of kinship-based privilege shapes the self-perception of these migrants, despite the evolving legal landscape. This sense of privilege stands in stark contrast to the precarious experiences of other migrant groups, such as Festus Okey, a Nigerian footballer whose tragic and mysterious death in police custody highlights the stark disparity in treatment compared to the relatively favorable reception extended to Bulgaristanlı like Nurcan and Hoşgül.

The third chapter, titled *Precarious Hope*, presents a detailed analysis of the precariousness inherent in the experiences of Bulgaristanlı migrants, with a particular focus on gender and generational hierarchies of vulnerability. Through Ayşe Parla’s extensive fieldwork, the chapter examines how the intersection of gender and ethnicity shapes the experiences of Bulgaristanlı migrant women, who, despite their relative privilege due to their ethnic kinship, are nonetheless subjected to gendered violence and marginalization. The chapter also explores the vulnerabilities faced by children, who, like women, occupy the lower rungs of the hierarchy of precariousness within migration. Parla reveals how, in the 1990s and early 2000s, Bulgaristanlı children were smuggled across borders by “channelers” and faced uncertain access to education in Turkey. This chapter underscores how state and associative mechanisms interact with migrants’ citizenship struggles and how these migrants’ lives are framed within both gendered and ethnically inflected discourses.

The fourth chapter, titled *Nostalgia as Hope*, critically examines the rhetoric framing migration from communist Balkan countries, particularly Bulgaria, as an escape by *soydaş*^[3] from communist persecution between 1950 and 1989. With the fall of communist regimes, this justification for migration lost its relevance in Turkey. Parla explores how the shift in migration and citizenship policies, along with the transition to a free-market economy, has reshaped migrants’ memories of communism.

[3] The rhetoric of *soydaş* is a discourse used by Turkey during the Cold War to legitimize the migration of Turkish and Muslim minorities from communist Balkan countries by emphasizing their shared ethnic and cultural ties.

She interrogates this rhetoric while also delving into the persistent nostalgia for *komunizma* (p.138) which continues to shape the memories of migrants despite the violence they have experienced. The recollections of Bulgaria's communist past are multifaceted, especially regarding women's participation in the labor market. While some view this involvement as an attempt to erase Turkish and Muslim identities and impose a double burden, others interpret it as a step toward women's emancipation (p.143-150). Through the personal stories of migrant women, Parla demonstrates how these individuals reconstruct their memories of communism considering their current migration experiences. This chapter, therefore, reveals the complex intersection of historical memory, gender, and migration within shifting political landscapes.

In the conclusion, titled *Troubling Hope*, Parla begins with a dialogue about hope between Gülcan, who has lived undocumented for three years, and her sister Nefiye, who still holds a valid residence permit, as they wait in line at the Foreigners' Department. Gülcan, with little chance of benefiting from the 2011 amnesty, says to her sister, who has no chance at all: "But don't say things like that again to make my hope empty." (p. 164) After this poignant moment of unfulfilled hope, Parla shifts the focus from *Bulgaristanlı* migrants to a broader intellectual discussion of hope. In the epilogue, *A Note on Method, or Hopeful Waiting in Lines*, reflects on the methodological choices that shaped the field research for this book. This research is a successful example of the anthropology of waiting, exploring how the experience of waiting becomes a space of anticipation, powerlessness, and, often, prolonged uncertainty for migrants. Waiting is an integral part of the migrant experience, deeply shaping their narratives of hope, frustration, and survival. Through the lens of waiting, Parla examines the socio-political and emotional dimensions that define the precarious lives of migrants, emphasizing how waiting is not simply a passive moment, but a significant site where identities, power dynamics, and aspirations are continuously negotiated.

Parla's study is based on a well-structured three-phase ethnographic research. The first phase is her doctoral research, conducted between 2002 and 2003, which explores how Bulgarian Turks, expelled from Bulgaria in 1989 and migrated to Turkey, were both embraced as "ethnic kin" and marginalized as "Bulgarian migrants." The second, and most significant, phase of the fieldwork spans 48 months from 2008 to 2013. The third and final phase consists of an additional 12-month fieldwork conducted in 2013 (p. ix-xii).

During her ethnographic research, she also visited Bulgaria with her interlocutors. Her observations of everyday life in Bulgaria during these visits helped her better understand why these migrants continue to nourish hopes of obtaining Turkish citizenship. However, Parla does not fully address the northern-southern divide among Bulgaristanlı Turks, even though she mentions it in the methodology section. Most of her interviewees are from the northern region, which means their experiences are shaped by greater influences from communism and Bulgarian culture. This distinction is not consistently reflected in her analysis, as all the women whose stories are presented in the chapters are from the northern region.