

Review of: "How to Think and Frame Third Worldism with Illustrations from Iran-South Africa Diplomatic Relations, 2006-2019"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

It is an interesting and thought-provoking paper that invites the reader to think about the relevance of the concept of "Third World" and its meaning in the framework of Iran-South Africa relations. However, there is scope for improving the manuscript and structuring it differently.

First, I believe that the objective of the paper and how the objective is arrived at could be formulated more precisely by adding a note on methodology and method. In my opinion, the article essentially presents a reflection on the meanings of the concept of Third World or Third Worldism and its validity for the interpretation of Iranian-South African relations, but the way in which this genealogy is carried out and the relationship to the case is somewhat confusing. I consider that one way to reorganise this would be to discuss, first, the academic and institutional meanings of the concept of the Third World in historical perspective (which at this point rather appears at several points in the manuscript). This will allow the author to present the four dimensions of the Third World concept as a synthesis derived from the existing academic and institutional discussion. From here, one can move down to the case. My suggestion is to systematically discuss which of the said dimensions are the most useful for interpreting Iran-South Africa relations, taking into account the foreign policy orientations of both countries. To make the analysis of the case more robust, I believe that the literature on Iranian foreign policy should be expanded to include the analysis of authors such as R. K. Ramazani, Arshin Adib-Moghaddam, Anoushiravan Ehteshami and/or Ali Fathollah-nejad. (I am unaware of the names of relevant South African foreign policy analysts).

Secondly, I suggest that the author reflect on "for what purpose" it is necessary to include in a work of this nature reflection on the "heterogeneity" of authors such as Escobar and De Landa. I find that, although the ideas of these authors are very suggestive, in the current manuscript it is not very clear what the contribution is. Maybe what should be pondered over in relation to this is in which distinct ways philosophies of difference such as Escobar's or De Landa's illuminate foreign policy analysis or even foreign policy practices.

Thirdly, I think that one should not open too many threads that do not end up being closed. One is the one I just mentioned. Another concerns the statement "The notion [of Third World] denotes both functional and social constructs", which is not fully explained.

Thirdly, the article should end with some conclusions.

Taking into account all the above, I consider that the article has enormous potential and it is worthwhile for the author to continue working on the manuscript.

