

SONDERDRUCK AUS:

TIRÉ À PART DE :

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Burundi et son passé colonial

Mémoire, enjeu et solde en débat

Burundi und seine koloniale Vergangenheit

Erinnerung, Problematik und Bilanz in der Debatte

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Post mortem

Nach Fertigstellung dieses Bandes verstarb am 12. August 2023 im Alter von 48 Jahren Prof. Dr. Gérard Birantamije von der UL Bruxelles, Gründungsmitglied des wissenschaftlichen Beirates dieser Reihe und engagierter Mitherausgeber dieses Bandes, dessen Thema ihm sehr am Herzen lag. Wir werden ihm ein dankbares Gedenken bewahren, verbunden mit seiner Familie und im gemeinsamen christlichen Glauben an die Auferstehung.

Ebenso gedenken wir dankbar Herrn Gaspard Nduwayo, Professor der Universität Burundi, der starb, nachdem er für diesen Band noch seine Beiträge fertigstellen konnte.

Ruhe in Frieden

Après l'achèvement de ce volume, notre cher collègue Gérard Birantamije vient de nous quitter. Il travaillait à l'Université libre de Bruxelles et était membre fondateur du Conseil scientifique de cette série de publication et co-éditeur engagé de ce volume, dont le thème lui tenait à cœur. Nous garderons de lui un souvenir reconnaissant et restons unis avec sa famille dans la foi chrétienne en la résurrection.

Nous pensons également au Professeur Gaspard Nduwayo de l'Université du Burundi qui est mort après avoir envoyé sa contribution pour ce volume.

Repose en paix.

Grußwort

Seit über vier Jahrzehnten bestehen partnerschaftliche Verbindungen zwischen Baden-Württemberg und Burundi, die Menschen über Grenzen hinweg zusammenbringen. Was einst mit zivilgesellschaftlichen Beziehungen begann, führte in den 1980er Jahren zu ersten politischen Kontakten. Auch in Zeiten, in denen die offiziellen Beziehungen unterbrochen waren, blieben die vielfältigen privaten, religiösen und zivilgesellschaftlichen Partnerschaften bestehen. Im Jahr 2009 wurde im Auftrag des Landes Baden-Württemberg eine Koordinationsstelle für die Partnerschaft bei der SEZ eingerichtet, um die Zusammenarbeit zu stärken. Schließlich wurde im Mai 2014 eine offizielle Partnerschaftsvereinbarung zwischen den Regierungen unterzeichnet.

Die geschichtlichen Verbindungen zwischen den beiden Regionen bestehen jedoch schon länger. Von 1896 bis zur Niederlage im Ersten Weltkrieg 1916 kolonisierte Deutschland das Königreich Burundi.

In Anbetracht dieser geschichtlichen Verflechtungen und der bestehenden Partnerschaft zwischen Baden-Württemberg und Burundi stellt sich die Frage: Was bedeutet die Kolonialgeschichte für die Partnerschaft zwischen Baden-Württemberg und Burundi? Wie kann eine Partnerschaft aussehen, die den Anspruch hat, die Fortführung postkolonialer Strukturen zu unterbrechen? „Dekolonisierung“ ist in aller Munde, aber wie sieht diese aus?

Das vorliegende Werk „Burundi und seine koloniale Vergangenheit, Erinnerung, Problematik und Bilanz in der Debatte“ ist ein wichtiger Schritt auf dem Weg, die gemeinsame Kolonialgeschichte aufzuarbeiten. Es lädt uns ein, zu verstehen, wie Machtungleichgewichte und struktureller Rassismus bis heute nachwirken. Die Dekolonisierung der Partnerschaftsarbeit erfordert, die komplexen Zusammenhänge zu verstehen, die zu Ungleichheit und Ungerechtigkeit geführt haben. Sie erfordert ebenso, strukturelle Ungleichheiten zu erkennen und ihnen aktiv entgegenzuwirken. Sie ist ein umfassender Prozess, der nicht nur in Burundi stattfinden sollte, sondern insbesondere auch bei denjenigen, die vom Kolonialismus profitiert haben. Der Wandel erfordert ein Umdenken, das sich von pater-

nalistischen Beziehungen hin zu echter Gleichberechtigung und gegenseitigem Respekt bewegt. Dazu ist es notwendig den Stimmen derjenigen Menschen zuzuhören, die durch den Kolonialismus und seinen Nachwirkungen nicht gehört wurden und werden. Ebenso gilt es die eigenen Privilegien und Strukturen zugänglich zu machen, denn Ausschlüsse war die Währung der Eliten, damals wie heute. Und weiter gedacht sollten wir uns auch öffnen für das, was Baden-Württemberg von Burundi lernen kann und sollte.

Die Dekolonisierung der Partnerschaft bedeutet, alte Muster zu durchbrechen und neue Brücken des Verständnisses und der Zusammenarbeit zu bauen. Es bedeutet neben der Reflektion und dem sich öffnen für andere Perspektiven, auch, dass strukturelle Veränderungen endlich sichtbar werden. Es erfordert von uns allen, Verantwortung zu übernehmen, sich der eigenen Privilegien bewusst zu sein und gemeinsam eine gerechtere Zukunft zu gestalten. Dieses Buch ist ein wichtiger Schritt auf diesem Weg, indem es uns dazu ermutigt, gemeinsam zu lernen und zu handeln.

Ich bedanke mich herzlich bei den Autor*innen und allen Akteur*innen, die sich unermüdlich für die Dekolonisierung der Gesellschaft einsetzen und damit zur Verringerung von Machtungleichheiten in der Welt beitragen. Ihr Engagement bereichert maßgeblich die Partnerschaftsarbeit zwischen Burundi und Baden-Württemberg, und dafür möchte ich nochmals meinen herzlichen Dank aussprechen.

Philipp Keil,

Geschäftsführender Vorstand

der Stiftung Entwicklungs-Zusammenarbeit Baden-Württemberg

Preface by the Editors

Burundi and its past of colonialism is not only a historical topic, but, as it seems, is also of vital relevance of and for the present and future of this county in the heart of Africa, its civil society including faith communities and the state organisation. This conviction inspired two public events, namely, a panel discussion during the Stuttgart SEZ Baden-Württemberg Conference on Burundi, held on the 28th of October 2022 on the topic „Changing the narrative: preconditions and visions of creating new partnerships“, and an International Conference held the next day on Burundi and its colonial past. During this Conference hosted in the building of the Library of the University of Freiburg, debates focused on memory, stakes and perspectives in relation with the said past. Presenters and attendees included politicians and scholars from different disciplines and based in Europe and Africa.

This ninth volume of Girubuntu Peace academy Studies series “Peace – Reconciliation – Future: Africa and Europe” compiles selected papers on the colonial past of Burundi under the German and the Belgian domination, most of which are written by Burundian scholars. Contributions provide insightful analysis of various issues grouped in two parts two grouped in two parts. Part I gathers papers dealing the management of the colonial past, with a focus on its realities and perspectives. Part II encompasses papers revolving around the theme “Culture and identity crises”. Regarding approach, beyond an authentic perspective on contemporary perspective on Burundi and its colonial past, this Volume extends perspectives on the post-independent Burundi in the aftermaths of decades during which peace and reconciliation policies are prioritized in the Burundian and neighboring societies. The findings have an intermediate character and call for further endeavors and research which confront the memories and the challenges connected to the colonial past of Burundi in its present and its future towards peace and the common good of the whole country and of the neighboring countries in the Africa’s Great Lakes Region. Hopefully, this volume will stimulate this much needed kind of further research and cooperations for peace and reconciliation, including and partnering with the scholarly activities of our Freiburg Caritaswissenschaft and its Girubuntu Peace Academy.

Preface by the Editors

We are grateful to SEZ Baden-Württemberg for its support of these activities in our project “Burundi and its past of colonialism” in 2022.

On behalf of the editors of the series and of the volume:

Klaus Baumann

Préface par le Recteur de l'Université du Burundi

En marge d'une mission de travail en Europe, nous avons été invité par la Girubuntu Peace Academy, une initiative du Réseau Africain pour la Paix, la Réconciliation et le Développement Durable (RAPRED Girubuntu) en coopération avec l'Université de Freiburg (AB Caritaswissenschaft und Christliche Sozialarbeit) à prendre part à un Symposium qu'elle avait organisé sur le thème : *Le Burundi et son passé colonial : Mémoire, enjeux et solde en débat*. Volontiers, nous avons répondu présent à cette manifestation scientifique s'est tenue le 29 octobre 2022, à l'Université de Freiburg im Breisgau, en Allemagne et nous n'avons pas été déçu. Au-delà de l'intérêt du thème du symposium au regard de l'actualité du débat sur le fait colonial, ses conséquences et son solde, la présence parmi l'équipe des animateurs de ce symposium d'une importante équipe d'enseignants-chercheurs de mon Université, ou en connexion avec mon Université a été déterminante pour notre présence.

Au point de vue du format, les organisateurs ont préféré un format hybride, c'est-à-dire que le Symposium s'est tenu en présentiel et à distance, simultanément. Le format hybride a permis aux chercheurs basés dans les deux hémisphères de partager et de discuter les résultats de leurs recherches et de surmonter les contraintes financières et logistiques du déplacement pour une activité en présentiel.

A l'instar du thème lui-même à caractère multidisciplinaire en ce qu'il se situe au carrefour de plusieurs disciplines, les débats ont fait intervenir une équipe multidisciplinaire comprenant historiens, journalistes, juristes, linguistes, pédagogues, théologiens, etc. La multidisciplinarité et la complémentarité d'approche et de méthodologie, les regards croisés des chercheurs européens et africains sur une question qui divise encore les héritiers des colonisateurs et des peuples coloniaux, étaient remarquables. Cette intéressante conception de la recherche est indispensable pour aborder une question complexe et sensible, comme celle du colonialisme.

Nous félicitons et encourageons la Girubuntu Peace Academy pour ses initiatives en matière de promotion de la recherche et pour l'association des chercheurs basés en Afrique, dans la région des Grands-Lacs africains et au Burundi en particulier. Nous félicitons et encourageons également les

enseignants-chercheurs de l'Université du Burundi qui ont participé à la recherche et dont les articles ont été publiés dans ce Volume. Qu'ils aillent de l'avant et fassent des émules parmi leurs collègues. Nous encourageons également tous les chercheurs à fouiller et encore fouiller pour fournir au monde de lecteurs et scientifique des données équilibrées et à jour pour des publications de qualité. La visibilité des chercheurs et de leurs institutions d'affiliation dépend essentiellement de la qualité et de la diffusion des productions scientifiques.

Prof. Dr. Audace Manirabona

Introduction générale

La mort de l’Afro-Américain George Floyd le 25 mai 2020 à Minneapolis suite à des violences policières a provoqué une forte indignation aussi bien aux Etats-Unis que dans le reste du monde. En dépit de la condamnation des meurtriers, de nombreuses manifestations contre le racisme à l’endroit des Noirs furent organisés un peu partout. A Bruxelles, bravant les restrictions dues à la pandémie du coronavirus, plus de dix mille personnes descendirent dans la rue le 7 juin 2020. Des statues des autorités coloniales, à commencer par celles du roi Léopold II furent vandalisées ici et là. C’est dans ce contexte et sur initiative du Parlement belge qu’une Commission spéciale de dix-neuf députés chargés d’analyser le passé colonial de la Belgique au Congo, au Rwanda et au Burundi fut mise sur pied le 16 juillet 2020. Pour l’assister, on fit aussitôt appel à dix experts¹, choisis selon les sensibilités politiques représentés au sein de la Chambre. Après quinze mois de travaux, ces derniers présentèrent leurs résultats qui, comme on s’y attendait, comportait des lacunes évidentes que Wouter De Vriendt, le président de la Commission reconnut lui-même, faisant valoir « les circonstances difficiles et le délai limité imparti » aux chercheurs. Sur les 689 pages du rapport en effet, rien n’était dit sur le Burundi² et très peu sur le Rwanda.

Dans la foulée, il s’était constitué presque au même moment un Collectif burundais sur la colonisation (CBC) qui se voulait ouvert, diversifié et inclusif, apolitique et multidisciplinaire. Il comptait à ses débuts une trentaine de membres³ (historiens, sociologues, politologues, journalistes, mathématiciens, etc.) résidents au Burundi, au Rwanda, en Belgique, en

¹ Les dix experts étaient composés d’un Burundais, d’une Rwandaise, tous les deux non historiens, de cinq Belges et de trois personnes d’origine congolaise. La parité du genre était scrupuleusement respectée.

² Au moment de la présentation du rapport, l’expert burundais, Mgr Louis Marie Nahimana était entre temps décédé.

³ Ces membres étaient répartis en cinq commissions : pouvoirs politique ; culture et société ; économie et environnement ; mémoire, temps présent, justice et réparation ainsi que plaidoyer, communication, documentation et archives.

Allemagne, en Suisse, en France et au Canada. La mission principale du CBC consistait à veiller à ce que les travaux de la Commission mentionnée plus haut établissent la vérité historique sur le passé colonial et en reconnaissent la responsabilité quant aux crimes et dégâts causés par la colonisation et ses conséquences sur la vie quotidienne non seulement des populations actuelles du Congo, du Burundi et du Rwanda, mais aussi sur le racisme systémique à l'égard des Afro-descendants belges.

Entre septembre 2020 et juin 2022, le CBC organisa une dizaine de conférences dont le débats portaient sur les transformations politiques, économiques, sociales et culturelles du Burundi pendant le protectorat allemand (1896–1916) ainsi que durant la période du Mandat et de la Tutelle confiés à la Belgique entre 1923 et 1962. Un rapport fut présenté au public à Bruxelles le 2 juillet 2022. Sur le plan politique, il évoquait l'idéologie coloniale, le statut juridique du Ruanda-Urundi, la réforme administrative des années 1930, l'affaiblissement et l'anéantissement des pouvoirs politiques et religieux traditionnels et les résistances populaires. Du point de vue social et culturel, il épinglait les mesures coloniales qui contribuèrent à la destruction du tissu social, la dévalorisation de l'individu et l'aliénation culturelle comme la classification des populations en « races » supérieures les unes aux autres, le combat contre les « coutumes barbares », un système éducatif au rabais ainsi que les traitements inhumains et dégradants. En ce qui concerne le volet économique, le rapport n'a pas manqué de souligner les méfaits des impositions coloniales et des réquisitions de tous genres, des cultures industrielles au profit de la métropole et par conséquent au détriment des populations locales.

Bien que la Commission spéciale chargée d'étudier le passé colonial belge ait refusé pour des raisons qu'elle n'a jamais expliqué de procéder au remplacement de l'expert burundais, elle fit preuve de sa collaboration, puisqu'à deux reprises, le 4 avril 2021 et le 4 juillet 2022, quelques membres du CBC furent auditionnés par le Parlement belge au sujet des attentes des Burundais sur leur travail en cours et les éventuelles réparations du Gouvernement belge.

Cet ouvrage collectif prolonge donc une réflexion menée depuis cinq ans et dont nous venons d'exposer les grandes lignes. Il répond au besoin maintes fois exprimé par les experts de la Commission spéciale qui montrent que « la compréhension et la gestion du passé colonial forcent à développer une forme d'écoute, de bienveillance et de mise à distance qui requiert du temps » (Chambre des représentants de Belgique, 2021 :10) ,

mais aussi et surtout par les conclusions et les recommandations des conférences organisées par le CBC invitant les Burundais à continuer les débats pour que toute la vérité historique soit établie avant d'envisager que la Belgique reconnaisse les fautes lourdes commises pendant la colonisation et procède par conséquent à la compensation dont la forme sera à déterminer.

L'ouvrage se compose de deux parties de longueur et d'importance presque égales. Il revient sur dix sept contributions des chercheurs universitaires de divers profils⁴ largement discutées lors d'un Symposium international ⁵organisé le 29 octobre 2022 par l'Université de Freiburg en collaboration avec RAPRED-Girubuntu⁶.

L'objectif majeur de la première partie de cet ouvrage est d'une part analyser les méfaits du passé colonial belge et d'autre part relever la nécessité de les revisiter pour mieux les comprendre en consultant notamment les archives jusqu'ici restées inaccessibles.

On sait que les vingt années qu'a duré le protectorat allemand n'ont pas suffi pour transformer le pays de manière significative et qu'actuellement son héritage apparaît assez maigre⁷. Le premier chapitre rend compte d'une exposition organisée à Freiburg en 2022–2023 sur les objets ethnographiques en provenance de l'ancienne Afrique orientale allemande et des efforts déjà entrepris par RAPRED-Girubuntu en matière de la recherche de la paix et de la réconciliation en adoptant « une approche positive de décolonisation ». Intéressante est aussi ici une contribution qui établit le bilan démographique et économique de cette période. A l'aide des sources composées des diaires des missions catholiques synthétisés par les rapports

⁴ Il s'agissait principalement des historiens, politologues, théologiens, anthropologues, juristes, journalistes, spécialistes des sciences de l'éducation affiliés à l'Université du Burundi, à l'Université du Lac Tanganyika, à l'East African University Rwanda, à l'Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, au Justus-Liebig-Universität Giessen, à l'Université libre de Bruxelles, à l'Université Saint Louis Bruxelles et l'Université de Paris Nanterre.

⁵ Ce symposium a été rehaussé de la présence de l'Ambassadrice du Burundi en Allemagne, du Recteur de l'Université du Burundi qui a bien voulu préfacer ce livre et du Recteur de la Catholic University of Rwanda.

⁶ Le Réseau africain pour la paix, la réconciliation et le développement durable (RAPRED) a, entre autres projets, l'intention d'accompagner les jeunes déshérités dans leur scolarité et leurs études universitaires.

⁷ Cet héritage se réduit à la présence de quelques bâtiments, dont le *boma*, à Gitega, au cimetière de Nyakagunda où reposent les soldats allemands tués par les Belges pendant la Première guerre mondiale, quelques mots en kirundi comme *ishule* (schule) ou *intofanyi* (kartoffeln) ainsi que des mythes et fantasmes.

annuels des Pères blancs, on découvre finalement, dans ce deuxième chapitre, que nos connaissances de l'histoire coloniale reposent essentiellement sur les écrits des premiers missionnaires, le personnel mis en place par l'administration allemande étant très limité. On apprend, chiffres et maints détails à l'appui, que la « pacification allemande » se fit avec une brutalité sans pareille : la résistance de Mwezi Gisabo fut sauvagement écrasée. Le Résident Von Grawert n'hésita pas à utiliser la mitrailleuse et força ainsi le roi à signer en 1903 le traité de Kiganda après avoir perdu de nombreux guerriers. Les expéditions militaires contre les chefs du Nord-Est qui contestaient alors le pouvoir central provoquèrent non seulement de nombreuses pertes en vies humaines, mais surtout le désordre et l'appauvrissement généralisé des autorités locales et de la population.

Ce triste bilan est aussi soigneusement examiné à travers le recrutement des jeunes gens qui sont allés combattre aux côtés des troupes belges et de leurs auxiliaires congolais durant la Première guerre mondiale, les réquisitions des vivres⁸, les corvées dont le portage⁹ qui affecta l'ensemble du pays au moment de la construction de Gitega en 1912.

Sous la plume du petit-fils d'une grande personnalité de l'administration coloniale belge, le troisième chapitre de ce livre évoque le rôle joué par Pierre Ryckmans¹⁰. Il s'agit d'un regard d'un descendant d'un acteur incontournable sur ce que fut l'œuvre de la Belgique au Ruanda-Urundi. Pour nous éclairer, sa biographie nous apprend qu'alors âgé seulement de 25 ans, ce jeune officier qui s'était engagé dans l'armée coloniale belge arriva en 1916 à Gitega comme chef de poste avant de gravir les échelons qui firent de lui successivement Résident de l'Urundi (1919–1928), Gouverneur général du Congo belge et du Ruanda-Urundi (1934–1946) et représentant de la Belgique à l'ONU (1949–1959).

François Ryckmans nous rappelle à juste titre que son grand père est le véritable théoricien¹¹ de la politique coloniale au Burundi. Il organisa avec le Père Henri Bonneau, supérieur de la mission de Mugeru, le plébiscite qui reconnut la souveraineté de la Belgique sur le Burundi le 25 août 1918,

⁸ Les soldats congolais de la Force publique se sont signalés par leur pillage au moment de se ravitailler.

⁹ La campagne de Mahenge en 1917 qui devait consacrer la victoire des Belges aurait nécessité plus de 20.000 porteurs dont les 2/3 moururent de maladies et d'épuisement. A leur retour, ceux qui ont survécu contribuèrent à la propagation des épidémies très meurtrières de la méningite cérébro-spinale et de la grippe espagnole.

¹⁰ Il a utilisé, outre les notes personnelles, le livre bien connu de Jacques Vanderlinden, Pierre Ryckmans (1891–1959). Coloniser dans l'honneur, Bruxelles : De Boeck, 1994.

¹¹ Pour plus de détails, voir Ryckmans, P., *Dominer pour servir*, Bruxelles 1930.

il obtint la soumission du chef rebelle Kilima en 1919, il réorganisa le Conseil de la Régence avant de faire adopter la loi du 21 août 1925 qui unit sur le plan administratif le Ruanda-Urundi au Congo belge¹².

A l'opposé, on voit au quatrième chapitre, Jean Paul Harroy, Gouverneur général du Ruanda-Urundi, clôturer la période coloniale de manière peu élogieuse. Dans un discours prononcé en décembre 1958 devant les plus hautes instances du pays, il souleva le « problème hutu-tutsi » dont il semblait ignorer qu'il avait été créé une trentaine d'années auparavant par une réforme politique et administrative qui consacra la suprématie des Ganwa, diminua considérablement le pouvoir des Tutsi et exclut totalement les Hutu.

Deux juristes discutent aux cinquième et sixième chapitres un sujet qui a fait longtemps l'objet d'une « omerta institutionnelle » : le rattachement du Bugufi au Tanganyika Territory à l'issue des conventions signés le 30 mai 1919 et le 15 mars 1921 entre la Belgique et la Grande Bretagne. La question centrale consiste à analyser les conditions de son éventuelle rétrocession, tout en considérant que les deux signataires ne sont plus parties prenantes et surtout qu'on ne heurte pas le principe d'intangibilité des frontières héritées de la colonisation.

Bien qu'il y ait une certaine littérature sur le passé colonial belge, il subsiste encore de nombreuses zones d'ombre dont il convient de faire rapidement la lumière, grâce notamment à l'accès aux archives jusqu'ici non encore ouvertes au public. Le rédacteur du chapitre 7 fait l'état des lieux des démarches entreprises par le Gouvernement du Burundi en vue de leur restitution, mais on apprend avec indignation que certains dossiers, notamment ceux en rapport avec l'indépendance ne seront pas ouverts à la consultation avant un délai de cent ans.

Avec une orientation plutôt tournée vers les conséquences de la colonisation sur les plans social et culturel, la seconde partie de cet ouvrage insiste avec raison sur la perte des valeurs traditionnelles qui ont conduit aux crises identitaires périodiques qu'a connues le Burundi dès les lendemains de l'indépendance. Rédigés par un groupe de chercheurs spécialistes de l'éducation, les chapitres 8 et 9 analysent les forces et les faiblesses du

¹² Sur le plan économique, Ryckmans généralisa l'usage de la monnaie après avoir remplacé les roupies et les hellers allemands, prit des mesures pour combattre les famines en obligeant les gens à cultiver le manioc et les patates douces, mobilisa les populations pour reboiser l'ensemble du pays et ouvrir le marais aux cultures pendant la saison sèche, construisit la première route qui relia Gitega et Bujumbura. Sa politique n'a pas toujours rencontré les vœux des missionnaires catholiques dont certains lui contestaient le leadership.

système éducatif durant la période coloniale en ciblant de manière claire les auteurs, leur méthodologie ainsi que les résultats obtenus d'une part et les difficultés toujours d'actualité que rencontre quiconque tente de le « décoloniser » : on ne mesure pas assez en effet l'importance qu'exerce actuellement l'acculturation sur notre société.

Les chapitres 10 et 11 rappellent que les valeurs traditionnelles d'*ubuntu* (humanisme) revisitées et remises à l'honneur ces derniers temps ici comme ailleurs notamment en Afrique du Sud ou celles d'*ubugabo* (bravoure) ont été mises à l'épreuve durant la domination coloniale : elles ont cependant vaillamment résisté, puisqu'elles ont permis de limiter les violences qui ont jalonné notre passé récent. Celles-ci ne pouvaient, on s'y attendait, n'être pas évoqué, tant elles ont été déterminantes dans l'évolution sociopolitique du pays et de ses voisins ces soixante dernières années : le chapitre 12 s'attarde sur l'*ikiza* (crise) de 1972 en s'appuyant sur des enquêtes orales effectuées entre 2000 et 2016 à travers tout le pays, tandis que les deux suivants analysés sous l'angle sociopolitique montrent que les Burundais n'arrivent pas à se défaire des préjugés et mythes hérités de la colonisation lorsqu'il s'agit d'analyser froidement la nature de leurs conflits.

Dans le quinzième chapitre, l'auteur rappelle que le Burundi précolonial est une société où règne l'ordre avec une organisation étatique solide, structurée et hiérarchisée en plusieurs niveaux autour du Mwami. Il relève que le colonisateur va s'attacher à déconstruire cette légitimité du monarque et les représentations traditionnelles du peuple vis-à-vis de celui-ci. À la lumière de la méthode de sociologie compréhensive de Max WEBER, l'auteur cherche à comprendre les motivations derrière cette déconstruction.

Face au passé colonial dont les conséquences continuent à avoir un grand impact sur le temps présent, les deux derniers chapitres de cet ouvrage réfléchissent sur l'action à mener à court et à moyen terme, à savoir la « réconciliation des mémoires coloniales » et de manière spécifique la restitution au Congo belge des biens culturels conservés actuellement en Belgique.

Au total, cet ouvrage est le fruit d'une réflexion plurielle des universitaires et chercheurs allemands, belges, burundais et congolais sur la domination coloniale, l'exploitation économique et surtout sur leurs conséquences sur les plans social et culturel. Plusieurs contributions mettent en relief et discutent des germes de divisions de la société burundaise qui ont conduit aux conflits et violences de la période contemporaine.

Joseph Gahama

**Déogratias Maruhukiro, Nicole Landmann-Burghart,
and Beatrix Hoffmann-Ihde**

The Colonial Past: Burundi in the Exhibition “Freiburg and Colonialism: Yesterday? Today!”

Abstract

Discussions about the colonial past, especially those about the restitution of cultural goods in European museums, have proliferated in recent years in the societies of the former colonial powers. As a result, the Städtische Museen Freiburg (Municipal Museums of Freiburg) have organized an exhibition titled „Freiburg und Kolonialismus. Gestern? Heute!“ (Freiburg and Colonialism: Yesterday? Today!). The present contribution is based on a webinar organized by the Städtische Museen Freiburg in collaboration with the University of Freiburg (AB Caritaswissenschaft and Christliche Sozialarbeit) and the association RAPRED-Girubuntu e.V. and aims to answer the following questions: what are the motivations behind and contents of this exhibition on colonialism? Are there any cultural objects from Burundi in the collections? What approach to decolonization and the treatment of colonialism is proposed for the case of Burundi? In an interdisciplinary approach, the authors will address these questions and try to provide some answers, also based on the proposals from the Webinar.

Introduction

The question of colonialism and its various manifestations has aroused a great deal of interest in recent years, particularly in the former colonial powers, such as Great Britain, France, Belgium, and Germany. Belgium was one step ahead of the other countries in launching an interparliamentary committee, which, in turn, set up a committee of experts to examine Belgium’s colonial past. Among the objectives of this committee of experts were, first, to understand as accurately as possible the concrete realities of the colonial period and their long-term impact; second, to propose a process of remembrance and reparation that can be undertaken within the framework of the Special Commission; and third, to examine the links between colonialism and racism.¹

¹ Cf. <https://www.lesoir.be/403076/article/2021-10-27/les-experts-ont-rendu-leur-rapport-la-commission-speciale-sur-le-passe-colonial>. Accessed 30 June 2023

Academic institutions, museums, and civil society organizations (CSOS) in these countries have also taken up the challenge by firmly placing research, exhibitions, and debates on the issue of colonialism on their agenda. This chapter is essentially based on the webinar organized by the University of Freiburg in collaboration with the Städtische Museen Freiburg and the RAPRED-Girubuntu organization and is structured along three main lines. First, the context and content of the exhibition on colonialism, which took place from June 2022 to June 2023 at the Augustiner Museum in Freiburg. Second, we will be exploring the objects in exhibition to see if there are any from Burundi. Finally, the RAPRED-Girubuntu organization took part in the exhibition, especially in the section on decolonization. The third part of this chapter will be devoted to outlining the organization's approach to decolonization.

1. The Exhibition at the Städtische Museen Freiburg

In June 2022, the Städtische Museen Freiburg opened a one-year special exhibition titled „Freiburg und Kolonialismus. Gestern? Heute!“ (Freiburg and Colonialism: Yesterday? Today!). This exhibition aimed to encourage visitors to critically engage with Freiburg's colonial entanglements and recognize their relevance in relation to their own lives. For people from the Global North, this means that they still benefit from the asymmetrical power structures that colonialism established and that still exist to the present day through and in the form of racism, the ideological root of colonialism. For people from societies in the Global South, it means that they still suffer from racism and other consequences of colonialism.

Successful implementation of the theme and attainment of the exhibition's goals first required a degree of self-reflection on the part of the entire curatorial team in order to break down colonial continuities of the museum as an institution. Postcolonial exhibition methods aim to challenge the hegemonic position of the museum as a normative institution of knowledge transfer. At the same time, it means not only facilitating marginalized content, voices, and positions, but also placing them as prominently as possible and making them both seen and heard. Thus, both the exhibition and, concomitantly, the museum become a site of actively unlearning entrenched habits, received opinions, and certitudes.² At the same time, the

² Landkammer, Nora, *Das Museum als Ort des Verlernens? Widersprüche und Handlungsräume der Vermittlung in ethnologischen Museen*, in: Iris Edenheiser and Larissa

exhibition is also intended to be a place of LEARNING that promotes dialogue between different groups of Freiburg’s urban society. Pupils and students, as well as people who have not yet properly engaged with the history of colonialism, but also postcolonial activists and members of Freiburg’s diaspora communities, may enter into a dialogue through and about the contents of the exhibition. Via dialogue, colonial entanglements can be exposed and jointly overcome. The exhibition was therefore conceived as a platform for dialogue that, beyond its content-related theme, was a contribution to postcolonial diversification and, ultimately, the decolonization of the museum. This approach advanced the concept of the so-called *contact zone* introduced into ethnographic museum theory by James Clifford in 1997.³ Clifford adopted the concept from Marie-Louise Pratt.⁴ Pratt developed her concept to investigate processes of cultural exchange that are characterized by power asymmetries. The exhibition’s discursive concept, which explicitly includes societies of the Global South, builds on this premise. The offer of a dialogue was aimed, in particular, at those societies that were affected by German colonialism. For overcoming the consequences of colonialism is a task that the descendants of colonized and colonizing societies can only overcome together.⁵

In the form of this discursive approach, the exhibition differed from previous projects, which hitherto aimed at a critical reappraisal of Freiburg’s colonial entanglements. These include publications, such as the website “freiburg-postkolonial”⁶ and the anthology *Freiburg und Colonialism. Vom Kaiserreich bis zum Nationalsozialismus* (Freiburg and Colonialism. From Empire to National Socialism),⁷ as well as several exhibitions staged since the early 1990s. An important milestone here was the exhibition on the centenary of the former Museum für Natur- und Völkerkunde, now Museum für Natur und Mensch (Museum Nature and Man). It took place

Förster (eds), *Museumsethnologie. Eine Einführung. Theorien, Debatten, Praktiken*, Berlin 2019, 304-321.

³ Clifford, James, *Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Cambridge/MA et al. 1997.

⁴ Pratt, Marie-Louise, *Imperial Eyes: Travel, Writing and Transculturation*, London 1992.

⁵ Comment made by Welfriedtine Naobes/Namibia in September 2022 during her visit to Freiburg as member of a Namibian delegation.

⁶ <https://www.freiburg-postkolonial.de/>. Accessed 27 December 2022.

⁷ Grewe, Bernd-Stefan et al., *Freiburg und der Kolonialismus. Vom Kaiserreich bis zum Nationalsozialismus*, Freiburg i. Breisgau 2018.

in 1995 and focused on the colonial interconnections of the museum's Ethnological Collection.⁸ It received a large part of its objects during the period of German colonialism from individuals who were temporarily active in the colonial territories and had a personal relationship to Freiburg.⁹ One of the main aims of the exhibition is to highlight such personal references and interconnections with German, but also European, colonialism. For the City of Freiburg, situated on the western edge of the southern Black Forest—i.e., somewhat on the periphery of the German Empire—was not a key player in colonialism, neither politically nor economically.

Nevertheless, by the latest since the political inception of German colonialism (from 1884/85), the inhabitants of Freiburg were increasingly intertwined with this form of rule and its exploitative structures on the level of their everyday lives. For example, they consumed goods, the raw materials of which coming from the colonial territories, or they supported the activities of Christian missionaries.¹⁰

In the long run, no one could escape pro-colonial and racist propaganda either, as it was ubiquitous in the media, at public events, and appearances by pro-colonial actors. These protagonists included, for example, Theodor Leutwein (1849–1921) and Max Knecht (1874–1954), who settled in Freiburg after their colonial activities. Leutwein began his military career in Freiburg and ended it as commander of the Kaiserliche Schutztruppe (Imperial Protection Force) and governor of German Southwest Africa, today's Namibia. Knecht was deployed as a colonial officer in German East Africa, including in the territory of today's Rwanda, and was responsible for the murder of combatants in the Maji-Maji War.¹¹

⁸ Gerhards, Eva (ed.), *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte. 100 Jahre Museum für Völkerkunde*, published on behalf of the City of Freiburg, Emmendingen 1995.

⁹ Brüll, Margarete, *Kolonialzeitliche Sammlungen aus dem Pazifik*, in: Gerhards, *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte*, 109-145. See note 8. Edgar Dürrenberger, *Freiburg und Afrika*, in: Gerhards, *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte*, 90-108.

¹⁰ Himmelsbach, Markus, *Das städtische Museum für Natur- und Völkerkunde*, in: Bernd-Stefan Grewe et al., *Freiburg und der Kolonialismus. Vom Kaiserreich bis zum Nationalsozialismus*, publications from the archive of the City of Freiburg i. Br., 42, Andreas Jobst, Johannes Küenzlen and Hans-Peter Widmann (eds.), Freiburg 2018, 143-156; Wegmann, Heiko, *Vom Kolonialkrieg in Deutsch-Ostafrika zur Kolonialbewegung in Freiburg. Der Offizier und badische Veteranenführer Max Knecht (1874–1954)*, Freiburg 2019.

¹¹ Wegmann, *Vom Kolonialkrieg in Deutsch-Ostafrika*. See note 10.

1.1 Structure of the Exhibition

The exhibition was divided into seven chapters. A prologue and an epilogue framed the other chapters on the thematic groups, namely “Mission-Resistance,” “Expansion-War,” “Consumer-Exploitation,” “Science-Appropriation,” and “Propaganda-Popularization”. The prologue was conceived as a timeline that provided information about the history of European and German colonialism and highlights Freiburg’s specific entanglements. The epilogue called for the decolonization of Global South-North relationships and thus led visitors out of the exhibition and back into their everyday lives. Through these seven chapters, the exhibition unfolded its main thesis: “Colonialism permeated Freiburg’s urban society comprehensively. In the form of its ideological root, racism, colonialism continues to have an effect in many ways up to the present and is particularly evident in the asymmetrical relations between the Global North and the Global South.”

This was explained emblematically at the beginning of the exhibition using the usambara violet (*Saintpaulia ionantha*). Beginning with seeds collected and sent to Germany by the German colonial official, Adalbert Emil Walter Le Tanneux of Saint Paul-Illaire (1860–1940), it was cultivated as a houseplant. As such, it embarked on a career in the living rooms of the Global North in the twentieth century. Since then, the wild forms, which originated in the Usambara Mountains in the north of what is now Tanzania, have almost disappeared.¹² Their natural habitat was destroyed by the introduction of coffee plantations during the reign of German colonialism.¹³ The low-cost access to non-European resources, such as coffee or cotton, through their production on their own plantations was one of the central arguments for Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898) in 1884/85 to abandon his previously negative attitude towards the appropriation of colonies.¹⁴

¹² Cf. Raistrick, Reinhild, African Violets. In Search of the Wild Violets. A monograph on the genus *Saintpaulia*, no place 2006. A less well-known example is the endemic species of tree *Anonidium usambarense*, which has now been declared extinct.

¹³ van der Heyden, Ulrich, Koloniales Gedenken im Blumentopf: Das Usambara-Veilchen und sein ‚Entdecker‘ aus Berlin,” in: Ulrich van der Heyden, Joachim Zeller (eds.), *Kolonialismus hierzulande – Eine Spurensuche in Deutschland*, Erfurt 2007, 220-222.

¹⁴ Döpker, Tobias, *Die Versorgung der deutschen Industrie mit Rohstoffen aus den eigenen Kolonien – Am Beispiel der Baumwolle*, 1999, <https://www.grin.com/document/30183>. Accessed 25 January 2023.

Using the example of the timber trade, the introductory timeline showed that the Black Forest region bordering Freiburg benefited from European colonialism long before 1884/85.¹⁵ As early as the seventeenth century, timber was sold to the Netherlands, where it was used in shipbuilding, among other applications. These ships were also used by the then world trading power in transatlantic trade. As a result, enslaved people were trafficked from Africa to work on plantations and in households in Asia and the Americas. The timber trade with the Netherlands not only secured a livelihood for the people of the Black Forest region; surplus capital also enabled them to develop new sources of income by investing in the early industrialization of the region.¹⁶ This is one of the roots of the economic strength of the German southwest that still exists today.

In order to convey the core message of the exhibition to a broader audience, it was necessary to offer a wide range of topics and to make diverse positions both seen and heard. Different methodological units were developed and used to incorporate the positions of non-museum experts into the exhibition as a participatory and collaborative venture. As a result of this cooperation, more than twenty contributions from non-museum experts were included in the exhibition. They introduced a recognizable polyphony to the contents and multiperspectivity on the topics presented. These included artistic positions, interviews, an externally curated exhibition area, and various loans provided by members of Freiburg's urban society following a public appeal. In addition, seven so called "Blank Spaces" were integrated into the exhibition, with content freely selected and formulated by non-museum experts, guided only by the general themes of the various chapters.

¹⁵ Scheifele, Max, *Die Murgschifferschaft: Geschichte des Floßhandels, des Waldes und der Holzindustrie im Murgtal*, Stuttgart 1988, 223.

¹⁶ Cf. Trenkle, Johann Baptist, *Geschichte der Schwarzwälder Industrie. Von ihrer frühesten Zeit bis auf unsere Tage*. As far as other economic regions are concerned, cf. Raphael-Hernandez, Heike, *Deutsche Verwicklungen in den transatlantischen Sklavenhandel*, 2015, <https://www.bpb.de/shop/zeitschriften/apuz/216485/deutsche-verwicklungen-in-den-transatlantischen-sklavenhandel/>, accessed 24 January 2023; and Weber, Klaus, *Deutschland, der atlantische Sklavenhandel und die Plantagenwirtschaft der Neuen Welt*, in: *Journal of Modern European History*, 7 (2009), 37-67; and Schulte Beerbühl, Margit, *Deutsche Kaufleute in London. Welthandel und Einbürgerung (1660–1818)*, Munich 2007; and Weber, Klaus, 'Krauts' und 'true born Osnabrughs': *Ländliche Leinenweberei, früher Welthandel und Kaufmannsmigration im atlantischen Raum vom 17. bis zum 19. Jahrhundert*, in: *IMIS-Beiträge*, 29 (2006), 37-69.

1.2 *Burundi in the Exhibition*

Apart from the chapter “Expansion-War,” which referred exclusively to Namibia, regional references were made selectively in the exhibition through individual exhibits. The basis for this were the collections held by the Städtische Museen Freiburg especially the Museum Natur und Mensch and the Augustiner Museum. Regarding Burundi, this meant that it was hardly represented by objects in the exhibition. While the Augustiner Museum does not have a single object from Burundi, the Ethnological Collection of the Museum Natur und Mensch holds seventeen objects that can be clearly attributed to Burundi. Nevertheless, there were several exhibition areas that focus on this small country and its social reality. Others related to former German East Africa and thus also to Burundi, as it was part of this colonial territory.

On the timeline of the introductory chapter, the political inception of German colonialism was pinpointed at 1884/85. At the end of 1884, representatives of several European states met in Berlin to divide up the African continent according to their spheres of power and interest.¹⁷ People from Africa who were affected by this were not involved in the so-called “Berlin Conference,” as a result of which the German Empire established itself as a colonial power. The people living in German Southwest Africa (today’s Namibia), Togo, Cameroon, and German East Africa (today’s Tanzania minus Zanzibar, parts of northern Mozambique, Burundi, and Rwanda) were thus forcibly amalgamated under German colonial rule. But they resisted this annexation and its concomitant oppression and exploitation. In 1905, this led to the Maji-Maji War against the German colonial regime in what was then German East Africa. A wooden figure (I/0140) pointed to the history of this on the exhibition’s timeline. The figure, which depicts an Askari soldier, comes from the area of what was then German East Africa (Fig. 1). Askari were members of the local population who served in the German and other European colonial forces. During the Maji Maji War, they were abused in action as proxies against the local population in the interests of German colonial power.

The timeline is followed by a screen on which people from Freiburg talk about their personal opinions on the topic of the exhibition. Father Dr. Déogratias Mahurukiro is one of the people interviewed. He is from Burundi and teaches at the Faculty of Theology at Freiburg University. The chapter

¹⁷ Siegfried, no details, Die neue Aera der Colonialpolitik, in: Die Gartenlaube: Illustriertes Familienblatt (1884/49), 805-807.

“Science-Appropriation” was divided into three thematic areas: the history of the Alexander-Ecker-Collection of Freiburg University, an anthropological collection with originally more than 1,300 human skulls from German and European, but also non-European, regions. At the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, this collection was misused to develop inhuman theories of race by comparing the skulls from different world regions. Whether the collection also comprised skulls from German East Africa is currently unknown on account of incomplete documentation.¹⁸



Fig. 1: Askari-Figure (I/0140). Type of item received: from Karl Sauer (1872-1917), colonial official. Nothing is known about the specific circumstances of acquisition in Africa.

Photo: Axel Killian.



Fig. 2: Exhibition “Freiburg and Colonialism: Yesterday? Today!”, Wardian case (on loan from the Botanical Museum Berlin, Free University, B 89000) in front of a reproduction of a historical photo of a sisal plantation in East Africa (University Library)

Frankfurt /M. 032-1501-081.

Photo: Axel Killian.

The second part of this exhibition’s chapter dealt with the global transfer of plants, which was coordinated from Europe in order to exploit colonized

¹⁸ At the moment, a current project is endeavoring to uncover the origin of the non-European skulls through the means of provenance research.

areas more efficiently. Mobile greenhouses, also called Wardian cases, were used for the overseas transport of living plants. The exhibition shows a wooden case of this kind on loan from the Botanical Museum Berlin. It stood in front of a historical photo of a sisal plantation in German East Africa (Fig. 2). During German colonial period, sisal agaves, originally native to Central America, were transferred to German East Africa for their cultivation on plantations, so that German textile production had direct and cheap access to the valuable raw material.

The third and largest part of this exhibition’s chapter focused on the history of today’s Museum Natur und Mensch and the colonial entanglements of its collections. While only objects from Oceania from the Ethnological Collection were on display, from the Natural Science Collection by contrast, there were also African objects on display. For instance, there was a rhinoceros’ skull on display (NM01 0456), which the former Museum für Natur- und Völkerkunde received from Wilhelm Winterer (1879–1969). He was a denizen of Freiburg and was active as a colonial officer in what was then German East Africa from 1907–1912/13. His father, Otto Winterer (1846–1915), was Freiburg’s mayor for many years. In this capacity, he actively supported the development of the museum, which was founded in 1895. Through his influence, his son left a large collection of natural history and ethnographic objects to the museum.¹⁹ Little is known about how Wilhelm Winterer obtained the individual objects in Africa. However, some of the natural history objects, including the rhinoceros’ skull, may have been hunting trophies.

The Exhibition’s Chapter “Consumer-Exploitation” addressed the exploitation of nature and people through colonialism and the persistence of its structural means into the present. The chapter addressed the ivory trade and the cultivation of coffee, which was also sold in Freiburg’s colonial goods shops. During the period of German colonialism, the number of colonial goods shops in Freiburg ballooned from fewer than ten to more than a hundred.²⁰ On the one hand, this reflects the growth of Freiburg’s population, which more than doubled during this period from just under 40,000 to over 80,000.²¹ But, it also meant that an increasingly broader section of

¹⁹ Dürrenberger, Edgar, Freiburg und Afrika, in: Gerhards, Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte, 90-108, 93f. See note 8.

²⁰ Hoffmann-Ihde, Beatrix, Freiburg und Kolonialismus: Gestern? Heute!, Städtische Museen Freiburg, Dresden 2022, 24.

²¹ https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/1/18/Einwohnerentwicklung_von_Freiburg_im_Breisgau_-_ab_1871.svg. Accessed 27 December 2022.

the population was able to consume coffee and other products made from non-European raw materials. Therefore, these former luxury goods became staples for a large part of Freiburg's population. For example, an advertisement in the *Freiburger Zeitung* from 1907 praised the cheap sale of "Usambara coffee," which was sold for 1.30 Marks per pound.²² The trade in ivory, which is strictly forbidden today, was at its peak at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, decades that also encompassed the period of German colonialism. Ivory was exported to Europe from all regions where elephants were indigenous, but especially from Africa. This led to an oversupply of this precious raw material, so that even everyday objects, such as buttons, handles, or bobbins for sewing thread were made from it, as an exhibit from the collection of the Augustiner Museum illustrates (Fig. 3).



Fig. 3 : Yarn spool made of ivory (Augustiner Museum, h-31-017c).

Photo: Axel Killian.



Fig. 4 : Mounted elephant tusks from Max Knecht's estate.

Photo: Axel Killian.

On loan from a private collection, compiled by Max Knecht (1874–1954), the exhibition features two elephant tusks mounted on a base (Fig. 4), which still to this day serve as room decorations. Max Knecht and his past as a colonial officer in German East Africa, as well as his pro-colonial activities afterwards in Freiburg, are one of the subjects in the chapter

²² In the same year, a pound of bread cost about 0.25 Marks. https://www.was-war-wann.de/historische_werte/brotpreise.html. Accessed 25 January 2023. Although the price ranges of bread and coffee today are very wide depending on their quality, the ratio in value between bread and coffee has remained roughly the same to date at 1:5. This indicates that at the beginning of the twentieth century, coffee was a luxury food that was also affordable for the general populace.

“Propaganda-Popularization”. After his time as a colonial officer, he was engaged in the organization of the Colonial Conference and Colonial Exhibition of the *Deutscher Reichskolonialbund* in Freiburg in 1935. While the Colonial Conference called for the reappropriation of former colonies, the Colonial Exhibition was intended to demonstrate the economic benefits of colonies to the population and to legitimize the exploitation of oppressed people through narratives of superiority. The Colonial Exhibition of 1935 also included an East Africa section with artifacts from the ethnological collection of the then Museum für Natur- und Völkerkunde (Museum of Natural History and Ethnology). They were meant to give visitors a sense of cultural superiority and legitimize the claim that colonialism served to civilize supposedly backward societies. Such racist stereotypes became deeply inscribed in the consciousness of visitors and were passed down through generations. The long-term effect of such stereotypes and images could be seen, for example, until 2021 at the Europa Park in Rust, a small town north of Freiburg. Opening in 1975, the park included an area that presented people from the African continent in a racist way as “wild/un-civilized” people as a counterpart to “civilized” Europeans who were shown in the other areas of the “Europa Park”. Sophia Hiss and Leon Mogck, two students at the Institute of Ethnology at the Freiburg University, critically examined this racist representation of the African continent and published their position on it in the *Badische Zeitung*. By referring to some of the vehement reactions of readers to this article in social media, the exhibition showed that racist stereotypes persist in the minds of many people to the present day.

As elements of postcolonial exhibition curation, the “Blank Spaces” were the most important methodological unit of the exhibition “Freiburg and Colonialism: Yesterday? Today!”. At the same time, they indicate future steps towards decolonizing the museum. In the last chapter of the exhibition titled “Let’s decolonize our world,” three “Blank Spaces” created by different groups of authors directed the attention to the future. With their contributions, this section posed questions of the opportunities and challenges of decolonizing Global North-South relationships in order to create a fairer world. In addition, members of the RAPRED-Girubuntu e.V. association made a contribution there. With four exhibits, including an Ingoma drum (Fig. 6), they outlined the peace work in Burundi and its importance for the future of the indigenous population and in neighboring regions. Even today, they suffer repeatedly from waves of violence, the roots of which can be traced back to the time of German and European colonialism.



Fig. 5: View of the East Africa section of the Freiburg Colonial Exhibition of 1935.

Photo: unknown



Fig. 6: Exhibition area (Blank Space) designed by the RAP-RED-Girubuntu e. V. association in the chapter “Let’s Decolonize our World”.

Photo: Axel Killian

2. Colonial Artifacts from Burundi in the Ethnological Collection of the Museum Natur und Mensch

The Ethnological Collection of the Museum Natur und Mensch in the Städtische Museen Freiburg comprises c. 20,000 artifacts from Asia, Oceania, the Americas, Ancient Egypt, and Africa. The collection also includes a comprehensive historical photographic archive.

2.1 The History of the Ethnological Collection

The interdisciplinary nature of the Museum für Natur und Mensch has its roots in its very beginnings: founded in 1895, the municipal Museum of Natural History and Ethnology henceforth collected natural history and non-European objects.²³ Initially, from 1899, the collections were exhibited in the former Rempart barracks. From 1903, they were presented in the rooms of the Turnsee School.²⁴ In the following years, the museum in

²³ 139 artifacts, which were part of the municipal collection of antiquities before the founding of the Museum für Natur- und Völkerkunde (Museum of Natural History and Ethnology), formed the initial holdings of the house.

²⁴ Gerhards, *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte*, 23. See note 8.

the Turnsee School underwent various extensions, some of them provisional, which became necessary due to the volume of the ever-expanding collections.²⁵ In 1928, the museum moved to the former Adelhauser Kloster and the former Gerberauschule. While the natural science collection was opened to the public in 1931 in the “Museum für Naturkunde”²⁶ in the former school building in the Gerberau, the Ethnological Collection remained in storage in the former Adelhauser Kloster and was not presented to the public there again until 1961 in the “Völkerkundemuseum”.²⁷ In 1996, both premises were merged to form the Adelhausermuseum für Natur- und Völkerkunde (Adelhauser Museum of Natural History and Ethnology), which existed until 2006. This was followed by a renovation and redesign of the building on the Gerberau. The premises in the former Adelhauser monastery were abandoned altogether and the Ethnological Collection was returned to storage. In December 2009, the Naturmuseum (Nature Museum) opened in the building in the Gerberau, where both collections are once more represented together. The Ethnological Collection, which had been stored in boxes, moved to its designated space in 2012 after the completion of the Zentrales Kunstdepot (Central Art Depot) of the Municipal Museums of Freiburg, where the collection has resided ever since. Since the renaming of the museum in April 2014 as the Museum für Natur und Mensch, both subject areas are again represented in the name of the museum.²⁸

2.2 Digitization Ensures Transparency and Accessibility

A large number of the artifacts from Africa preserved in the Ethnological Collection arrived in the collection during the period of German colonialism. This means that these objects originate from colonial contexts. They

²⁵ Between 1903 and 1905, the number of objects preserved by the Ethnological Collection grew from about 4,000 to about 8,000. 2,022 ethnographs alone went on permanent loan from the university collection to the Ethnological Collection from 1904 until the end of January 1905. See Gerhards, *Vom Nomadisieren zur Sesshaftigkeit*, in: Gerhards, *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte*, 62f. See note 8.

²⁶ Gerhards, *Vom Nomadisieren zur Sesshaftigkeit*, in: Gerhards, *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte*, 34. See note 8.

²⁷ Krummer-Schroth, Ingeborg, *Erinnerungen an die Völkerkundesammlung in der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit 1939–61*, in: Gerhards, *Als Freiburg die Welt entdeckte*, 43ff. See note 8.

²⁸ In the recent history of the Ethnological Collection, cf. <https://www.freiburg.de/pb/848239.html>. Accessed 4 July 2023.

changed ownership under conditions that were marked by violence and unequal power relations. What we now call “objects from colonial contexts” are often identity-forming and cultural mediators for the former owners and their descendants. For the descendants of the societies of origin to find out which collections and museums hold objects of their ancestors, institutions formerly and currently engaged in collecting need to increase transparency and access to their collections.²⁹

An important step on this path for the Ethnological Collection is the digitization of its holdings. Through digitization, the object records can be viewed in public and globally accessible databases, such as the Online-Sammlung (Online Collection) of the Municipal Museums of Freiburg. Societies of origin, academics, as well as interested citizens worldwide thus can gain access to the collections, which since the closure of the “Adelhausmuseum für Natur- und Völkerkunde” in 2006 can only be partially seen in sporadic special exhibitions.

Of particular importance are national and international projects that bring together collection holdings from a specific region in German or European collections and museums in a database, such as Digital Benin.³⁰ Societies of origin can use these databases to find out which identity-forming and cultural mediators of their ancestors are kept in Germany or Europe and in which institution.

As an example of the extensive and multi-layered digitization process of the Ethnological Collection, the digitization of the Africa Collection is worthy of mention here. When the project began on 1 July 2019, much of the collection comprising c. 3,500 artifacts was still in cardboard boxes in the Central Art Depot of the Städtische Museen Freiburg. Unpacking the objects, inspecting them and comparing them with the data records for each object

²⁹ Many publications and press articles have recently appeared discussing collections from colonial contexts, on the continuation and after-effects of colonialism, as well as colonial structures, on the necessity of conducting provenance research together with the descendants of societies of origin, and on the restitution of unlawfully appropriated and identity-forming cultural and collector's property, which symbolizes this current controversial and multifaceted debate. Cf. Hahn, Hans-Peter / Lueb, Oliver / Müller, Katja / Noack, Karoline (eds.), *Digitalisierung ethnologischer Sammlungen. Perspektiven aus Theorie und Praxis*, Bielefeld 2021; or Ahrndt, Wiebke, *Nicht-europäische Perspektiven fördern. Deutscher Museumsbund sensibilisiert für den Umgang mit Sammlungsgut aus kolonialen Kontexten*, in: *Politik & Kultur* 1 February 2019; *Deutscher Museumsbund e.V., Leitfaden Umgang mit Sammlungsgut aus kolonialen Kontexten* (2021). <https://www.museumsbund.de/publikationen/leitfaden-zum-umgang-mit-sammlungsgut-aus-kolonialen-kontexten/>. Accessed 5 July 2023.

³⁰ <https://digitalbenin.org/>. Accessed 5 July 2023.

in the museum database Imdas pro, turned out to be crucial procedural steps. Before the objects were given a location in one of the Ethnological Collection’s storage rooms, as many as possible were professionally photographed. Some objects were also saved and cleaned by a conservator.

The digital data sets were also expanded to include information that had been recorded on analogue media, such as index cards and inventory books from the time when the objects entered the collection. Special attention was paid to the objects that entered the collection during the period of German colonialism via donation, acquisition, or exchange.

As part of the digitization of the Africa Collection, which was realized with special funds from the Städtische Museen Freiburg and funding from the Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Baden-Württemberg (Ministry of Science, Research and Arts of Baden-Württemberg), more than 1,000 documentary records relating to the Africa Collection were able to be prepared for publication in the Online Collection of the Städtische Museen Freiburg by the end of 2022, where they will appear in the course of 2023.

2.3 Artifacts from Burundi

According to our current knowledge, there are thirteen colonial objects from Burundi in the Ethnological Collection. Some of the objects consist of two parts, such as a knife and a sheath. If we count these objects individually, seventeen colonial objects come from Burundi. They are two knives with sheaths, two swords with scabbards, a sickle, a hatchet, a basket vessel, two wooden vessels, three shallow basket bowls, and a wide coaster. Another colonial-object from Burundi, a stringed musical instrument, was held in the Ethnological Collection until 1970, whereupon it was exchanged for two masks from West and Central Africa.

As far as we have been able to reconstruct thus far, all these objects entered the collections of the then Museum of Natural History and Ethnology between 1899 and 1902, i.e., at the time when Burundi was part of the German colony of German East Africa.



Fig. 7 : I/1008

Basket Bowl

Entrance type: Unknown

Rudolf Bangel

Photo: Axel Killian

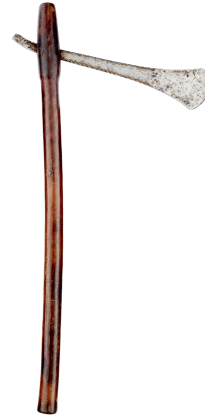


Fig. 8 : I/0368

Hatchet

Entrance type: Purchase

Photo: Axel Killian



Fig. 9 : I/0325

Knife with Sheath

Entrance type: Purchase Rudolf Bangel

Photo: Axel Killian



Fig. 10 : I/0342

Sword with Scabbard

Entrance type: Purchase Rudolf Bangel

Photo: Axel Killian

According to current knowledge, a further ninety-nine objects held in the Ethnological Collection also come from the former German colony of German East Africa, although it is unclear from which of today’s countries these objects originate. In addition to Burundi, the former German colony of German East Africa also included Tanzania (minus Zanzibar) and Rwanda, as well as areas in the north of Mozambique. These artifacts include two drums, a bugle, twenty spears, seven spearheads, two daggers, one of them with a sheath, two vessels, one of them with a lid, a club, two quivers, one of them with five arrows, a sound box of a musical instrument, five pieces of clothing, two bags, three tobacco pipes, one basket vessel, two calabash vessels, one bottle, one knocker, six arm rings, one piece of jewelry, two clay figurines, one headdress, one cap, two tobacco rolls, two mats, nineteen arrows, one sword with scabbard, one basket with lid, and one bow.

Six other colonial objects from East Africa are no longer in the collection, the whereabouts of a spear is currently unclear; the other objects comprising two daggers, one with a sheath and two arrows, were exchanged for a mask and two wooden figures from West Africa. These artifacts entered the Ethnological Collection between 1899 and 1950. They were “collected” during the German colonial rule in East Africa or came into the hands of the people who subsequently donated or sold them to the museum during this time.



Fig. 11 : I/0122

Drum

Entrance type: Purchase Eduard Kuhn

Photo: Axel Killian



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Fig. 12 : I/1023

Calabash Vessel

Entrance type: unknown

Photo: Axel Killian



Fig. 13 : I/1037

Knocker

Entrance type: unknown

Photo: Axel Killian



Fig. 14 : I/1048

Tobacco Pipe

Entrance type: Donation Mrs Nut

Photo: Axel Killian

All of the colonial objects, which, in all probability, originate from what is now Burundi or East Africa, were introduced to the Ethnological Collection by a total of ten different people, who gave them to the former Museum of Natural History and Ethnology free of charge or sold them to the museum. Most of the people we refer to as “previous owners” were members of the German colonial Protection Force, the so-called “Schutztruppen,” or they worked as teachers, traders, or doctors in the German colonial territories. Two of these artifacts from East Africa entered the collection via the University of Freiburg. At present, it is not known who brought these objects to Freiburg or, indeed, when this happened. About ten artifacts from Burundi or East Africa could not yet be assigned to a specific individual responsible for the sale or donation. One person donated three objects from East Africa to the collection. With regard to this person, we do not know whether he was an agent of German colonialism or whether he received the objects from a third party before donating them to the collection.

In addition, we do not know the circumstances of acquisition for any of the colonial artifacts from Burundi or East Africa. We do not know when specifically, or under what circumstances the artifacts came into the possession of those who contributed them to the collection.

We also know very little about the makers, artists, and previous owners of the artifacts. We also only have scant information about the use and production of the artifacts, their cultural background and significance, or their specific geographical origin.

What we do know about colonial objects from Burundi or East Africa is recorded in the notes when the artifacts entered the collection. Some of the people who supplied the objects to the collection described in their correspondence with the then Museum of Natural History and Ethnology where they “acquired” the given object and what it was used for in its community of origin. However, the information is sparse and, in many cases, rudimentary. In addition, systematic evaluation of the correspondence of the former Museum of Natural History and Ethnology with the individuals who introduced the artifacts into the collection has yet to be undertaken. It would be desirable to work on the holdings within the framework of provenance research project in conjunction with partners from Burundi and the other East African countries that were part of the former German colony of East Africa and to reconstruct the provenance of the objects, their former owners, and their cultural contexts. In addition to making the collection largely accessible through digitization, this would also facilitate the identification of identity-forming and unlawfully appropriated cultural property, to jointly pursue new ways of dealing with artifacts originating from colonial contexts and, of course, to restitute objects if desired.

3. RAPRED-Girubuntu e.V. and its Work for Peace and Reconciliation as a Contribution to Decolonization and Treatment of the Colonial Legacy

Rapred-Girubuntu (African Network for Peace, Reconciliation, and Sustainable Development)³¹ is a non-governmental organization based in Germany, whose main aim is to promote a network of peace and reconciliation through research in collaboration with the University of Freiburg (AB Caritaswissenschaft and Christliche Sozialarbeit) in the development of the Girubuntu Peace Academy (GPA).³² Because of its commitment to peace and reconciliation, the RAPRED-Girubuntu organization was chosen to take part in the Exhibition on Colonialism in the Städtische Museen

³¹ <https://www.rapred-girubuntu.org>. Accessed 4 July 2023.

³² For more information about the Girubuntu Peace Academy, cf. the following link: <https://www.rapred-girubuntu.org/girubuntu-peace-academy>. Accessed 4 July 2023.

Freiburg, thus proposing an approach to decolonization and engaging with the legacy of colonialism *per se*.

3.1 RAPRED-Girubuntu's Engagement as a Positive Approach to Decolonization

We call the “positive approach to decolonization” as opposed to the “negative approach to decolonization”— an approach that consists not only of a critique of the depredations of colonization, but also of establishing the basis for an exchange of values with a view to reciprocity. In fact, colonization was not only political and economic, but it was also cultural.³³ The cultural domination of the Western world through the introduction of languages and religions alien to Africa has resulted in a contempt for local languages and cultures by Europeans in general and by colonists in particular. The pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial periods were founded on a process of knowledge production predicated upon the invention of the ‘Other’ in order to be able to take advantage of them.³⁴ To add insult to injury, this process of knowledge production was assimilated by the colonized societies or peoples to such an extent that it becomes difficult to talk about a specific history of these countries that is itself not conditioned by European domination.³⁵ In fact, in the eyes of the colonialists, the given colonized people was perceived as sub-human, wholly bereft of culture or history.³⁶

Thus, as Ngugi wa Thiong’o points out, colonial and post-colonial Africa was understood and defined in foreign languages even to the point where African intellectuals also understood and defined themselves in these languages,³⁷ either to make their way in the ‘world of the civilized’ who spoke foreign languages incomprehensible to the people, or to display their erudition. The indifference shown to African culture and languages can be witnessed, for example, in the lack of effort and interest shown by some European experts or development workers in learning the local language and culture of the countries in which they are working. It was incumbent

³³ wa Thiong’o, Ngugi, *Decolonising the Mind, the Politic of Language in African Literature*, Nairobi 1986, 4.

³⁴ Silber, Stefan, *Postcoloniale Theologien*, Tübingen 2021, 46.

³⁵ Cf. Mbembe, Achile, *De la postcolonie. Essais sur l’imagination politique dans l’Afrique contemporaine*, Paris 2020, 56.

³⁶ Cf. Mabana, Léopold Sédar Senghor et la civilisation de l’Universel, in: *Diogenes* 2011/3 (N° 235-236), 3-16, PUF, Paris 2011.

³⁷ wa Thiong’o, *Decolonising the Mind*, 5. See note 33.

upon the African partner to learn the language of the European in order to be able to serve him. In its positive approach to decolonization, RAPRED-Girubuntu proposes a new perspective on and for African values. In particular, it inculcates the values of “Ubuntu,” inviting everyone to make these values their own. “Gir-Ubuntu” translates as “make Ubuntu your own”. Thus, in addition to critiquing colonization, we are offering our interlocutors something positive that can serve as a bridge toward understanding and communication. In its collaboration with other organizations and institutions, RAPRED-Girubuntu is committed to promoting respect for its identity based on the values it wants to advocate.

In this way, it hopes to contribute to the decolonization of institutions. The concept of networking that it proposes to partners enables each partner, however small, to maintain their visibility and identity within the consortium and to participate actively in this give-and-take process, with the ultimate goal of co-building a civilization of the Universal.³⁸ The aim here is to reject a world dominated by money, where whoever pays for the musical instruments dictates the music, or a Eurocentric world that enshrines the domination of the West over the rest of the world. Instead, we are proposing a decolonized, open-minded world, in which each partner is respected as such, and their contribution is valued in a mutual way.

3.2 Working for Peace and Reconciliation as a Contribution to Dealing with the Legacy of Burundi’s Colonial Past.

Before presenting the contribution of the Rapred-Girubuntu Organization in dealing with issues relating to the colonial past, let us first briefly analyze the impact of the colonial past in Burundi. It is not our intention to make an exhaustive analysis here, but rather to focus on the issue of the civil wars in Burundi.

3.2.1 Conflicts and Civil Wars in Burundi as a Legacy of the Colonial Past

Since gaining independence, Burundi has experienced many civil wars and conflict of an ethnic nature. If we look closely at the various civil conflict

³⁸ Cf. Mabana, Léopold Sédar Senghor, 5. See note 36.

in Burundi, we can see that there has been a certain consistency over the past ten years or so.³⁹

Pre-colonial Burundi did not experience inter-ethnic tensions or wars, as Eugène Nimenya affirms in his doctoral thesis:

*“We know of no war between ethnic groups before or during colonization. Neither history, nor legends nor any other stories, nor songs report that there was ever any armed conflict between ethnic groups.”*⁴⁰

The negative impact of colonization on Burundi can be assessed on several levels, especially those of a political, social, cultural, and religious nature. The political and social destabilization of Burundi began with the German colonial period, ironically called the German Protectorate, ironically inferring that the Germans had arrived with the intention of protecting the kingdom of Burundi. This period lasted twenty years (1896–1916) and was characterized specifically by the weakening of the power of King Mwezi Gisabo and the destabilization of traditional structures of governance.⁴¹ Helmut describes German colonial policy in Burundi as follows:

*“‘Divide and rule’ became the operational maxim of the German colonial administration in Burundi up until the military capitulation of 1916.”*⁴²

The influence of colonization on ethnic conflicts in Burundi (and in Rwanda) was manifested, above all, in racist descriptions of the populations, in an attempt to model the then racist theories *en vogue* in Europe at the time on the local populations. The Tutsis were described as a minority from the north who had invaded and enslaved the local populations, the majority of whom were Hutus. This minority was described as having white characteristics (the Swiss of Africa) in contrast to the Hutu majority,

³⁹ Cf. Maruhukiro, Déogratias, *Des guerres civiles au défi de la paix: La vérité et la justice pour comprendre le conflit burundais. Essais d'analyse compréhensive du conflit burundais et apport de l'Eglise catholique dans la promotion de la paix et la réconciliation*, in: Klaus Baumann, Rainer Bendel, Déogratias Maruhukiro (eds), *Gerechtigkeit, Wahrheitsfindung, Vergebung und Versöhnung. Ansätze zur Friedenspolitik in Nachkriegsgebieten*, Berlin 2021, 116.

⁴⁰ Nimenya, Eugène, *La dimension politique du salut, L'engagement de l'Église pour l'homme dans la communauté politique, avec une attention particulière pour le Burundi*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Freiburg 2012, 217.

⁴¹ Cf. Maruhukiro, Déogratias, *Als der König betrogen wurde*, in *Südzeit* 95 (2022), 14.

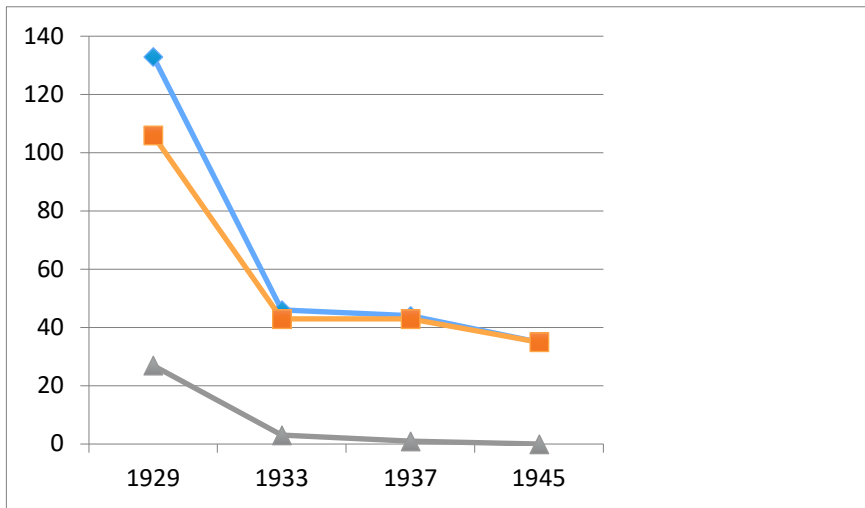
⁴² Strizek, H., *Geschenkte Kolonien, Rwanda und Burundi unter deutscher Herrschaft*, Berlin 2006.

who were considered to be the true “negroes” who were only fit to remain in the service of the Tutsis. The journal *Afrika Bote. Nachrichten aus den Missionen der Weissen Vater* was tantamount to a channel for transmitting such descriptions. In the *Afrika Bote* from 1912, we read:

*“Diese „königlichen Hirten“, die **Batutsi**, sind die später ins Land eingedrungenen (vom Norden) Fremdlinge und jetzigen Gebieter des Reiches, auch die Besitzer des einzigen Landesreichtums, der prächtigen Rinderherden. Auf seine Lanze nachlässig gestützt, in der Linken den Hirtenstecken, so finden wir ihn träumend bei seiner Herde „auf der Alm“. Gerieben und durchtrieben in allem, was sein liebes Rind betrifft, will ihm die Landwirtschaft gar nicht schmecken. Er verleiht oder verschenkt lieber an einen Hörigen ein Kühlein und läßt sich [// S. 272] das zum Brot nötige Feldstück bebauen. Diese Hörigen, Leibeigenen, unterjochten eigentlichen Barundi, die **Bahutu** bilden die übrigen 3/4 der Einwohner. Es sind eigentliche Neger, schwarze, biedere, plumpe, dickfeiste Bäuerlein, harmlos gucken uns die schlaunen Aeuglein entgegen.”⁴³*

The Belgian colonial period (1916–1962) reinforced the propagation of the ethnic virus, especially in Burundi’s political class. With the administrative reform of 1925, Belgium completed what the Germans had begun with their policy of *divide et impera*, i.e., ‘divide and rule’. In 1929, the Belgian colonial authorities introduced a new administrative organization based on discrimination against the Hutus. All chiefs from the majority Hutu ethnic group were systematically removed from office.

⁴³ Gaßdinger, P.J. in Muyaga (Urundi), Urundi, eine afrikanische Schweiz, in: *Afrika-Bote. Nachrichten aus den Missionen der Weissen Vater*, illustrated monthly journal, 19 (November 1912), 267-272. Translation: “These ‘royal herders,’ the Batutsi, are interlopers who later invaded the country (from the north) and are now the lords and masters of the realm, also the owners of the only wealth in the country, the magnificent herds of cattle. Leaning carelessly on his spear, his herder’s crook in his left hand, we find him dreaming of his herd ‘on the mountain pasture’. Sharp-witted and underhand in everything that concerns his beloved cattle, agriculture is not at all to his liking. He prefers to lend or give away a little cow to a serf and let [p. 272] him cultivate the fields necessary for bread. These bondsmen, serfs, subjugated the actual Barundi, the Bahutu, and make up the remaining three-quarters of the inhabitants. They are real negroes, black, simple, clumsy, thick-skinned little peasants, looking at us harmlessly through their sly tiny eyes.”



*New Administrative Organization by the Belgian Colonial Authorities since 1929.*⁴⁴

The graph above shows exactly how the number of chieftaincies was drastically reduced between 1929 and 1945. It is true that the number of Tutsis was reduced, but it is evident that from 1933, the colonial administration was practically devoid of Hutus. This exclusion of Hutus, both in the colonial administration and in other social services, such as education, not only caused frustration among the Hutus, but was also the latent source of the political ferment and violent ethnic conflict that has ravaged Burundi in recent history.

3.2.2 RAPRED-Girubuntu's Engagement in Promoting Peace and Reconciliation as a Contribution to Dealing with the Colonial Past

Since it was founded in 2015, RAPRED-Girubuntu has been committed to promoting peace and reconciliation by focusing on two main areas, namely research on peace and reconciliation and the implementation of concrete projects aimed at promoting peace and reconciliation at grassroots level. As part of its research on peace and reconciliation, RAPRED-Girubuntu works with the University of Freiburg (AB Caritaswissenschaft and Christ-

⁴⁴ Cf. Maruhukiro, Déogratias, Für eine Friedens- und Versöhnungskultur. Sozial-politische Analyse, ethischer Ansatz und kirchliche Beitrag zur Förderung einer Friedens- und Versöhnungskultur in Burundi, Berlin 2020, 40.

liche Sozialarbeit) through the Girubuntu Peace Academy (GPA). The research carried out is interdisciplinary and involves researchers from different disciplines, such as theologians, philosophers, historians, lawyers, political scientists, doctors, psychologists, etc. This research is then published in a scientific publication series set up for this purpose. This publication series is titled: “Peace-Reconciliation-Future. Africa and Europe: Studies of the Girubuntu Peace Academy.”

In our research, we favor reciprocity where European and African researchers research and publish on the same subject; this is also facilitated by the organization of conferences or symposia, in which these different researchers can present the results of their research and thus come into direct contact with colleagues from different universities and from other countries. In our conferences and publications, we have mainly focused on a comparative approach in post-conflict countries, in this case the African Great Lakes and post-Second World War Europe.⁴⁵ The Girubuntu Peace Academy has also initiated the “Freiburger Friedensgespräche FFG” (Freiburg Peace Dialogues), which aim to encourage dialogue between the various political leaders and civil society from Burundi.

The research carried out at the Girubuntu Peace Academy also inspires concrete peace promotion projects. RAPRED-Girubuntu is therefore involved in concrete projects at grassroots level. The following projects have already been set up:

3.2.2.1 Promoting Peace through Education and Training “Education Builds Peace”.

This is achieved through peace education projects, such as the Sangwe project, which was carried out in the Bugarama municipality in the Bujumbura rural province. This project consisted of various activities, such as promoting peace through sport, promoting peace through culture, etc. Through the “Iga” project, RAPRED-Girubuntu supports schoolchildren and students from vulnerable families so that they can continue their studies.

⁴⁵ On this subject, please consult the various volumes already published: <https://www.lit-verlag.de/publikationen/reihen/frieden-versehnung-zukunft-afrika-und-europa.-paix-recconciliation-avenir-l-afrique-et-l-europe-peace-reconciliation/>. Accessed 5 July 2023.

3.2.2.2 Humuriza or the Promotion of Peace and Reconciliation through the Treatment and Care of People Traumatized by War.

Research has shown that past traumas are often a handicap to reconciliation work and that treating these traumas can open the path toward reconciliation.⁴⁶ With these objectives in mind, projects to train operatives in trauma treatment and care for traumatized people have been carried out in Rwanda and Burundi.

3.2.2.3 Promoting Peace by Fighting Poverty.

Poverty is also cited as one of the causes of the wars in Burundi, and it does indeed seem to play an important role.⁴⁷ It is for this reason that the RAPRED-Girubuntu organization has also initiated specific projects to fight poverty, such as the Hakuna Matata project and the “Food Security as a Contribution to the Fight against Poverty and Social Cohesion” project.

Conclusion

This chapter takes the reader on a little odyssey along the path of colonialism, which, emanating from the West, has invaded different parts of the world. Themes, such as “Mission and Resistance,” “Expansionism and Wars,” “Exploitation, Science, and Propaganda” will have traced this journey to the point of leaving indelible marks on countries and populations. Readers will have realized that the City of Freiburg was not exempt from the whole colonial enterprise. As a direct result of colonialism, Freiburg profited from the unequal trade, or rather the exploitation, of colonized regions. From the point of view of objects from Burundi, the Städtische Museen Freiburg would probably not be a reference point, in fact there are few objects there, but the few that are in the museum may give rise to questions in relation to their provenance and acquisition. Given the importance and number of objects from Burundi, the question of restitution

⁴⁶ For more information, cf. volume 7 on the topic: *Se souvenir, comprendre et réconcilier. Le travail de mémoire comme chemin pour la construction d’une paix durable* (Volume still in the process of publication). Cf. also Glavas, Andrijana, *Ich bin immer noch hier, die Rolle von Religiosität und Spiritualität bei traumatisierten Patienten in Kroatien*, Berlin 2022.

⁴⁷ Cf. Maruhukiro, *Für eine Friedens- und Versöhnungskultur*, 183. See note 44.

was not discussed in depth during the webinar and is therefore not discussed in this chapter either.

However, the issue of the Burundian conflict as an indirect consequence of the colonial past has been discussed on several occasions. The third part of this chapter aims to focus on this issue by proposing the hypothesis that RAPRED-Girubuntu’s commitment to peace and reconciliation is one approach to dealing with Burundi’s colonial past.

This chapter has covered a very broad field, ranging from colonial expansion and its manifestations all the way to the issue of decolonization. The authors cannot claim to have exhausted the subject matter and are aware that various points could be explored in greater depth.

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