Crossing African Borders

Migration and Mobility

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(Eds.)

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CROSSING AFRICAN BORDERS – MIGRATION AND MOBILITY

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This publication is one of the results of a conference organised in Lisbon in 2011 on the theme of African borders and their relationships with migration and mobility. The selected papers are a sample of the diverse perspectives on the general theme presented at the meeting. Other written contributions were presented at the event and summaries of them can be found online.[1]

Unwritten contributions were the discussions and exchanges of ideas throughout the conference and the opportunity to share visions and research results. Most of the participants are members of the ABORNE – the African Borderlands Research Network (www.aborne.org), funded by the European Science Foundation (www.esf.org). ABORNE was created in 2007 and is solidly established as a fundamental platform for continuing work about borders in Africa and results of research have been consistently expanding since its existence. The network promoted this event, allowing a substantial number of its members to participate and present ongoing research and papers resulting from long-term research. Many other scholars met ABORNE members at the event and this helped to increase ABORNE's membership, as many joined the network. Publications resulting from research about African borders can be found in many scientific journals and other publications and the ABORNE website has updated links to the majority of them. This collection focuses on migration and mobility and their relationship with African borders.

African border studies

Although there is a vast literature and historical analysis on the many issues raised by African borders, sociological studies mobilising groups of scholars particularly interested on borders in Africa can be situated in the 1990s onwards, in particular after the conference "Borders and Borderline Zones in Africa" in Edinburgh in 1993. This initiative was followed by several research projects at the beginning of the following decade, like one on "Democracy, identities and Representations" (2001-2005, conducted by the Centre d'Études d'Afrique Noire at the University of Bordeaux and the University of Barcelona) or a project on "Borders of Africa: the dynamics of political loyalty and local identities" (2002-2006, conducted by the African Studies Centre of the University of Leiden. More recently, in 2007, the African Borderlands

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[1] www.aborne.org/uploads/media/2011_Lisbon_Panels.pdf

Research Network (ABORNE) was created, funded by several European science institutes through the European Science Foundation.

A few papers stand out in the general research on African borders, some of them published prior to 1990, like those by Jeffrey Herbst, Fredrik Barth, Paul Nugent and Anthony Asiwaju. Even though the collective study of African borders spans a vast number of subjects – from archaeology (Hall, 1984) to political science (Larémont, 2005) or sociology (Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996) – the need for an interdisciplinary approach led to the gradual integration of many relevant topics into analyses, encompassing issues such as sovereignty (Mbembe, 2002), migration (Tornimbeni, 2005), cross-border trade (Dobler, 2008; Meagher, 2003), conflict (Zeller, 2007), gender (Cheater, 1998), law and legitimacy (Abraham, 2006), traditional authorities (Zeller, 2007; Tomàs, 2006) and social change and identities (Ferguson, 1999; Dobler, 2010). Additionally, there is an important body of present-day studies focusing more and more for instance on managing and sharing trans-border natural resources or the spread of HIV-AIDS.

Generally speaking and notwithstanding the interdisciplinarity that characterises border studies, research can be grouped into approaches focusing on conflicts caused by the borders on one hand and approaches that emphasise other kinds of relationship – commitment, cooperation and intense exchanges on the other hand. Political disputes, the debate on identities and colonial borders in Africa, the occurrence or intensification of ethnic conflict or the conflict-ridden nature of post-colonial borders have caught the attention of several researchers (Asiwaju, 1985, 2003; Kapil, 1966; Nugent, 2003; Tronvoll, 1999; Sambanis, 1999; Herbst, 1989; Barth, 1969; Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1982). This type of research led to a theoretical framework where important analytical categories such as democracy, citizenship and national and ethnic identities were introduced. Several other scholars focused instead on the dynamic, fluid and permeable qualities of borders and even of identities themselves, with many varied points of view emerging (Mbembe, 1999; Migdal, 2004; Pellow, 1996; Prescott, 1987; Rösler and Wendl, 1999; Nyamnjoh, 2007; Brambilla, 2009). Many of these also highlighted the role of relations in a border context between different actors beyond the ethnic group, such as the state, administrative bodies, economic agents, populations of different ethnicities and locations and religious organisations.

Both state and non-state actors have developed their own strategies, based on different concepts of international borders (Donnan and Wilson, 1999; Flynn, 1997; Dobler, 2009) which may coincide with and reinforce or, conversely, weaken each other (Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996; Sambanis, 1999; Zeller, 2007; Asiwaju, 1985). Additionally, pressures at the local, regional or international levels and regional economic dynamics represent both constraints and opportunities, exploited differently by different actors (Nugent and Asiwaju, 1996; Rodrigues, 2007, 2010). In appearance and in reality, most borders remain porous and subject to negotiation and conflict by different actors, collective and individual alike. African borders today have many forms throughout the continent. They have been utilised and appropriated to

different ends since independence, with obvious consequences for social and political organisation and regional integration (Nugent, 2003; Bach, 1999).

Recent changes affecting the movement of persons, goods and services involving intense trans-border mobility have promoted a more dynamic approach to cross-border studies, focusing on the new forms of social, economic and political relations and on the importance of globalisation and transnationalism. This focus was particularly addressed by the conference participants.

The conference themes

The conference on borders and migration in Africa attempted to cover a broad range of themes and issues, bringing together scholars from Europe, Africa and the United States. Migration and mobility in and out of Africa are central factors in the social, political and economic dynamics of life in borderlands. It is also one of the main concerns of state authorities, both in and outside Africa, and a key feature in African social and economic strategies. The theme, and its relation to the control and regulation of African borders, has attracted many scholars worldwide from several disciplines, which made this conference topic of high interest and allowed fruitful exchanges on an empirical and theoretical level.

Border studies have provided a critical framework for investigating the nature and implications of changing patterns of migration within Africa. A large amount of literature deals with ways in which borders have affected migration in Africa, especially labour, seasonal and forced migration. Illegal migration to Europe is currently a major international concern and several papers addressed this issue, while new trends in inter-African migration were also highlighted, together with their major social, political and economic implications.

The conference invited a number of international specialists who provided important contributions in their areas. Prof. Allen Howard from Rutgers University introduced the general aspects of border analysis in Africa in his keynote address "Sierra Leone-Guinea boundary and border zone trade: historical and comparative perspectives". His presentation covered different historical periods in the region and contributed not only to the framing of border studies in the continuous changes taking place in Africa but also fostered the discussion that followed.

The following short review cannot do justice to the programme or the many excellent contributions, but can only mention some of the themes emerging from the panels. The first panel, "Methodologies for Studying Cross-Border Movements", convened by Tara Polzer, focused on the methodological challenges from both migration and borderland studies. With the format of an open discussion or workshop, the panel discussed the challenges that arise from the context, including mobile research targets, which is precisely one of the main concerns of scholars engaged in border and migration analysis.

The second panel was more concerned with the theoretical approach to African borders ("Rethinking hierarchies of borders and border crossings?") and was convened by Giorgio Miescher. It focused on the theoretical aspects of conceptualising borders. Presenters moved beyond "physical international borders" and discussed the role, pertinence and meaning of other territorial borders for the network and the scholars involved in it. It therefore addressed the academic "hierarchies" of these different types of border. Gardini spoke about "Multiple Borders: Migration, Land and Conflicts in Togo", Lenggenhager focused on the "hierarchies" of borders ("From a Namibian Internal Border to the External Border of an International Nature Park"), Almeida the "African Refugee Camps" and Duh the "Importance of Somali Social Formation in Kenya-Somalia Border Crossing". On the specific theme of the conference, migration was approached by questioning where borders are actually experienced by migrant(s).

Panel three on "The Building of African Territories through Borders", convened by Camille Lefebvre and Jude Murison, contained presentations on a diverse range of country case studies (Cameroun, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda). The panel took a historical perspective, examining the impact of pre-colonial and colonial migration on contemporary Africa. Overall, the papers attempted to shed light on how colonisation and the imposition of geographical lines have changed the mobility of African people, and how this can help us understand mobility today. Els's presentation was on the "Dhimba in northwestern Namibia: Identities and belongings through migrations and (hi)stories", Imbert-Vier asked "What is a migration boundary built for? The case of the 'Barrage de Djibouti'", Locatelli focused on "Ethiopian cross-border migration and the making of a 'culture of the enemy' in Eritrea", Walker presented "To Zanzibar and back: Comorian mobilities in colonial and post-colonial Zanzibar", Vaughan "Colonial Migration from French Equatorial Africa to Darfur", Pahimi the "Pratiques fiscales et dynamique des migrations transfrontalières entre le Nord Cameroun, le Nord-Nigéria et le Sud tchadien" and Murison raised the question "When did you cross the border? The differing rights of Rwandan refugees and migrants in Uganda".

Panel four, for which the convenors Paolo Gaibazzi and Stephan Dünnwald invited papers on "Forced Migration and the Role of Borders" gathered presentations around two focuses. While some of the papers explored movements over inner-African borders focusing on integration and identity formation, a second set of papers dealt with European bordering processes in Africa and their effects on migration. Anthony Asiwaju showed the relevance of cross border movements under different colonial regimes for today's border zones, while Tandia and Bakewell dealt with the agency of refugees and the role of the UNHCR refugee regime and informal integration. Integration, agency and identity were keywords also in Drotbohm's presentation on the arrival of deportees on the Cape Verdean Island of Brava. Fornale and Lemberg-Pedersen analysed the progression of European migration and border management in Africa, which increasingly affects the conceptualisation of borders in African states. Gormo's paper was on "Migration forcée des Tchadiens dans le département du Faro au Nord Cameroun".

Panel five approached border circulation from an economic and trade perspective ("Border crossings and economic circulation: trade, smuggling, labour") and was organised by Gregor Dobler. It started from the assumption that, although economic reasons are not the exclusive motive for migration, they have always been a powerful incentive. Papers in this panel analysed different dimensions of the economic dynamics for migration, including its importance for livelihoods and collective strategies (Kuschminder, Siegel and Andersson on "The Changing Face of Migration in Ethiopia"; Cross on "Migrants, borders and labour regimes in Mauritania: between militarisation and mobility"; Morgado on "Strategies for Survival in an Adverse Context [Niger]"); the changing reasons and justifications for migration over time (Tati on "Territory and border crossing for livelihoods among (voluntary and forced) migrants from DRC to Swaziland" and Lobo on "Making a life: female migration from Boa Vista Island, Cape Verde") as well as the hidden purposes of border control by states (Polus on "Does Botswana create a new Gaza Strip?"). Two of the papers focused on smuggling, envisaging it as a generator of a "smuggling" culture, a substitute for state economic policy and, in certain contexts, as resistance movements (Hüsken on "The Culture of Smuggling in the Borderland of Egypt and Libya" and Bermant on "The moral economy of underground cross-border transactions at the border between Europe and Africa").

Panel six, convened by Paolo Gaibazzi and Mattia Fumanti, was concerned with the linkages between "Border Regimes and Migrants' Subjectivities". The common assumption by the panel was that borders are not only state institutions having regulatory effects on mobility and citizens; they are also discursive practices that shape people who cross or inhabit border areas into particular kinds of subjects. The panel did not therefore confine its field of enquiry to identity politics, but also explored ways of being. All the papers in this panel took up the challenge of exploring border regimes and subjectivities by using an empirical approach, and hence the panel's emphasis on practice, i.e. migrant as well as government practices. The panel had presentations by Russell ("Rwanda, Burundi and the Negotiation of Border Regimes in a Narrow Space"), Tsianos and Kuster ("Border regimes and migrants' practices: citizenship, belonging and the making of migrant subjectivities"), and Graw ("Of Borders and Horizons: Reflections on Migratory Expectations in Africa and beyond", co-authored with Schielke).

Panel seven, dedicated to "Partitioned Africans" and organised by Jordi Tomàs and Alexandra Dias, was designed to present the human factor in Africa's international boundaries. It investigated how borderland groups define, value and use international boundaries with varying emphasis on social, cultural, religious and economical aspects. The panel was divided in two sessions. Georg Klute participated actively as a discussant during both. The cases were Nigeria/Cameroon (Njoku and Udeoji, "The Bakassi Peninsula Zone in Nigeria-Cameroun Border Relations"), Senegal/Mauritania (Kane, "Identity and Restored Citizenship"), Senegal/Guinea-Bissau (Tomàs on "An international border or just a territorial limit?"), Eritrea/Ethiopia (Dias, "From porous border to wall"), Mozambique/Zimbabwe (Patrício, "Ndau identity in the Mozambique-Zimbabwe borderland") and Uganda/Sudan (Hollstegge, "Narrating and practising the state border between Uganda and Southern Sudan").

Some topics discussed were common to all panels. These were the relation between informality and formality; negotiations (and failures) between state control of borders and migrants' agency; the translocality of migration as opposed to established international boundaries; the sense(s) of belonging for migrants and the role of borders in relation to it. Although one of the panels was exclusively devoted to discussing the methodological aspects of border analysis, the majority of the presentations stimulated discussion on the limits and possibilities for border research in Africa. National and international policy on migration and the way migration in and out of Africa is shaped and conditioned were another cross-cutting theme throughout the conference.

Migration and borders

One of the principal areas of African border studies is migration in Africa. Movement of people, goods and information across international and intercontinental borders is a growing trend in the world. In Africa, historical accounts of movements associate them with the emergence of important social and political settings on a variety of scales. These have contributed to building and reinforcing social identities through generations and establishing spatial boundaries of nations and socio-political groups. The delimitation of colonial borders – and their maintenance after independence – conditioned not only pre-existing social formations but also laid the foundation for building modern nations.

Since colonial times, African border regions have been characterised by high levels of mobility as a result of migrant labour systems, resettlement and flight from taxation and labour demands, and more recently as a result of substantial refugee flows. Intense circulation and exchange in borderland areas, often related to economic dynamics, in which labour and trade play a central role and determine border crossings, still create and reshape new and old social and economic contexts. The search for opportunities in employment and commerce also motivates Africans to cross borders in the past and present, thereby reconfiguring these new and old contexts.

On the other hand, the causes of migration and circulation across African borders are often associated with involuntary conditions. Africans have experienced forced migration on a grand scale, historically related to slavery and, especially in recent decades, within and across sovereign state boundaries in the context of conflict and warfare. The most dramatic conflicts of recent times have all involved enormous human flows. All these examples of human flight have involved the use of borders as sanctuaries not only for victims but also for perpetrators, thus underlining the complexity of insecurity often associated with border zones.

Intense cross-border circulation is widely observed, yet often poorly understood as aspects of hazily defined "globalisation processes" or "trans-nationalism". Trans-national and trans-continental migration requires the construction of new identities, both in the countries of origin and the new locations

chosen by the immigrants, and generates dynamics of exchange and communication. Borders play a central role in this context, both empirically and subjectively.

To understand the reciprocal implications of borders on migration, it is important to take into account the different kinds of boundary crossers, their motivations (e.g. labour migrants, refugees and displaced persons); the distance between origin place and destination (long-distance migrants, regional migration, trampoline towns' temporary migration); the social status of migrants (middlemen minorities, qualified workers; brain-drain issues) and the implications of these movements (brain-drain issues, citizenship, urban growth). Several national and international institutions have been working together and individually on issues related to migration in the world in order to understand the impacts and regulate circulation across borders. Africa-Europe border crossings are specifically an area of great concern. The changes caused by regulation, however, encourage the development of new local and transnational strategies, with important implications on citizenship. Some concerns regarding cross-border circulation involve finding out how identity (original and at destination) is moulded and modified, transformed and reinvented by long-distance migration and the possibilities of integration in destination locations.

ABORNE is not merely interested in providing a platform for comparison of these human flows through border spaces, but also in assessing the extent to which borders are themselves shaped by mobility. The emergence of a discourse of indigeneity across a number of African countries has particular implications in border locations. The members of ABORNE are also interested in exploring the differences between types of mobility (e.g. floating populations as opposed to migration paths) and how these relate to forced migration.

The sample papers

The first paper, "Profiling Ethiopian Migration: A Comparison of Ethiopian Migrant Characteristics to Africa, the Middle East and the North" *(*Katie Kuschminder, Lisa Andersson and Melissa Siegel) deals with the characteristics of migrants from Ethiopia to three different migration destinations – Northern countries, other African countries and the Middle East. The paper is based on a household survey that shows that the characteristics of migrants and their households of origin differ depending on migration destination. Furthermore, the study highlights the role that increased migration flows to Africa and the Middle East in recent decades have played in reshaping the profile of Ethiopian migrants. Finally, it shows that current Ethiopian migration flows coincide with some of the current global migration trends but at the same time contrast with some of the overall migration figures for Africa.

Mamadou Kane's paper, "Identity Strategies, Cultural Practices and Citizenship Recovery: the Mauritanian Refugees in the Senegal Valley", discusses the complex issues of identity (re)construction in the "Djolly Senegal" refugee community. As a result of the conflict in 1989, these Mauritanian refugees developed strategies for integration into the Senegalese part of the borderland, facilitated by a common

language. Yet the process of losing and regaining their status nowadays, as they move freely between the two countries, is paralleled by a more complex process of identity quest or recovery. The paper examines these identity issues by focusing on the migrants' experience and the cultural bridging strategies that they have developed.

The third paper "Migrants, borders and labour regimes in Mauritania: between militarisation and mobility" by Hannah Cross also focuses on migration into Mauritania from the south. It describes the channels of this migration – 1) pendular border crossings of the Senegal River from neighbouring regions in Senegal and Mali and southern Mauritanians moving north; 2) labour migration from further afield in West Africa, linked historically to fishing and mineral-led growth; 3) intended migration to Europe from West and Central Africa; 4) refugees. The paper is concerned with reconciling the connections and contradictions between migration and borders, which represent opposing economic and territorial regimes and are often viewed separately. Throughout the article, evidence provided by ethnographic research among migrants who have returned from, passed through, or remained in Mauritania supports the whole argument. The main conclusions, however, focus on the broader, structural causes of mobility and restriction, drawing attention to key historical factors in these competing political economies.

Jean Gormo's paper, titled "Forced Migration of Chadians in the Faro Division in Northern Cameroon (1980-2010)" describes and analyses the forms of integration of Chadian refugees in Cameroonian society, trying to understand their role in the dynamism of a particular region (the Faro Division). Coming from a country of high instability, the arrival and settlement of these refugees produced visible local effects, particularly from sociocultural or economic points of view. The author discusses these effects in his article, placing (and questioning) them as an explicative variable of economic, sociocultural and political dynamisms in the division.

Patrice Pahimi's article, "Taxation and the dynamics of cross-border migration between Cameroon, Chad and Nigeria in the colonial and postcolonial period", is an analysis of the practices of northern Cameroon societies facing taxation imposed by the colonial and postcolonial government and its relationship with the Cameroonian population's mobility through Chad and Nigeria. The paper aims to show how the porous nature of the Chad-Cameroon and Nigeria-Cameroon borders, added to the transnational community phenomenon, represents challenges in terms of the control of human flows. Throughout the article, with consistent evidence based on colonial and, to a lesser extent, postcolonial archives Pahimi argues that migration and tax evasion are closely related to ethnic and cultural patterns and the search for social and economic security.

The article "Does Botswana create a new Gaza Strip? The analysis of the 'fence discourse'" (Dominik Kopiński and Andrzej Polus) is an analysis of the 2003 Botswana government plan to build an electric fence, a physical border between Botswana and Zimbabwe. Official discourse based this intention on the control of foot-and-mouth disease among livestock. However, as it coincided with growing tensions

between Botswana and Zimbabwe and increased (illegal) migration from Zimbabwe to Botswana, the fence acquired many parallel meanings. During the description of the evolution of this border and migration associated with it, the authors discuss five dimensions of "fence stories", namely – environmental, phytosanitary, international and political and economic and social.

Aboubakr Tandia's article, "Beyond the 'Genius of Suffering': the paradox of an alienated border regime: refugee integration and social transformation in cross-border Dagana (Senegal-Mauritania)" is a discussion of the nature and role of border regimes from the perspective of refugee regimes and integration. It looks at refugees as part of a border people whose agency informs the close relationship between border and refugee regimes. It analyses the transformative potential and achievements of refugee practices in local integration and their effects on borders and refugee regimes. Focusing on the experience of a refugee community based in the cross-border zone of Dagana between Senegal and Mauritania, it contends that refugees are agentless even in the context of a rigid boundary regime. On the contrary, as authentic and legitimate actors of local integration, refugees participate in the transformation of host communities and the border regions they live in.

The article "Territory and border crossing for livelihoods among (voluntary and forced) migrants from DRC to Swaziland: the re-imagining of a borderless spatial system" (Gabriel Tati) stems from the idea that migration across international borders represents an important livelihood strategy. Taking the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as a case study, the paper examines ways in which, through the spatial trajectories of migrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo, different meanings are assigned to bordered territories. It questions the extent to which (voluntary and forced) migrants create a borderless spatial system that circumvents the geographically defined state. The core argument is that the interplay of weak institutional policy apparatus along the inter-state borders makes it easy for migrants to create their own rules for free movement to fit their social aspirations and in this process a meaning to cross-border mobility is socially assigned and values are developed over time across geographical boundaries. The author supports his argument through with life stories of migrants living in Swaziland, which provide clear evidence of the changes affecting socio-spatial strategies.

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BORDERLESS WORLD VS BORDERS AS WALLS: INSIGHTS FROM A BORDERLAND GROUP IN NORTHERN ETHIOPIA

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The border between Eritrea and Ethiopia changed status frequently from the 19th century up to Eritrea's independence (Triulzi, 2006: 7). With the creation of Eritrea as an Italian colony and prior to the incorporation of Ethiopia into the Italian East African Empire the border was defined according to colonial treaties. However, the border waxed and waned over the decades of their political coexistence. Indeed, the border's status shifted from a mere internal-administrative marker to a colonial border, to dissolution, to an inter-state border during the one-decade federation, became an internal border again, went through a phase of contested no-man's-land during the civil war and, finally, acquired the status of an international border between two sovereign states. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities in May 1998 the border had never been delimited or demarcated. For all practical purposes the ethnic groups straddling the border continued their usual daily business regardless of the borderline. For borderland groups Eritrea's independence was of secondary importance in the face of the general sense of security generated by the end of the civil war against the Derg.

In the aftermath of the 1998-2000 interstate war between Eritrea and Ethiopia the porous border was transformed into a wall leading to its closure and the hampering of established movements of people and goods across the border. The ethnic groups straddling the borders particularly affected were those of northern Ethiopia from the Tigray and Afar regions.

This article draws on original empirical research among a partitioned group, the Saho on the Ethiopian side of the border, the ethnic group referred to as the Irob. The article will shed light on the strategies and shifting identities that a borderland group created in order to adapt to the closure of a previously porous border.

The first part of the article characterises the borderland group and the places which fall in traditional Irob territory in relation to the process of state formation in Ethiopia and Eritrea, the state's trajectory and the extension of its institutions to the rural area under focus: the current Irob woreda.[2] The second part assesses the legacy of armed conflicts: the civil war that opposed insurgent movements straddling the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea to the Marxist military regime known as the Derg and

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[2] Woreda is the administrative unit which corresponds to a local district under the new post-1991 federal model in Ethiopia. The administrative units are as follows in descending order: region-zone-woreda-tabia-kushet.

the 1998-2000 inter-state border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia. The article will show that the two armed conflicts left different legacies in the rural area and impacted differently on the local social actors' daily lives. Finally, against the background of the two preceding parts, the article will analyse the borderland group's strategies and the changes in identities since the closure and militarisation of the border between Eritrea and Ethiopia in the aftermath of the 1998-2000 war.

The state's trajectory and the extension of state institutions to a rural area: Irob woreda (district)

The local district presently known as Irob woreda is located in the Tigray Region in the Eastern Zone and its population numbers 31,000, which represents 1.3% of Ethiopia's population. The definition of a local district with the name of the majority ethnic group in this area, the ethnic group referred to as the Irob, corresponds to the political project of state building that the Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) introduced in post-1991 after the overthrow of the Derg.

The capital of the Tigray Regional State of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia is Mekele. Tigray Region is divided into four administrative zones and the capital is the fifth zone. The five zones, which are referred to as Zoba, are as follows: Western, Eastern, North, South and the Capital. Irob woreda is in the Eastern Zone. The Eastern Zone's capital is Adigrat. Currently, the Irob woreda has seven *tabias* and twenty eight *kushets*. The *tabias* are as follows: Alitena, Indalgueda, Agara Lakoma, Ará, Endamosa, Haraza Sabata and Weratle. The old capital of traditional Irob territory, Alitena, was replaced by Dawhan, a newly built capital in the vicinity in 1997. But this was not always the case. Indeed, the recognition of Irob's land within the state's administrative structure was a novelty introduced in the context of the EPRDF's political state building project. In the Imperial Period (Haile Selassie) Ethiopia was divided into 14 provinces and Tigray was a province at that time. Tigray was divided into eight administrative units called *awaraja*. The areas where traditional Irob land is located were under the administration of the Agame *awaraja* with Adigrat as the capital. In the Derg period, Tigray was divided into 11 *awarajas*. Due to the intensity of insurgent movements in Eritrea, Tigray and Ogaden in 1987, the Derg created five autonomous administrative regions: Eritrea, Tigray, Assab, Dire Dawa and Ogaden (Bureau, 1988: 13-16). During this period, due to the rise in insurgent movements in Tigray, their increasing ascendancy and legitimacy was submitted to a tripartite administration: 1) the urban areas along the limited infrastructure of roads that remained under the Derg's control; 2) the villages (*tabias*) and hamlets (*kushets*) that were under the main insurgent movement's control, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), and 3) *terra nullis* (no man's land) which comprised peripheral and remote areas of very difficult access. Many of the localities in the current Irob woreda fell into either category 2 or 3.

The post-1991 federal model marks a significant rupture with the previous political state-building projects and had manifold implications for Irob, as this part of the article will show. The post-1991 transition envisaged the implementation of an ethnic-based federal model. This model was based on the

principle of equality between the diverse groups making up Ethiopia's social structure. The model's aim was to reflect the multi-linguistic, multi-ethnic and multi-confessional character of Ethiopia's state. In order to overcome the centrifugal pull exercised by the periphery over the centre, the federal model was based on the principle of devolution of autonomy to the regions and local districts under the banner of decentralisation.

The ethnic-based federal model aimed to rebuild the state in a way that would reflect the distribution of the various nationalities in Ethiopia. Article 39 of the new Constitution recognised even the right of secession for the nations, nationalities and peoples of Ethiopia. In this context, the nationality concept in the 1994 Constitution involved recognition of the multinational character of the state. In practice, the Constitution recognises each citizen as an Ethiopian (national identity) and as identified with the majority ethnic group in its region, zone or local district – woreda. In this sense, nationalities should be interpreted as sub-nationalities, which are synonymous to ethnic groups. The different administrative units and the internal boundaries between them were redefined and delimited in accordance with the distribution of the different ethnic groups in each region and local administrative unit. However, in Ethiopia's case ethnic distribution is not geographically or homogenously consolidated in each region. The logic underlying the expansion of the state since the 19th century, namely with Emperor Menelik II, was one of subordinating the foci of opposition to the central state through expansion and incorporation of peripheral groups. This logic was reproduced and consolidated by the subsequent regimes. Adding to this logic of expansion, the voluntary and forced processes of migration during the imperial regimes, the Italian occupation (1936-1941) and the Marxist military regime resulted in the geographical scattering of various ethnic groups (Donham and James, 1986; James, *et al*, 2002; Turton, 2006). Finally, the previous political state-building projects were framed around the principle of subordinating all other sources of identity to the national identity and Amharic took precedence over all other languages as the lingua franca of the Ethiopian state.

The Irob and their traditional territory remained on the periphery of the state until very recently, as the next section of the article will show. The relationship between Ethiopia and Eritrea's state trajectories and the positioning of this ethnic group vis-à-vis the border between Ethiopia and Eritrea are central for an understanding of the process of extending the state's institutions and representatives to this rural borderland area. But first the next section will introduce the Irob's myth of origins, their sources of identification and the Bukenayto sub-group. This clan is of particular importance as the author gathered most of the data for the present article through participant observation, group and semi-structured interviews among the Irob Bukenayto during fieldwork in November 2010, as mentioned in the introductory section.

The Irob's myth(s) of origin and sources of identity

In the 19th century, an Irob family, the Soubagadis, played a critical role in Tigray's power reconfiguration and in the regional history of political rivalries. Dedjatch Soubagadis (1816-1830) managed to gain ascendancy over other potential candidates through his warrior's skills and political astuteness. For the Irob, as a minority group in Tigray, this marked a moment of political ascendancy in a region dominated by the majority ethnic group, the Tigrayans.

The sources and contemporary oral narratives differ in terms of the origins of the Irob. The Irob do not identify themselves with the other seven Saho clans that converted to Islam. One line defends that they are the descendants of Greeks who arrived at the current Eritrean port of Adulis, hence their name Irob which in local pronunciation sounds like "Europe". Another line of oral tradition links them to the word Rome. The last one links Irob to the word in Saho which means "return to origins". Perhaps it is no coincidence that the myth of origins links Irob to Europe, as one of its lineages (Irob Bukenayto) converted to Catholicism after the foundation of a Lazarist mission by French priests in the traditional capital of their homeland, Alitena, circa 1846. The other two lineages, Irob Adgade and Irob Hasaballa, remain loyal to the Christian Orthodox tradition of the Ethiopian state, while part of Irob Hasaballa converted to Islam (AAVV, 2007: 187).[3]

The regional political ascendancy of an Irob families' representative, as mentioned before, marked the affirmation of members of this group as social actors in Tigray's political space. Soubagadis's father had the merit of bringing together supporters from the three Irob families - Bukenayto, Hasaballa and Adgade (Coulbeaux, 1929: 381). The division in three families of this sub-group of the Saho follows the principle of descent from one of the three brothers and leaders of these clans.

In terms of social organisation and of the traditional political lineage units the three families are referred to as *Are*, which literally means house or place of residence according to the tradition of descent from one of the three lineages' traditional authorities. The leader of each clan is referred to as *Ona* and is elected for life. A council of five elders or of other members of recognised prestige within the group is responsible for the final decision. This position of *Ona* has predominantly remained within certain families and/or sub-clans in a line of continuity. The assemblage of the representatives and other important meetings and ceremonies have traditionally been held in the old capital of Irob, Alitena,[4] in a place called Dalubeta. In Weratle, another place in the Irob traditional territory, the traditional assembly place is located by the clinic under a centuries-old tree and is known as Indharta Daga.

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[3] The only mosque in Irob woreda was built recently in the new capital, Dawhan. Families in Wuratle who identify themselves with Islam and follow the religion live peacefully with those who identify themselves with Catholicism. However, the only public place of religious profession and cult is a Catholic church.

[4] See map 2 to identify Alitena's geographical location in relation to the new woreda capital, Dawhan, the Eastern Zone capital, Adigrat, and the Eritrean town of Senafe.

In terms of socio-economic organisation, in contrast to other Saho sub-groups that tend to remain nomads and devoted to transhumant pastoralist activities, the Irob are sedentary and engage in agriculture and cattle breeding.

Their language Saho is a Cushitic language, as is the case with Somali, Oromifa, Afar and other languages in the Horn of Africa (Lewis, 1998: 176). Indeed, their language is very close to Afar. However, while Afar follows the Latin script, Saho follows the Ge'ez script.

More recently, especially since the international recognition of Eritrea as a sovereign state (formally in 1993) an interesting distinction has emerged according to one local informant: "In Eritrea, Saho refers to people and language. In Ethiopia, Saho means language, not people".[5]

In order to understand another source of identity of this group and the emergence and consolidation of a distinction of the Saho who remained associated with the Ethiopian state, like the Irob (Lewis, 1998: 176), the next section will look into the divergent state trajectories of the Ethiopian and Eritrean states.

The Irob in relation to Ethiopia's and Eritrea's trajectories and to the border

Ethiopia, with the exception of the period of Italian occupation (1936-1941), was not under colonial rule, unlike the majority of the states in Sub-Sahara Africa. Eritrea, on the other hand, embarked upon a divergent trajectory of state formation with the beginning of Italian colonial rule in 1890.

Ethiopia and Eritrea were both part of the Abyssinian Empire thus sharing a common history, among other traits,[6] until Italy colonised Eritrea (1890-1941). However, as Jacquin-Berdal rightly claims (quoting Halliday and Molyneux, 1981) "neither Eritrea nor Ethiopia as presently constituted existed in the pre-colonial period" (Halliday and Molyneux cited in Jacquin-Berdal, 2002: 85). When Ethiopia defeated the invading Italian Army at the historical battle of Adwa (1896) and Italy was forced to shelve its plan to expand further south of the Mereb River (the river between Eritrea and Ethiopia) the two countries followed divergent trajectories. However, the groups north and south of the Mereb, especially the ones based in the Ethiopian region of Tigray, continued to cross the border to inter-marry, visit relatives, attend weddings and funerals, worship, look for job opportunities other than agriculture, trade and search for pasture and water (Abbay, 1997). In short, the creation of the Italian colony did not prevent groups separated by the border (which remained porous as in other ex-colonies in Africa) from continuing their

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[5] Interview with the author, Irob woreda, November 2010.
[6] Although Eritrea's coastal regions have experienced external influences over the centuries, Eritrea's highlands were closely bound to Ethiopia's Tigray. Indeed, the Eritrean Tigrinya are ethnically linked to the Ethiopian Tigrayans. The leaders of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) used to hold the positions of Heads of State. President Isaias Afewerki of Eritrea and late Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia are both Tigrayans. The Eritrean Tigrinya and the Ethiopian Tigrayans speak the same language, Tigrinya, and follow the same religion, Orthodox Christianity, among other features (Jacquin-Berdal, 2002: 82-83). The EPLF and the TPLF are locally referred as *shabya* and *woyane* respectively.

daily lives among their kin across the border. But Italian colonial rule did transform Eritrean society and contributed to the creation of a sense of difference among groups within Eritrea with regard to the southern neighbouring country.

Between 1936 and 1941, when Italy invaded and occupied Ethiopia, although Addis Ababa was the capital of the Italian East African Empire, Eritrea remained the main commercial and economic centre. Indeed, by 1940, 54.8 percent of the industrial firms in the Italian Empire were located in Eritrea, while 30.6 percent were located in the remaining Ethiopian provinces (Shewa, Harar, Amara and Oromo & Sidamo) and the remaining 14.6 percent were located in Somalia's Italian colony. With regard to commercial firms Eritrea's economic prominence within the Italian East African Empire was again undisputable: 56.2 percent of the firms were located in Eritrea, 30 percent in the remaining Ethiopian provinces and 13.8 percent in Somalia.

As a consequence of the opportunities available in the Italian Eritrean colony, for most of the twentieth century peasants from neighbouring Ethiopia, mainly from Tigray, also migrated north (to Eritrea and especially the capital, Asmara) when in need of supplementary income (Young, 1997: 72).

The borderland groups, like the Tigrayans, Kunama, Saho-Irob and Saho-Afar, as was the case in other borderland areas in Africa, were artificially divided by the border introduced with the creation of the Italian colony of Eritrea.

Indeed, as several interviewees mentioned reflecting local interpretations and narratives: "Eritrea did not exist. It was Ethiopia".[7]

With Italy's defeat in World War II, Britain administered the former Italian colony until Eritrea's future was determined (1941-1952). The destiny of Eritrea was fixed by United Nations Resolution 390 A (V) of 1952 which established its status as an autonomous region within the Federation with Ethiopia (1952-1962). However, the progressive deterioration of federal arrangements and Ethiopia's final abrogation of the Federation sparked dissent and contributed to the emergence of the armed struggle. Ethiopia forcefully incorporated Eritrea as its fourteenth governorate or province.

The war for Eritrea's independence lasted until the defeat of the Derg regime by the combined forces of the EPLF and the TPLF in 1991. Eritrea's independence was formally recognised in 1993 in the aftermath of a referendum that enshrined its 30-year fight for self-determination. At this stage Eritrea's independence had no ramifications for the daily lives of borderland groups. Indeed, borderland groups continued their daily business regardless of the border as they had done in different periods, as mentioned in the introductory section.

As several Irob living in remote rural areas closer to markets in Eritrea than in Ethiopia mentioned, "All the people used to go to Senafe, not Ethiopia. Our town before the war was Senafe. We

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[7] Interview with the author, Irob woreda, November 2010.

are farmers. We sent honey (baska), butter (subay), ox (aurr), cows (saga), goats (lahe) and sheep to the market in Senafe. In Senafe we bought clothes, shoes, food and wheat". However, this situation changed dramatically with the outbreak of hostilities between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998. In the aftermath of the 1998-2000 war between Eritrea and Ethiopia the porous border was transformed into a wall leading to its closure and the hampering of established movements of people and goods across the border.

The next section provides an analysis of the legacy of both the civil war and the interstate war (1998-2000) for several Irob living in the borderland area.

The legacy of armed conflicts in a rural borderland area

During the imperial period in Ethiopia, Irob traditional territory remained on the periphery of the state. The mountainous nature of the landscape and its topographical location contributed to its isolation. Indeed, as late as 1969 (still during the imperial regime) Alitena, the old capital of Irob, was inaccessible by road. In this year the first efforts were made to build a road between the border town of Zalambessa and Alitena. This corresponded to a distance of around 35 kilometres or a 5-6 hour journey on foot. Most residents of this area are used to performing and calculating their daily activities in terms of walking distances and hours, and this is still the case in other localities within the Irob woreda. The building of a road was followed by a combined initiative of an international non-governmental organisation (NGO), Caritas-Switzerland, and a local NGO, Action for the Development of Adigrat Diocese (ADDA) to build a dam near the present woreda capital, Dawhan. The project to build Assabol Dam was initiated in the 1970s in the aftermath of the internationally reported famine during the 1973-75 drought. The drought combined with poverty, the political situation and difficulty of access to many areas in Tigray contributed to this large-scale famine. During the Derg period, with the increasing presence of insurgent movements in this area, the Assabol Dam Project was interrupted. The dam was only officially opened on 12 October 2008 (O'Mahoney and Troxler, 2009). The difficulties of building roads and completing this project further confirm the peripheral status of the area.

The first insurgent movement that emerged in Irob traditional territory was named after one of its mountains, Assimba. The movement was created around 1974 (1967 in the Ethiopian calendar)[8] and mobilised support among a number of Ethiopian groups. The movement also mobilised supporters among the Irob, and its leader Tesfay Debressae identified with the Irob. The movement evolved to become the Ethiopia People's Party and its base was in Gamada, another well-known remote location in Irob's traditional territory. Even the TPLF used Irob traditional territory as a rear base and its combatants were based in several remote locations, near Weratle, and on a well-known mountain in Irob traditional territory, Dambakoma. However, during the civil war period, characterised by the armed opposition of insurgent

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[8] The Ethiopian calendar differs from the Gregorian calendar. The differences are as follows. The Ethiopian calendar has a total of 12 months with 30 days and a 13th month, referred to as Pagume, which has only five or six days, in the case of leap years, and is seven to eight years behind the Gregorian calendar.

movements against the Derg regime, due to its peripheral position in a remote borderland area, Irob traditional territory was not the centre stage or the theatre of armed conflict. The insurgent movements took advantage of the area's remoteness and peripheral situation to rest, re-assemble, escape, move freely, organise and prepare their combat operations against the Derg. This context further highlights the isolation of Irob traditional territory from state institutions and agents.

The Derg military socialist regime launched the first plan to teach Saho language in the context of a national campaign that came to be known as *zemacha.* The National Working Campaign (zemacha) was part of the Derg's national policy of promoting literacy. It envisaged the distribution of university students across the country, and particularly in rural areas, in a one-year voluntary scheme to contribute to the "campaign against generalised illiteracy" and to promote teaching in local languages. The first manual written for the teaching of Saho, which was written in the Ge'ez script, dates from this period.[9] But during the Derg period the presence of state institutions or agents was kept to a minimum and their visits to the area remained sporadic. For all purposes this borderland area retained its peripheral status in relation to the state.

The outbreak of hostilities between Eritrea and Ethiopia in 1998 and the armed confrontation between the fighters for the Eritrean Defence Force (EDF) and Ethiopian National Defence Force (ENDF) marked a significant rupture with previous periods. From one day to the next, Irob traditional territory became a theatre of armed conflict and was under effective occupation, and in some areas closer to the border, like Weratle, the EDF remained until the end of hostilities (2000).

Strategies and shifting identities of a borderland group in a post-conflict context (2000-2011)

The leaderships of the two countries negotiated while fighting. What had begun as a minor border dispute in a borderland area, Badme, escalated to a proportion beyond any expectations leading to an estimated 100,000 death toll (Steves, 2003; Triulzi, 2002). Analyses of the causes of the war have led to divergent interpretations, with some placing emphasis on the political dimension and on the falling out between the leaderships of the two countries (Negash and Tronvoll, 2000; Abbink, 1998) and others putting arguing that territory was the central bone of contention (Dias, 2008; Jacquin-Berdal and Plaut, 2005). Indeed, with Eritrea's independence Ethiopia became a landlocked country. The Eritrean port of Assab remained central to all imports and exports to and from Ethiopia.

According to local accounts, when the hostilities began, the Irob residents were taken by surprise and many took up arms in order to hinder the advance of the EDF into traditional Irob territory. For the first time, Irob traditional territory was the theatre of armed conflict. The trenches carved in the mountainous

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[9] The official dictionary was finally released in 2008 in the context of the EPRDF political project of promoting learning in local languages. In the current education system, first grade students learn in Saho. After grade 1 up to grade 8 they learn in Tigrinya, and among other subjects they learn Saho. In grade 9 up to university all the subjects are taught in English.

terrain remain the physical marker of the 36-month border war. At the time of the first Eritrean offensive the EDF had the upper hand. Indeed, continuous and compulsory military service in Eritrea meant that the EPLF/ People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) regime could count on at least 150,000 new conscripts, trained, equipped and ready for deployment, whereas Ethiopia needed to recruit and train new contingents of troops.[10] The final Ethiopian offensive on 12 May 2000 allowed the EPRDF to win an indisputable victory on the battlefield.

During the hostilities, Irob woreda's residents and other groups in the borderland areas sought refuge, regardless of the border. As the intensity of the fighting escalated they started to fear reprisals from the EDF and sought alternative routes back to Ethiopia (Dias, 2008; Abebe, 2004).

As the EDF was forced to withdraw from several locations deep inside Eritrean territory on the celebration of the 7th anniversary of Eritrea's Independence (24th May 2000), the Eritrean government announced its troops had withdrawn from all disputed border areas that were occupied after the 6 May incident in Badme. The ceasefire agreement was signed on 18 June 2000. The Peace Agreement was finally signed in Algiers on 12 December 2000.

In the Algiers Peace Agreement the parties agreed on the creation of a United Nations Mission for Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE) whose mandate was to monitor the implementation of the peace agreement and of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ). The TSZ was a buffer zone along the 1,000 kilometre-border, with a margin of 25 kilometres which remained mostly within Eritrean territory. The parties also agreed to create two independent commissions. The first, the Eritrea - Ethiopia Border Commission (EEBC) had total independence and autonomy to decide on the delimitation of the border on the basis of the colonial treaties of 1900, 1902 and 1908. The Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission had to decide on compensation claims from both sides.

Initially, the good-will line, which was unconditionally accepted by Eritrea, left Irob land inside the TSZ. Ethiopia's failure to provide a map of the borderline with precise coordinates led the UNMEE to include large swathes of territory that had been previously administered by Ethiopia within the Temporary Security Zone. After realising this inaccuracy, Ethiopia complained and urged the UNMEE to redraw the line, placing it further north. UNMEE was later able to provide an operational map that already included Irob land within Ethiopia's territorial jurisdiction. Local actors contested the EEBC decision to recognise Eritrea's jurisdiction over places in Indalgueda which are considered traditional Irob territory. In this respect, the role of a transnational non-state actor, the local representatives of the Catholic Church, played a critical role in mediating between UNMEE, the local state representatives and the local group (Dias, 2010).

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[10] Interview, Addis Ababa, July 2005.

This redrawing of the line according to Ethiopia's later coordinates caused Eritrea to protest and claim that Ethiopia had not withdrawn from "occupied territory". Eventually, this misunderstanding raised Eritrea's suspicions as to the UNMEE's impartiality in dealings with both states. Finally, the TSZ was formally declared in mid-April 2001.

The independent Boundary Commission to decide on the border's delimitation and demarcation (EEBC) was set up on the premise that the final decision on the disputed border areas would be final and binding. The EEBC finally announced its decision on 13 April 2002. After the initial euphoria and claims of outstanding victory by both parties, ambiguities contributed to an exacerbation of suspicion and animosity between them. The key problem was the ambiguity with which the award of Badme was approached. The EEBC only mentioned Badme twice and both parties manipulated this initial ambiguity to claim that the town had been awarded to them. Badme was the place where the incident that triggered the crisis took place. In the end, the contentious situation surrounding Badme took precedence over the extensive areas where agreement could have been reached, which offered promising areas for incremental measures towards a rapprochement between the parties. This initial resistance led both sides to submit their own observations and evidence to contest the EEBC's April 2002 Decision. After examining the cases submitted by the parties, on 21 March 2003 the EEBC announced the final, binding decision to recognise Eritrea's legitimate sovereignty over Badme on the basis of the Colonial Treaty and, especially, of the legal line that had crystallised in 1935, prior to Italy's invasion and forcible occupation of Ethiopia.

Due to the problems between UNMEE and Eritrea's government, the UNMEE civilian and military staff left Eritrea on January 2008 and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1827 of 30 July 2008 formally extinguished the mission. As a result, the Temporary Security Zone ceased to exist and at the time of writing the EDF and ENDF still keep soldiers deployed along the international border. In some places the soldiers are literally face-to-face.

For the Irob, EDF's occupation of the area was resented because of the destruction and looting of property and disrespect for places of religious practices, such as churches. A sense of security was recovered when the Eritrean troops were finally dislodged by the Ethiopian army. However, communities in the central sector still resent the persisting militarisation of the border. The frontier has been transformed into a garrison area and the continuous presence of soldiers in the region was a transformation brought about by the war with significant social implications for the borderland group in this sector.

Movements of goods and people are formally hindered by the closure of the border. As one local interviewee mentioned, "We don't go to Eritrea because the soldiers are there. They are dangerous. If we go there we are enemies". Another one added, "If I go to Eritrea, I am treated as the enemy. They can come here. If we go there we are treated as spies".[11] Movement of people across the border has not been totally curtailed. Many have taken the risky option of crossing the border under the cover of night. Since

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[11] Interview, Irob woreda, November 2010.

2000 the number of Eritreans who have been granted refugee status in Ethiopia has been steadily increasing. Unofficially, the estimates point to a total of 20,000 Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia.

The daily business of Irob citizens living at the borderland has become more difficult as they have to face five to eight hours on foot to go to the market in Adigrat, whereas before the war it would take them between 30 minutes and one hour to get to the Eritrean market of Senafe.

In addition, those who embark on the long journey of irregular migration to Saudi Arabia, Israel or Europe have been forced to attempt much more difficult itineraries and fall prey to criminal networks organised around irregular migrants. Whereas before the closure of the border they would take boats from small Eritrean ports near Adulis, presently they either take the dangerous itinerary across Somaliland and Puntland (Somalia) to reach the port of Bosasso, or they go via Sudan and attempt to reach Europe or take the dangerous journey through the Sinai Desert to reach Israel.

The development of the region remains a hostage of the "no peace, no war" situation. Although the border war contributed to the extension of the state's institutions and agents to the borderland, continuous militarisation of the border and its closure has led to continuous isolation of several locations within the Irob woreda near the border.

At the beginning of the war and in its immediate aftermath many would claim that they and the Eritreans were the same people, even repeating their astonishment with statements such as: "How can we fight our brothers? We are the same people".[12] The notion of Eritreans as foreign citizens is now more ingrained and mentioned frequently. The whereabouts of almost 100 Irob citizens remain unknown as they were forcefully taken to Eritrea when the EDF withdrew from Irob traditional territory.[13]

Conclusion

The process of state formation and of extending the state's institutions to a peripheral area was accelerated and consolidated by the armed conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia (1998-2000).However, the absence of normalisation of relations between the ruling parties in Asmara (Eritrea) and Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) compromises the region's development and the borderland group's daily activities.

The borderland group is a hostage of the contested status of the international border and of the failure to normalise relations between the two governments. From a porous border, the post-conflict situation changed it into an invisible wall.

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[12] Interview, Irob woreda July 2005.
[13] Interview, Irob woreda November 2010.

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ANNEX: Illustrations

Map 1: Tigray Region (capital: Mekele), Eastern Zone (capital: Adigrat) and Local District (Irob woreda, capital : Dawhan).
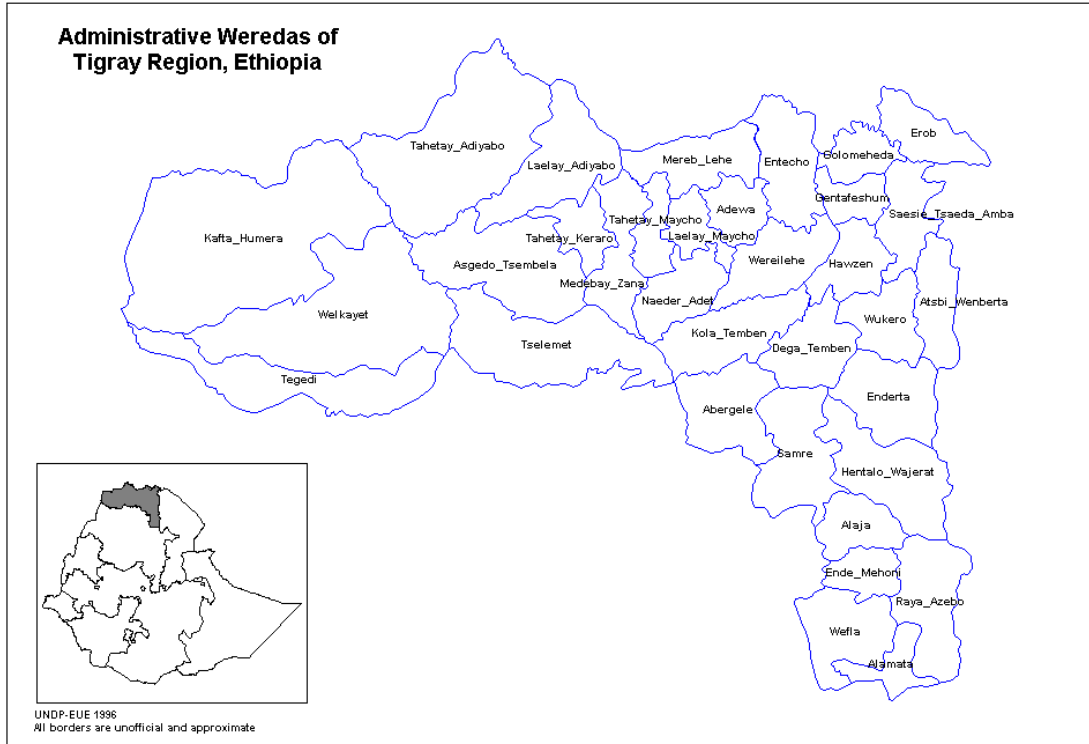
Source: http://www.africa.upenn.edu/eue_web/r1_d.gif

Map 2: Areas of contested sovereignty according to the EEBC decision.

Source:http://news.bbc.co.uk

PROFILING ETHIOPIAN MIGRATION:
A COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHIOPIAN MIGRANTS TO AFRICA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE NORTH

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ABSTRACT This paper provides an overview of the different characteristics of migrants from Ethiopia to three different migration destinations: (1) northern countries, (2) other African countries, and (3) the Middle East. The paper is based on a recent household survey of 1,286 migrant, non-migrant and return migrant households in Ethiopia. First, the results show that the characteristics of the migrants and their origin households differ depending on migration destination. Secondly, the increased migration flows to Africa and the Middle East in recent decades have played an important role in reshaping the profile of Ethiopian migrants. Furthermore, the results show that current Ethiopian migration flows coincide with some of the current global migration trends but at the same time contrast some of the overall migration figures representing Africa.

Introduction

Migration dynamics are continually evolving to meet changes in the global environment. New migration flows develop in response to economic, social and political structures in host and sending countries, often referred to as the push and pull factors of migration. The current environment in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) has led to increasing migration movements from countries in the region in recent decades as people are pulled towards other countries and regions in search of better opportunities. Africa is a region that has strong migration dynamics stemming from a mix of conflicts, income inequality and poverty, and environmental factors such as droughts (IOM, 2010b). A large portion of the migratory movements in SSA can be characterized as internal African migration between countries. Limited data is available, however, on migration dynamics in and from SSA, particularly to other regions of the south. According to the World Migration Report published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), there were an estimated 19 million international migrants in Africa in 2010, an increase of 1.5 million international migrants from 2005 (IOM, 2010b). It is estimated that Africa accommodates nine percent of global immigrants, although this is considered to be an underestimate due to the lack of data in the region (IOM, 2010b). SSA is an extremely large and diverse continent, and flows differ within each region and each country.

The objectives of this paper are threefold: the first is to provide a further understanding of emigration flows from Ethiopia. The second is to understand the profiles of emigrants from Ethiopia and how emigrants differ in different destination countries. Finally, the third is to situate Ethiopian emigration within the broader picture of global migration trends. This paper achieves this by providing an overview of the different characteristics of migrants from Ethiopia to the following three migration destinations: (1) northern countries – meaning North America, Europe, and Australia, (2) other African countries and (3) the Middle-East. The results show that the characteristics of the migrants and their origin households differ depending on the migration destination, and the increased migration flows to Africa and the Middle-East in recent decades have played an important role in reshaping the profile of Ethiopian migrants.

This paper is based on the *IS Academy: A World in Motion* Ethiopia data collection.[14] An in-depth household survey was conducted of 1,286 households across five different regions in Ethiopia from March to May 2011. Surveys were made of households that currently had a member living abroad, households that had a member who had lived abroad and returned and households that had no experience of international migration. The focus of this paper is on the households that currently had a member living abroad, and more specifically on the information the household provided on the member living abroad, that is the *migrant*. It is important to stress that the migrants themselves were not interviewed. A migrant was defined in this study as any member of the household who had been living in another country for a minimum of three consecutive months. This definition was chosen so as to include seasonal migration, which occurs annually for a shorter period, usually three to eight months.

The surveys were conducted in five regions of Ethiopia: Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR), Tigray, and Addis Ababa, which together account for 96% of the population. In each region, three different *woredas* (districts) were selected for sampling, totalling 15 data collection sites. The sampling strategy was based on a two-stage approach. First a listing was made at each site to identify households as migrant, return migrant or non-migrant households. Based on this identification, households were randomly selected for enumeration in each site with an equal proportion of migrant or return migrant households to non-migrant households. The data is not nationally representative and cannot be generalized to represent all Ethiopian migration. The analysis seeks to compare the differences between the different migrant groups surveyed based on their region of destination.

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[14] The *IS Academy: A World in Motion* Project is a five year study funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Migration and Development in Afghanistan, Burundi, Ethiopia, and the Netherlands.

Figure 1: Location of field sites
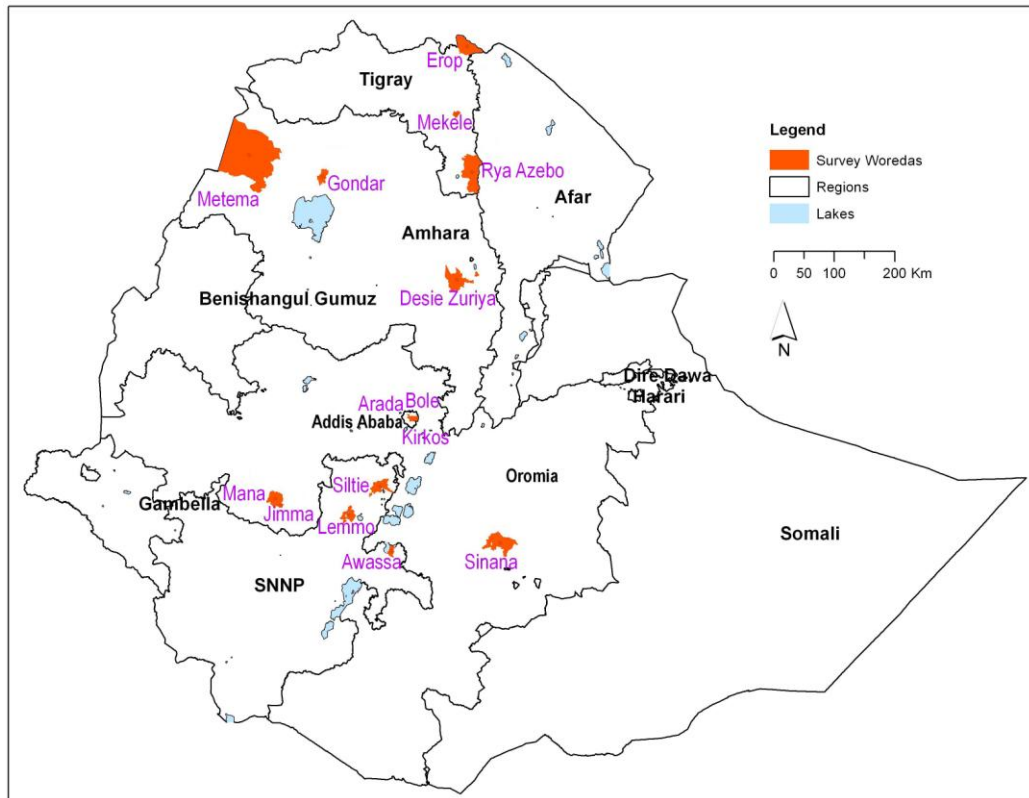
Source: *IS Academy: A World in Motion.*

The first section of the paper provides an overview of current trends in international migration with a focus on how these trends are manifesting in Africa. The second section gives a brief introduction to migration patterns from Ethiopia. The third section presents the results of the survey with a focus on the migrants' demographic characteristics, their household's characteristic, and their migration experiences. The fourth section discusses how the Ethiopian case fits within current international migration flows, while the final section provides a conclusion.

Global migration routes and trends: a focus on sub-saharan Africa

This section examines four current trends in migration studies. The first trend is an increase in migration flows and the changing direction of migrant flows. Following on from this, the second is an increase in specifically south-south migration flows. The feminization of migration is highlighted as the third trend and the final trend is the barriers to migration for the low skilled.

Castles and Miller (2009) have labelled the current era the "age of migration", arguing that there is both an unprecedented volume of international migration and a global reach of international migration that is affecting more countries than ever before. De Haas (2005) argues that the number of people migrating internationally has not increased (the percentage of the population that are international

migrants has stayed relatively stable at around three percent), but the direction of flows has changed, with the post-WWII era seeing previously unprecedented south-north migration movements. South-north migration flows from Africa have also changed in recent decades. Previously, the largest flows from Africa to Europe were from North African countries, but since the 1990s and the impositions of increasing migration restrictions in Europe these flows have changed (De Haas, 2008). Since 2000, the largest flows of irregular migration from Africa to Europe are by Sub-Saharan Africans, not North Africans (De Haas, 2008).

Recent data from the World Bank also suggests that the current decades are seeing rising flows of south-south migration with the south accounting for 47 percent of all migration from the south (Ratha and Shaw, 2007: 5). Bakewell, however, highlights that there are conceptual issues within defining south-south migration. In order to define south-south migration, one must define what "the south" is. Saudi Arabia poses a challenge in this classification, as the World Bank's definition of developing countries based on income places Saudi Arabia in the north whereas, if defined as per the UNDP Human Development Index, Saudi Arabia belongs to the global south (Bakewell, 2009: 4). This is problematic in defining south-south migration as Saudi Arabia and the rest of the Middle East attract large flows of labour migrants. Thus the three categories of north, Middle East, and south will be used in this paper in an effort to avoid these classification challenges. South-south migration will be used in this paper to refer to migration within Africa. Migration to the Middle East will include the Arab countries of Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Lebanon, and Syria and migration to the north will include North America, Europe, and Australia.

A debate currently exists in the literature as to if and how the drivers of south-south and south-north migration differ. Ratha and Shaw (2007) suggest that income differentials, proximity and networks drive south-south migration. Bakewell (2009) argues that south-south migration, like south-north migration, can be driven and shaped by a number of factors including livelihoods, political conditions, social factors including education and marriage, and environmental factors including drought and famines. From a general perspective, De Haas (2005) argues that the key driver of migration is relative deprivation, and typically those from the poorest countries do not migrate, as they also do not have the resources to do so. Adepoju (2008) suggests that spiralling population growth in SSA has increased the impetus of people to move in recent decades and that families invest in funding the migration of one member as a livelihood strategy with the expectation of remittances. Overall, questions remain as to if and how south-south migration can or should be compared to south-north migration and whether the drivers of these different migration streams are different.

In addition to an increase in south-south migration flows, recent decades have seen a feminization of migration (Castles and Miller, 2009). The term feminization of migration reflects the fact that: 1) today women make up nearly half of all international migrants – 49 percent in 2010 (IOM, 2010a)

– and 2) their reasons for migration have changed over time. Data from the United Nations shows that there has been a three percent increase in female migration from 46.7 percent in 1960 to 49.6 percent in 2005 (United Nations, 2006). In Africa, women are cited to account for 46.8 percent of migrants in 2010, a slight increase from 46.2 percent in 1990 (Giovannelli, 2009). The second factor in the feminization of migration is the changing roles of females in international migration flows. Formerly, females were viewed as "passive reactors to males" migration decisions' and as migrating solely for family reasons or family reunification (Cerrutti and Massey, 2001: 187). It is now recognized that females migrate increasingly as labour migrants and can be active decision makers in the process. The last decades have also led to female-specific forms of migration which include the commercialization of domestic workers, trafficking of women in the sex industry and the organization of women for marriage (Carling, 2005). In addition, certain countries have developed strong gendered migration trends. In Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines women comprise 62-75% of migrant workers, whereas women account for only 45% of migrant workers in Asia overall (Piper, 2008).

The final trend that is discussed in this paper is the increasing barriers to migration to the north for the low skilled. The majority of migrants from Africa are low skilled, which creates increasing challenges for migration, as "barriers to mobility are especially high for people with low skills, despite the demand for labour in many rich countries" (UNDP, 2009: 2). The north has generally cut itself off to low-skilled workers (IOM, 2010b), with the exception of allowing some migrants to come as temporary workers in certain agricultural, construction or care worker programmes, but these are generally not migrants from SSA. Northern countries generally work to ensure that low skilled jobs and migrants are temporary, as low-skilled workers are not viewed as desirable and are often recruited to fill jobs that locals are unwilling to do (Martin, Abella and Kuptsch, 2006).

This section has sought to highlight some of the key trends currently occurring in international migration with a focus on how these trends are manifesting in Africa. It is evident that there is a general increase in migration from African countries and that a large portion of the migration is to other African countries. Secondly, female migration from Africa is increasing, although female migrants from Africa are less numerous than the international average. Thirdly, low skilled migrants, which predominate in SSA, experience more barriers to entry and are generally only employed in temporary positions in countries of destination (IOM, 2010b; Adepoju, 2010). These trends are in no way representative of all current dynamics in international migration, but highlight some of the key developments in the field and will be returned to later in the paper. The next section provides an introduction to migration from Ethiopia.

Overview of Ethiopian migration patterns

Ethiopia is one of the largest and poorest countries in SSA. Although Ethiopia, in comparison to other SSA countries, has a low emigration rate estimated at 0.7 percent (World Bank, 2011), due to its

sheer population size of approximately 80 million people, in absolute numbers it has a large diaspora community. The exact size of the diaspora is unknown, but is estimated to be one to two million people with large populations in the Middle East, North America and Europe. In comparison to other SSA countries, Ethiopians are the second largest group in the United States (after Nigerians) and the fifteenth largest in Europe (AFTCD-AFTQK, 2007).

Emigration movements from Ethiopia have been concentrated in the last thirty years and can be characterized in four waves (Tasse, 2004 in Lyons, 2007). The first wave was pre-1974 with the emigration and return of Ethiopian elite, who primarily went abroad for education and then returned. In 1974, the military Dergue regime took over from the monarchy imposing a state of fear. Refugees fleeing the Dergue regime characterized the second wave from 1974-82. The third wave was primarily migration for family reunification from 1982-1991 as families previously left behind joined those who had initially fled the regime. In 1991, the Dergue regime was defeated and in 1994 Ethiopia held its first democratic elections. The primary migration flow in the 1990s was the repatriation and return to Ethiopia of refugees from neighbouring countries. The final wave of Ethiopian emigration can be characterized by the post-1991 flows that continue today.

There is limited availability of data on current migration stocks and flows from Ethiopia. The majority of data currently available is at the macro level. The World Bank cites the 2010 stock of Ethiopian emigrants to be at 620,000 and the stock of emigrants as a percentage of the population to be 0.7 percent (2011). Further, the World Bank cites the top destination countries as: Sudan, the United States, Israel, Djibouti, Kenya, Saudi Arabia, Canada, Germany, Italy and Sweden (2011). At the micro level, in a recent survey of 2,042 individuals, the World Bank found that 39% of the respondents currently had family members or relatives living in another country (2010).

According to the Ethiopian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, it issued 21,256 employment contracts for Ethiopians to work in the Middle East from July 2008 to July 2009 (MOLSA, 2010). Eighty-two percent of these work permits were for females. The primary countries the work permits were issued for were Saudi Arabia (61.9 percent), Kuwait (33.16 percent), and Bahrain (3.22 percent). In an attempt to regularize irregular migration flows to the Middle East, employment agencies involved in migration between Ethiopia and the Middle East officially require a licence issued by MOLSA to provide employment contracts. The majority of migration to the Middle East continues to be irregular, however. According to a forthcoming study commissioned by the UNDP, it is estimated that up to half a million females migrate from Ethiopia to the Middle East each year.[15] A large industry of informal labour brokers has been established in Ethiopia with both legal and illegal agencies offering to place women in domestic work in the Middle East (ILO, 2011).

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[15] *Forthcoming: UNDP (2011) The Push and Pull Factors of Migration of Women in the Middle East.*

The two primary destinations for regional migration from Ethiopia to other African countries are Sudan and South Africa. Circular migration from Ethiopia to Sudan has existed for the past few decades, and females have recently begun to migrate to Sudan in search of domestic work. In a study of irregular migration from the Horn of Africa to South Africa, Horwood estimates that 11,000 to 13,000 Ethiopian men entered South Africa in 2008. The Ethiopian Embassy in South Africa estimates that there are currently 45,000 to 50,000 Ethiopians residing in South Africa (Horwood, 2009: 32).

The current data on emigration from Ethiopia illustrates a shift from refugee driven migration in the 1980s to different forms of labour migration from Ethiopia in the last decade. The data also indicates an increasing prevalence of south-south migration and feminization of migration in Ethiopia. These themes will be explored further in the results section.

Results from the IS Academy Survey

There are a total of 531 current migrants in the IS Academy sample. When examining the destination choice of all migrants in the sample it is apparent that the most popular destination country is Saudi Arabia, followed by the United States. Almost 24 percent of the migrants reside in Saudi Arabia, while a little over 20 percent live in the United States. Other popular destinations include the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and the neighbouring country of Sudan, which have attracted approximately 11 percent of the sample respectively.

Table 1 illustrates the migrants' destination regions. An examination of how migrants are distributed across different regions reveals that the Middle East is the most common migration destination among migrants, at 44 percent. Almost 30 percent of migrants are located in Europe, North America or Australia (here defined as the north), while approximately 21 percent of the sample have migrated to other African countries.

Table 1: Destination regions, frequency and percent

Destination regions			
Region	Frequency	%	>60 months** (%)
North*	162	30.3	61.3
Africa	105	19.7	4.4
Middle East	251	47.0	30.0
Total	534	97.0***	95.7***

* North includes USA, Canada, Australia, and all European countries except Russia
** refers to migrants who have been abroad more than 60 months
*** All countries but Russia and Israel are classified into the three regions and constitute 97% and 95.7% of the sample respectively

The results are presented in the following three sections that compare and contrast the characteristics of migrants to the north, African countries and the Middle East. The first section examines

the demographics and background of the migrants themselves. The second discusses the migrants' household characteristics. The third describes the differences between the migration experiences of the three migrant groups.

Demographics and background of Ethiopian migrants

Table 2 provides an overview of the migrants' characteristics. It is noteworthy that over 60 percent of all migrants are female, which illustrates feminization of the migration flows from Ethiopia. Migrants in the Middle East are 68 percent female, which coincides with recent feelings in Ethiopia that emigration is dominated by female migration to the Middle East. It is worth mentioning that females also dominate migration within Africa at 53 percent, which appears contrary to the common perception in Ethiopia that migration to African countries is male-dominated. When we examine this further by country of migration in Africa, however, it is evident that the majority of migrants to South Africa are male, at 82 percent, and the majority of migrants to Sudan are female, at 75 percent. These findings are in line with the figures reported by the IOM and current feelings in Ethiopia.

Table 2: Characteristics of migrants, whole sample and by destination region

Variable	Overall sample	North	Africa	Middle East
Age	30.42	36.71	26.2	28.14
Male	39.70	43.21	46.67	32.00
Passport	80.30	96.27	64.76	77.60
Years of Education	9.88	13.12	8.80	8.06
Absent (months)	64.69	108.91	27.76	50.49
Parent of child in hh	13.86	11.72	6.67	18.40
Single	60.00	59.74	80.95	65.60
Relationship to household head				
Child	78.28	76.54	87.62	74.80
Head	4.49	4.94	0.95	6.00
Spouse	4.31	2.47	1.90	6.80
Brother/Sister	7.12	8.02	7.62	6.00
Occupation in Country of Migration (most common categories)				
In paid work	75.28	64.20	76.19	84.80
Self employed, business	5.06	9.26	7.62	0.80
Doing housework	5.24	8.02	0.95	5.20
In education	3.93	8.64	6.67	0.80
Unemployed, looking for job	2.25	8.02	0.95	1.20

Source: Authors own calculations

In general, the migrants are fairly young and primarily children of heads of households. The migrants' educational background also varies by destination. As expected the most educated migrants are found in northern countries. The average duration of education of a migrant in northern countries is 13 years, while migrants in the Middle East are the least educated of the three groups with on average of eight years. There are a total of 44 migrants in the sample who completed tertiary education (bachelor's degree or higher) and would thus be classified as highly skilled. Of these 44 migrants, 37 (84 percent) are in the north.

Finally, being employed in paid work is the most common occupation across all three migration regions. About 75 percent of the migrants are employed in their destination country. Of the migrants in the Middle East 85 percent are in paid work and very few run their own business, while migrants in northern countries run their own business or study in the country of destination to a larger extent. About 64 percent of the migrants in the northern countries are employed, around nine percent run their own business and almost nine percent are in education.

Migrant households' characteristics

This section provides an overview and context of the households from which migrants are emigrating. Characteristics of the overall household and household head are detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Household characteristics

Variable	Overall sample	North	Africa	Middle East
Household Size	6.42	6.09	6.82	6.52
Urban	47.75	76.54	23.81	39.60
Occupation of household head				
In paid work	11.79	10.76	5.83	14.92
Self-employed: business	10.27	10.76	4.85	11.69
Agricultural/herding	30.42	3.80	62.14	35.08
Unemployed, actively looking	0.38	0.63		0.40
Unemployed not looking	0.95	-		1.61
Sick/disabled	1.52	-	1.94	2.42
Retired	19.01	38.61	9.71	10.48
Community/military service	0.38		0.97	0.40
Housework	23.57	33.54	14.56	20.97
Family worker/helper	0.57	1.90		
Main respondents perspective on household's subjective wealth				
Finding it very difficult	9.49	6.29	9.49	10.12
Finding it difficult	16.51	8.18	16.51	21.05
Coping (neutral)	40.23	38.36	40.23	41.30

Living comfortably	28.46	40.25	28.46	21.05
Living very comfortably	5.31	6.92	5.31	6.48
Average frequency of receiving food aid in the past 12 months	13.29	5.03	19.23	15.42

Migrants to the north are more likely to be from urban areas at 77 percent, while migrants to African countries are more likely to be from rural areas. Only 24 percent of the households with a migrant in the south live in urban areas. This coincides with migrants to the north being more educated and seemingly from a better-off background.

The household head's education differs slightly from his or her occupation, however, especially when comparing the Middle East and African migrant groups. Unsurprisingly, the household heads of migrants to the north are the least likely to be involved in agriculture (3.8 percent), and are primarily retired (38.6 percent) or do housework (33.5 percent). The household head of migrants to African countries are the most likely to be involved in agriculture (62 percent), whereas only 35 percent of household heads of migrants to the Middle East are involved in agriculture. Heads of household of migrants in the Middle East are most likely to be involved in doing housework (21 percent) or paid work (15 percent), or to be self-employed (12 percent).

The main respondents in the survey were asked to describe their household's current economic situation. Nearly half of the households with a migrant in the north responded that their household was living comfortably or very comfortably (47 percent), compared to 34 percent of households with a migrant in an African country and 28 percent with migrants in a Middle Eastern country. Households with a migrant in the Middle East were most likely to report that they were finding it difficult or very difficult to cope, at 31 percent, compared to 26 percent of households with a migrant in an African country and 14 percent of households with a migrant in the north.

Migrants' migration experiences

This section provides an overview of the migration process experienced by the migrants. Table 4 shows descriptive statistics of the variables summarizing migration experiences.

Table 4: Migrants migration experiences

	Overall sample	North	Africa	Middle East
Reason for migration (most Important)				
Employment	74.13	35.03	94.12	92.53
Family reunion	3.86	10.83	0.98	0.41
Security/political	3.86	8.92	-	1.66
Education	5.41	15.29	0.98	0.83
Reason for destination choice (most Important)				
Easy country to access/gain entry	11.41	4.46	32.67	7.47
Could find employment	19.92	6.37	22.77	25.73
Working conditions are better	22.05	15.29	14.85	31.12
Payment is better	14.70	4.46	13.86	22.82
Living conditions are better	5.80	17.20	-	1.24
Family/friends there	13.73	26.11	8.91	7.05
Study	3.68	9.55	0.99	0.83
Involved in decision to migrate (most important)				
Only migrant	43.24	38.85	45.10	43.57
Friends	6.76	5.10	12.75	5.81
Father	14.48	13.38	11.76	16.18
Mother	10.81	8.92	12.75	12.03
Spouse	6.95	10.19	4.90	5.91*
Sibling	8.88	8.92	8.82	9.13
Child	1.93	6.37	-	-
Means of financing migration				
Savings	12.74	8.28	20.59	12.45
Informal loans from family/friends	26.45	14.65	15.69	38.59
Gift from family/friends	38.42	51.59	38.24	31.95
Sold assets	3.86	0.64	5.88	5.39
Migrate alone	66.28	67.09	60.78	68.46
Transit experience	17.12	23.46	17.14	10.76
Documents				
Work visa	47.98	32.28	40.20	64.32
Tourist visa	5.78	11.39	1.96	4.15
Student visa	3.47	10.13	0.98	-
Refugee status	3.85	10.13	-	0.83
No documents	26.78	13.92	47.06	25.31

Source: Authors own calculations.

As expected, the primary motivation for migration is employment opportunities in all three migrant destinations. This is, however, far more pronounced for African and Middle East migrants at 94 percent and 93 percent respectively, as compared to migrants to the north at 35 percent. Migrants to the north are more likely to migrate for education (15 percent), family reunification (11 percent) or as refugees for security and political reasons (nine percent).

In addition to the reason for migration, the questionnaire asked the reason for choosing the destination country. There is more variation here amongst the migration destination groups. The reason for choosing a northern country was primarily due to network effects of having family or friends in the country of destination (26 percent). Network effects were a more unlikely reason for destination choice among the Africa (nine percent) and Middle East group (seven percent). The second most common reason for destination country choice for migrants to the north was that the living conditions were better there (15 percent), which was a negligible response for migrants in the Africa and Middle East Group.

The most common response for destination choice among migrants to African countries was "easy to gain entry" (33 percent), which was most likely predicated on geographic closeness to Ethiopia and the fact that only 65 percent of migrants to an African country had a passport. The most common response for destination choice for the Middle East group was that working conditions were better (31 percent). Here it is essential to remember that the migrants did not answer these questions themselves and responses might have been different if the migrant had been the respondent, as the authors' research findings demonstrate that working conditions in the Middle East are quite poor.[16]

Across all three destination groups, the majority of migrants migrated alone and most frequently they were the only person involved in their decision to migrate. Particularly for female migrants this illustrates their autonomy and role as active decision makers in the migration process, as opposed to passive reactors to a male's decision-making.

Finally, people generally have to acquire documents in order to migrate. Most frequently migrants to all destinations acquired a work visa (48 percent), which was the most common for migrants to the Middle East (64 percent). Migrants to the north also acquired tourist visas (11 percent), student visas (10 percent) or refugee status (10 percent). Migrants to African countries most commonly did not acquire any documents (47 percent), which was also a frequent option in migration to the Middle East (25 percent), and slightly less frequent for migration to the north (14 percent). Ten percent of migrants to the Middle East and eight percent of migrants to African countries migrated with a broker or smuggler. This suggests that these low skilled migrants migrate illegally and seek to avoid barriers to entry for the low skilled. Smugglers and brokers were not mentioned in the northern migration routes, which have a higher percentage of highly skilled migrants, as discussed previously.

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[16] Based on interviews conducted by Kuschminder with 45 female return migrants from the Middle East.

Profiling Ethiopian migrants and situating Ethiopia within global migration trends

This paper seeks to provide an overview of the different characteristics of migrants from Ethiopia to the three destination groups, the north, Africa and the Middle East. Based on the results, a profile of the characteristics of migrants to the different regions and their households begins to emerge.

Ethiopian migrants to the north are more educated, from more educated households in urban areas, and are more likely to be married (although the majority are still single). They are most likely to have a passport and migrate for a variety of reasons including employment, family reunification, as UNHCR sponsored refugees and for education. Migrants to the north are the most likely to have a network in the country of migration, which influences their destination choice. They are also more likely to make their decision to migrate in consultation with their family, and their migrations are primarily funded by gifts from family or friends. Finally, they are absent from the household for the longest average duration and are the least likely to be employed in the country of migration.

Migrants from Ethiopia in African countries present a different picture from migrants to the north. Ethiopian migrants using these south-south migration channels are primarily from rural areas where the household is involved in agricultural or herding for their livelihoods and are the most frequent recipients of food aid. These migrants and their head of household have low levels of education. Ethiopians migrating within Africa frequently do not have a passport or any formal entry documents. Nearly all south-south migrants migrate for employment and they generally migrate to countries that are easy to access and where they can find a job. This group is the most likely to migrate with friends as a part of a group. Finally, the majority have paid employment in the country of migration, though they are most likely to migrate for the shortest period.

In the final group, Ethiopian migrants to the Middle East are predominately young and female, from a mixture of rural and urban areas with low levels of education of the migrant and household head. The household heads are in a variety of occupations including agriculture, paid work, housework, self-employment or retired. These households are the most likely to report that they are finding it difficult to cope, however. The primary motivation for migration is employment and the vast majority are employed in paid work in the country of migration. They chose the destination choice country based on working conditions, payment and finding employment. In order to finance their migration, they most frequently take informal loans from family or friends. Ethiopia migrants in the Middle East tend to migrate alone (although some migrate with a broker or smuggler), and have been abroad for an average of four years.

These regional migration profiles can also be compared to the trends in international migration discussed at the beginning of the paper. First, it is evident that migration from Ethiopia is increasing in volume, as the majority of migrants to the Middle East and Africa are recent migrants, whereas the majority of migrants to the north have been there much longer. The primary destination, however, is not other African countries, but the Middle East. The strongest corridor of migration from Ethiopia reflected in

this data is clearly to the Middle East, which should not be considered south-south migration due to the vast differences in wealth between these countries.

Returning to the debate at beginning of the paper as to whether the drivers of north-south and south-south migration are different, this analysis suggests that the north-south and south-south/south-Middle East migration flows do have different drivers in the Ethiopian context. The drivers of Ethiopian migration to Africa and the Middle East are clearly economically motivated as the migrants seek employment opportunities abroad. In comparison, however, the drivers of migration to the north are multiple (including family reunification, security reasons and education opportunities) and are not solely motivated by employment. This supports the argument that different migration flows have different drivers and suggests the need for further comparative data between drivers of different migration streams.

The feminization of migration is also highly evident in Ethiopia, as sixty percent of total migrants are female. Migration to the Middle East is most significantly a female phenomenon and is motivated by gender-specific domestic work opportunities in the Middle East. The results also indicate that females are active decision makers exercising their agency in the process, as 43 percent make the decision to migrate without consulting anyone else, as opposed to historical migration trends in which women were classified as passive reactors to migration processes. The feminization of the Middle Eastern migration flow from Ethiopia is comparable to countries in Asia such as the Philippines, Indonesia or Sri Lanka, where migration is primarily female-dominated for domestic work.

The final trend of barriers to movement of the low skilled is also reflected in the data. Firstly, migrants to the north are higher educated and from better-off families. This reflects both a global preference for skilled migration and the higher costs of migrating to the north. Secondly, the reasons for migration to the north are much more diverse, reflecting a variety of legal migration channels, than the reasons for migrating to Africa and the Middle East. Thirdly, the majority of migrants to the north have passports and proper documentation, whereas one third of migrants to African countries do not have a passport and nearly half do not have any official entry documents. This illustrates the impact of barriers to movement imposed by states and how differences in entry requirements and border management affect migration flows.

Conclusion

This paper has presented an in-depth overview of the characteristics of migrants from Ethiopia, with a comparison of three different flows of migrants to the north, Africa and the Middle East based on the *IS Academy Survey*. This picture has been further elaborated into profiles of the different migration streams that can be compared and contrasted. These profiles elicit the different ways that the different migration streams appear in global migration trends and contrast these trends as they are represented in Africa.

The comparison highlights that migration from Ethiopia contrasts with some of the overall migration figures for Africa. First, the most prevalent migration stream is to the Middle East, which thus contrasts with the overall figure that 47 percent of migration from Africa is to other African countries, as migration to other African countries is the smallest flow from Ethiopia (21 percent). Secondly, the UN DESA states that 46.8 percent of migrants from Africa are female, whereas in Ethiopia 60 percent of migrants are female.

In conclusion, this analysis suggests that the current migration streams from Ethiopia are unique within the African context. It also illustrates that caution must be exercised when drawing conclusions across the African context, as each country and region is unique. Further research is required to understand the different streams within particular countries and how these countries factor into the wider picture of global international migration flows and trends.

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IDENTITY STRATEGIES, CULTURAL PRACTICES AND CITIZENSHIP RECOVERY: MAURITANIAN REFUGEES IN THE SENEGAL VALLEY

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ABSTRACT
In 1989 a conflict arose on the Senegal-Mauritania border, resulting in violence by populations on either side against those suspected of "foreign" origins. This situation entailed mass slaughters of people of Senegalese descent in Mauritania and expulsion for the luckier ones. Their assimilation in the Senegalese part of the borderland has been made partly easier by the language they share with the host communities, which enabled them, on arrival, to undertake activities that would also ensure their integration. Mauritanian refugees now have the possibility to move freely between their former sites and their new environment. Yet this process of losing and regaining their status is paralleled by a more complex process of identity seeking or recovery. This paper examines these identity issues by focusing on the experience of the Djolly Senegal refugee community, and also on the cultural bridging strategies that they have developed, with a particular interest in representations and discourse.

Introduction

This paper examines the cultural adaptation and integration strategies developed by a refugee community in the Senegal Valley after 22 years of exile on the Senegalese side.[17] The refugees' discourse, which is itself part of their identity and cultural adaptation strategies, throws light on other strategies pertaining to socioeconomic and cultural practices.

The issue of refugee identity strategies and culture in the context of border processes in the Senegal Valley has been abundantly addressed, yet more by French than English speaking scholars. Moreover, these French scholars have focused on essential aspects of culture and identity construction. Santoir (1990a, 1990b, 1998) provides a comprehensive body of work on these refugee communities – but with limited emphasis on such cultural practices as discourse. Marty (2003) does so, but with an interest focused rather on the FLAM (Front de Libération des Africains de Mauritanie) nationalist movement (see also Fresia's (2008) insightful analysis). Even though the discourse of the latter is sometimes appropriated by Mauritanian refugees in their claim to citizenship, it does not take account of the refugee experience and the resulting perceptions and discursive strategies it shapes.

On the institutional level of humanitarian organizations, Polzer (2008: 6) deals with "discursive specialisations and blueprints" that convey "the assumption that a discourse of refugee rights, as defined

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[17] This began as a conference paper presented in a panel organized by Jordi Tomas Guilera and Alexandra Dias at the fifth annual conference of the African Borderlands Research Network (ABORNE) in Lisbon, Portugal in September 2011. I'm particularly indebted to the network and the participants for the fruitful exchanges, and to Dr. Cristina Rodrigues for suggestions for the final version. I acknowledge with gratitude Aboubakr Tandia's constant support.

by international Conventions, will in all cases be beneficial to the refugees concerned and therefore is desired by them". Such an assertion implies that the refugees' expression of their wants is not given due attention. The representation of their situation, drawn from the refugee's imagination and the cultural reserve of their linguistic community, is thus structured by their cultural heritage. The question is then also that of how the refugees address their integration with various cultural strategies, and how these are disclosed by discourse and implemented through discursive strategies.

This article will first address the deportation experience in its psychological and social/material aspects. The second part looks at the local integration and adaptation strategies, with a focus on the part played by refugees in their integration through representations and discursive strategies and socioeconomic and cultural practices.

The manpower-and-ghost community

In 1989 a clash between Mauritanian cattle raisers and Senegalese farmers led to a diplomatic crisis, due to the intervention of the Mauritanian National Guard. This situation entailed intercommunity violence on both sides of the border and also turned out to be the last straw in the ongoing socio-political tension in Mauritania since 1978 (Marty, 2003: 499). In Mauritania, whose Arab-oriented policies have been more and more marked, this crisis between the two countries was coupled with an escalation in tension between white populations (called *Beydanes*) and black Mauritanians. In addition to the resulting killings, the mass deportation of black populations from Mauritania to the other side of the border was the most remarkable aspect of this crisis.

It is in this context that the inhabitants of Djolly, a Mauritanian village in Trarza – a southern region on the banks of the Senegal River –, were deported to the Senegalese side of the border early in 1989. Like other refugees landed in sites of Ndioum, Dodel, etc. along the border, they were taken in by the district of Thillé Boubacar, in the same borderland area called the middle Senegal valley (Figure 1). It corresponds to the pre-colonial province of Fuuta Tooro.

Figure 1: Map of the St-Louis region illustrating the location of the Trarza region (Mauritania) and the Thillé Boubacar district (Senegal) in the middle valley borderlands.
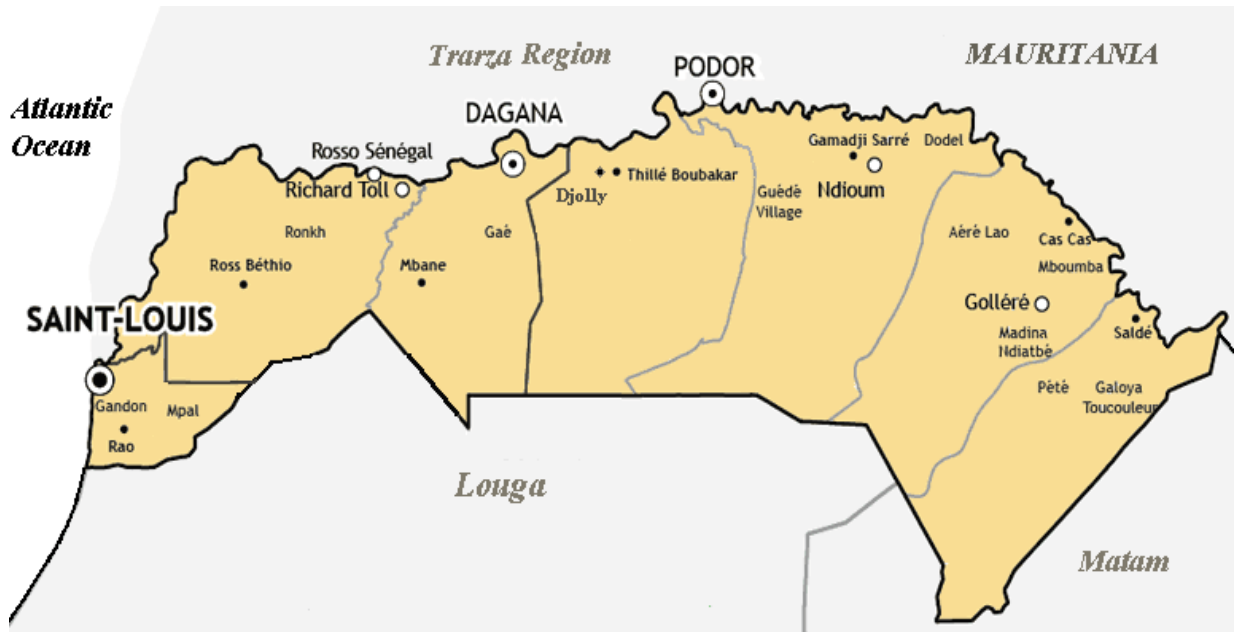
Source: http://www.au-senegal.com/carte-administrative-de-la-region-de-saint-louis,038.html (modified by author).

The psychological dimension

The psychological dimension of the refugee experience covers 22 years of exile, with a deep trauma at the beginning, due to the experience of violence, dispossession and uprootedness. Jean Schmitz argues that the implication of the Mauritanian State in these events makes it possible to compare it with what was going on at the time in the south-west Sudan province of Darfur, with the same idea of an ethnic or racial state vendetta leading to the same uncontrollable outcomes (Jean Schmitz, 1990: 503). Former possessions on the Mauritanian side and the feeling of powerlessness in the face of state-supported abuse have not been cleared from consciences by concerns and expectations. Nourou, 29, evokes this aspect as the main reason why the possibility of going back to Mauritania is not welcome to him:

> I was 6 or 7 at the time our families were leaving. So people of my age cannot remember all the details about how good it was to live down there, but we have been told about the way we used to live there; it was a life of abundance. Then we spent 22 years here… it has not always been easy. Yet I know that in Senegal, whenever you undergo an identity control, chances are there's something wrong with you. Otherwise, nobody disturbs you. In Mauritania, someone can find you in your house, slap you and ask you what you are doing there. Everybody hasn't the required self-control to tolerate this, and if you react, you can be imprisoned for it, or even more. Personally, this is one of the reasons why I don't like Mauritania at all.

There is an acute awareness among the refugees as regards their condition that is still linked to the circumstances of their forced migration. Apparently not at ease with the term *refugee*, one of them

declares that they are the "deported", "which is different from the label 'refugees' that is generally put on us. We have been forced out of our home places into exile as a result of a political decision; we didn't flee from war consequences, etc., as refugees do."

On their arrival most of the villagers of Djolly were scattered in the neighbouring villages where they were accommodated temporarily by the local inhabitants, mainly in Dimat – a village 2 km to the west of Thillé Boubacar – because of kinship ties (see Santoir, 1990b: 580-581 for other places in the valley). Soon after, they were allotted a plot of land to set up their camp (Figure 2). This moment at least temporarily marked a turning point in their relations with the local population and the perception of their condition. In the course of settling into the camp, they were faced with new spatial intrusions and collisions. M. O. Sy, a local worthy and one of the elders of this community, retraces this new sense of alienation:

> It was the local authority of Thillé Boubacar who allotted us this area on which we've set up the camp. But unexpectedly, we've seen people who weren't refugees trying to take advantage of this opportunity by taking over building lots within this territory. We were not in a position to say anything, being newcomers. There was this feeling that we hadn't enough legitimacy to raise an objection, and it was all the more delicate as these people often turned out to be relatives...

Figure 2: Map of the Senegal-Mauritania borderland in the middle valley illustrating the displacement of the Djolly community, and their former and post-1989 locations.
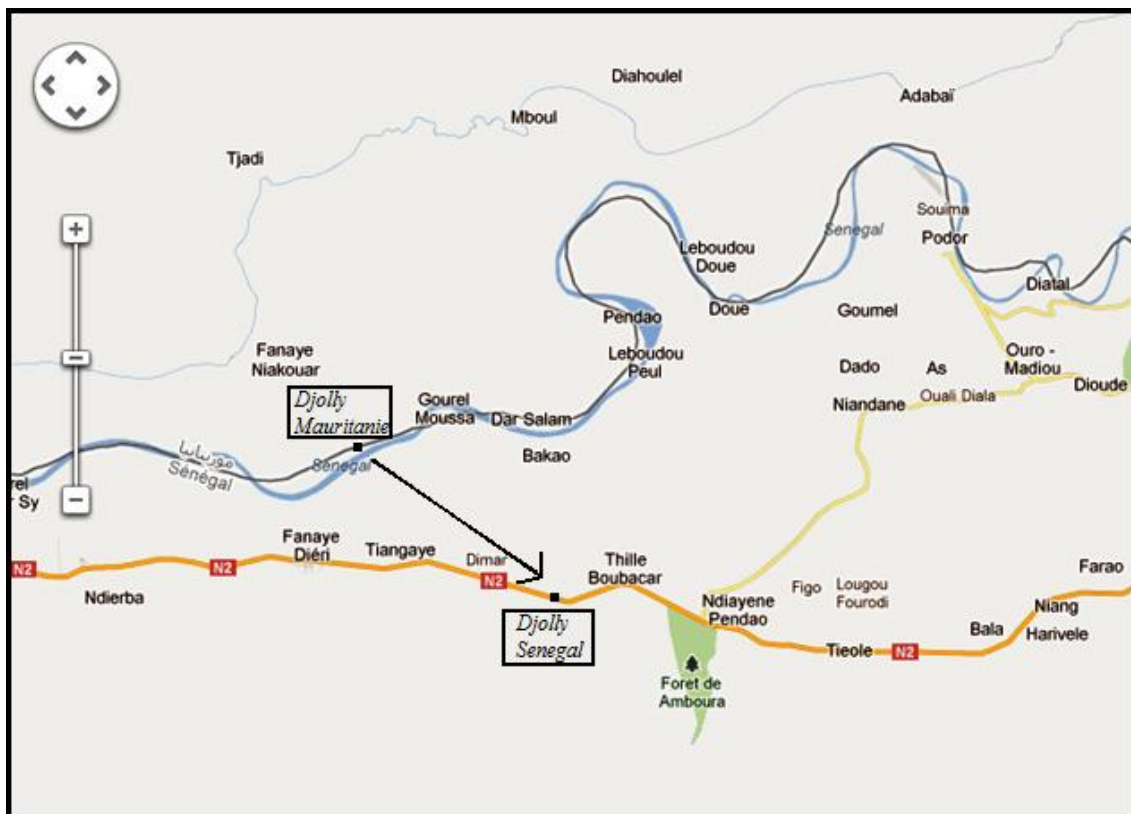
Source: Google Maps - ©2011 Google.

This episode was a sort of re-enactment of their experience in the country from which they have been expelled. Both are connected to spatial dispossession and seem to produce a persistent sense of uprootedness that is reflected in their discourse.

It is a noticeable fact that the possibility of repatriation has not put an end to the deportation experience. Repatriation, considered on political and judicial levels as the end of exile, does not put an end to it in the minds of the refugees in this specific case, given that it is not viable. "I have always been a refugee in Senegal, a displaced person", says A. B. S. "And strange enough, even when I've returned in my country, my status has turned out to be problematic; it was 'incomplete' because they said I'm a 'Revenant'. Then I asked: 'Where did we go? We belong here!' which means that it would be much more pleasant if he had called us 'citizens'".

Seemingly the implied meaning of "Revenant" here is "someone who has decided to come back", yet the actual meaning of "revenant" in French is "ghost", that implies also, "someone who no longer belongs to this world". This might be the reason why the word has raised so much controversy. The use of such a word illustrates the invisibility of repatriates and testifies to the failure of repatriation.

The evocation of patience is also a recurring motif in conversations, and is indicative of the ongoing experience of exile.

Social/material aspects

A considerable heritage consisting of vast expanses of land suitable for agriculture and cattle-raising means that the community of Djolly has a long tradition of these activities, in addition to fishing and Koranic studies. So the first aspect they resented was the lack of these means of subsistence. On arrival, they were left with no other option than to make arrangements with the local population as to land exploitation, but they were aware of the scarcity of such a resource, in comparison to the possibilities that Mauritania offered. The Senegalese government's efforts in this sense are not acknowledged by the refugees. They appreciate that Senegal welcomed them and treated them humanly, but this treatment does not include putting such resources at their disposal:

> On this side, when we came back, we pursued these activities, namely agriculture and cattle-raising. But if you have no land and no cattle, that turns out to be problematic. Then OFADEC arranged some contracts with the landowners and provided funding for the development of the land, so that we could share the latter's lots and exploit half the land. After the crops, which end the contract, we would take our water pump and move away for another contract with another landowner whose land has not been prepared for cultivation, generally because of the lack of means. None of us had land here on this side, so it was the system which permitted us to survive.

The idea that they are somewhat exploited by the local populations is widespread among the refugees, and their views diverge as regards the possibility that the local population has to provide them with land for farming. They repeat with a certain bitterness a saying regarding their role in the development

of land that the local hosts did not have the means to farm before the type of contract mentioned above: "People say in the surrounding villages that if you cannot prepare your land, give it to a refugee", says Habib with a certain sadness.

The refugee women of Djolly had a kitchen garden back in Mauritania, which they used for food, while part of the products was sold to provide them with some financial resources. Yet they admit that the trade culture they discovered in Senegal after their deportation has been quite traumatic. There were some products that they never imagined could be sold and which turned out to be expensive in Senegal. They experienced a clash of two extreme cultures: theirs, a culture of reasonable commercial spirit that has not yet wiped out deep rooted habits of gifts and mutual support, and that of the Senegalese communities, extremely mercantile.

Most of the activities women used to carry out in Mauritania were severely limited by the new environment, especially immediately after deportation. They used to have a wider range of activities than men in Mauritania, but most of them were not profitable in the end when they gave them a try in Senegal. Apart from farming, they would get together in mutual profit associations too and undertake various activities. They were faced with the same problem as the men to find land for farming. In terms of support, there was a good start on arrival, but it did not last long. The distribution of food supplies helped them in the daily management of family resources, but was cut off long ago. "We also had a centre built for us so that we could undertake such activities as dry-cleaning, dress-making, etc." – says Aïssata Sy – "We've been involved in these activities for a long time, and others too, initiated by various organizations".

The relationship with the women of the host communities has also not made things easier. Refugee women have rarely been invited to join women's profit associations, but the experience would always take a wrong turn given that the expected outcome vanished at the moment of sharing profits. "We decided that it was perhaps better to stay out of these associations" – says Aïssata Sy – "We often had the feeling that we were cheated. That's why we decided to be more cautious about this sort of association with the local women".

Relations are far from being conflictual yet and on the contrary ties with the host population have even been reinforced. The refugees seem to compensate for the negative aspects of deportation with evocation and claims of their Mauritanian belonging and citizenship.

Local integration and adaptation strategies

Making sense of integration

Ways of life and forms of meaning are constituent of culture. Border is essentially a matter of perception. Brunet-Jailly (2005: 635) illustrates the fact with Anderson's description of "how meaning varied according to place, noting, for instance that 'frontier' in the American and French traditions does not

appeal to the same imagery". Whereas people live and work at borders "because of the very existence of borders", they also have a shaping power on them. Borders, beyond their rigid physical presence, are what people make of them through their practices, and these result from a particular perception of these markers. "This, then, is the core theory of border studies: the implicit recognition that agency and structure are mutually influential and interrelated in the shaping of emerging and integrated borderlands" (Brunet-Jailly, 2005: 644).

This mutual influence between agency and structure occurs through complex processes in which ethnic, social, political and economic identities of various actors (refugees, host communities, state control agents at the border) cooperate, interact and clash according to a logic that opposes states' global policies and communities' and individuals' local strategies, or sometimes reconciles them. Flows of people and goods across borders are at the heart of these exchanges. The refugees' perception of the border, which appears through their discourse, varies depending on the reference to their Mauritanian identity as citizens or their relationships and ties with the borderland communities. Marty observes the same phenomenon in the FLAM's rhetoric (Marty, 2003: 508).

Local integration, as it appears with the Djolly refugees, is a negotiated shift from the conditions of the temporary to those of the indefinite, or its possibility. This indefiniteness (Polzer, 2008: 3) encompasses a variety of limits (temporal, spatial...) that were previously set in the host territory and are eventually blurred through 'a process of negotiating access to local legitimacy and entitlement on the basis of a variety of value systems determined by local power holders in dialogue with refugees' (Polzer, 2008: 3). Polzer provides this definition as including elements of Jacobsen's *de facto integration* and Crisp's notion of integration as the eventuality of permanent stay in the host country in a way that satisfies them.

The refugees' role in Djolly community integration

The refugees' approach to integration encompasses a wide range of elements that can be classified in three categories: perceptions and discourse, socioeconomic practices and cultural strategies.

"Kaya mbeeya!" (either float or hover)

One interesting question regarding the Mauritanian refugees in Senegal is their idea of Mauritania, in that their representations of it reflect the complexity of their relationship with the home country, a complexity that is made worse by the bonds that have been created with the host country. "You cannot possibly give your head to someone, and then take back the tongue. That's what is going on in Mauritania presently", says M. Sy. "Mauritania, in my mind, cannot be separated from what has been in construction since 1966, meaning racism", adds A. B. S. The association with racism and unfair practices of Mauritanian governments is a leitmotiv and is deeply linked to the question of land. Justice, for the refugees, means reclaiming the land that fed them.

> Justice is a fair settlement of arguments between citizens and their equal treatment (...) There is no justice. When they imprisoned us for claiming our land, the public prosecutor said that I shouldn't be taken to him if land claim was the issue. Now the question is: where should I be taken for a settlement? And as a condition to my release, he demanded that I wouldn't return there, unless I get permission to do so from the governor. If there is justice, then we don't know what it is.

The point is that farming is a central, nearly sacred element in the cultural range of the Djolly refugee community. Besides being the main source of subsistence, it is a value they have inherited and that has shaped their way of life in Mauritania for decades. To a great extent, land determines their options as regards repatriation, and is evoked in their discourse by strong images. "The nights you spend in the south are the nights you can't spend in the north,[18] because in the north your land is the bed", says a woman.

Evoking the difficulty of choosing between a home country where you can return and get any favour, providing that claims to land property are not mentioned, and a host country where land access is also quite impossible, the dilemma they are facing is expressed in various ways. When asked what was to be done, Mamadou gave a quite uncommon answer: "kaya mbeeya".[19]

The discourse pointing to dilemma, "kaya mbeeya" expressing bitter irony and cynicism, shatters that of such public actors as states and the IGOs. "Kaya mbeeya" sums up a disorientation that is reflected in a discourse and is also translated in various practices as a result of identity re-composition strategies. It is an attitude that shows the discourse of states and the UNCHR as simplistic and hardly serious with regard to the identity issue, but also it questions and even annihilates the actions of relocation that they undertake, given that it is not merely physical.

Besides, this discourse reflects a specific notion of the border space as a continuum and connotes a certain relationship with the border in that it determines the floating situation that the discourse describes, with its bridging effect.

This relationship illustrates the dialectical relationship between the notions of *space* and *place* within the anthropological perspectives and interest in "accounting for cultural disjuncture, displacement and distress" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 9). Space is defined by Donnan and Wilson as "the general idea people have of where things should be", that is, "the conceptualization of the imagined physical relationships which give meaning to society". As to place, it is "the distinct place where people live; it encompasses both the idea and actuality of where things are" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 9).

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[18] In the Fulani language (also called *pulaar* in Senegal and Mauritania), the terms "Mauritania" and "Senegal" do not exist. They are respectively referred to as "the North" (Rewo) and "the South" (Worgo) of Fuuta Tooro, the land of the Haalpulaaren. See Fresia (2008).
[19] "Kaya mbeeya" means literally in pulaar "either you float or you hover". It connotes the lack of certainty, but also the lack of options with regard to a particular situation.

"Dem-Dikk": socioeconomic practices

The mercantile culture of the local host communities has left an imprint on the refugees. Most of them acknowledge that they were perhaps too naïve, less realistic than the host communities, and that this difference must be due to the proximity of the Senegalese villages to local markets, which was not their case in Mauritania. For most of them, the utopian relation to resources of the old days pertains now to the category of buried habits, even though it is still magnified as a great human quality.

Faced with the new reality of what one is tempted to call the possibility of impossible repatriation, the refugees have adopted a strategy of ambiguity with regard to their options. In Djolly, which looks more like a refugee village (Santoir 1998: 109 uses the term "site" and discards that of "camp") than a refugee camp (see Photo 1), both those who have decided to return to Mauritania and those who have decided to stay can be found at home. They have sent one or two members of the family to Mauritania to occupy the new sites they have been allotted, (paradoxically near their former places, which are still occupied by Beydanes) so that they can take delivery of any supplies from the UNCHR or any other form of support, and watch over the place at the same time. M. Sy says:

> There is no other possibility. We haven't enough choice because it is not practicable as a destination. You go there for a moment, if you find conceivable conditions that allow you to stay there a while, and if you don't find them you go back to where they permit you to sleep and take some rest, given that you've spent three or four sleepless nights.

The new mobility, "dem-dikk",[20] as one of them called it, is justified by the fact that "a drowning man would clutch at a sword blade without hesitation". After 22 years in Senegal with the problem of refugees' land access still unsettled, the very evocation of the possibility of having this problem solved in their home countries creates a rush.

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[20] This is an allusion to the name (in Wolof) of a Senegalese public transport company, which means "come and go in a round trip".

Photo 1 : The Refugee "village" of Djolly

Source: by author.

Besides there is the need to secure possessions acquired in Senegal, which are worth 10 other years of hardships and effort that cannot be sacrificed to the hope of going home. So, to them, the question has taken on a socioeconomic dimension, in addition to other aspects.

Dresses and cards: cultural strategies

Among the identity and cultural adaptation strategies, there is the adoption of a cross-border nomadic way of life that characterizes the new figure of the deported. They see and define themselves as citizens of the other side who are still compelled to come back now and then to the land of exile in the quest of identity and cultural roots. A. says:

> In Mauritania our culture has been confiscated. Whenever people gather to express or celebrate or enjoy cultural practices we inherited from our forefathers, they are faced with the reluctance and resistance of authorities who consider any gathering as a threat to stability and set out to discourage it or even forbid it. We are not given freedom when it comes to living our culture in community.

As it seems, the refugee as a cultural figure is denied existence in Mauritania, and it is this fragmented identity that the nomadic strategy of re-composition of the self-addresses. Describing, about French policy, what he calls *le paradoxe flagrant* (explicit paradox), Etienne Balibar explains this type of situation:

the struggle against more or less real communitarianisms that are perceived as a threat turns into the construction of an exclusive identity which is given an "abstract" and "political" definition (…), but is used very concretely to draw lines of ethnical demarcation (given that there is the people of the republic, with their history, their symbols and traditions…and there are the others). (Balibar, 2001, cited in Neveu, 2004: 4).

This somewhat clarifies why the refugees interpret the Mauritanian government's efforts to discourage their cultural gatherings as a rejection of their citizenship. Thus, in a context of deprivation, they resort to cultural identity to compensate for a citizenship they are not allowed to live fully. This situation creates a link between those who have returned and their fellow refugees who have chosen to stay in Senegal, and even with the Senegalese host communities, in a reflex of bridging activism.

The existence of a linguistic community, a culture spanning the border, creates the opportunity for those in the Djolly community who have returned to expand their spatial scope by crossing back to Senegal whenever they are denied their cultural practices. So the demands of local culture and its expression entail a temporary denial of the border in the imagination of the repatriates. In their minds, it is a line they cross when they temporarily discard transcendence to reinstate their political status as Mauritanian citizens for a specific purpose (socioeconomic reasons).

A noteworthy aspect of the cultural practices of the Djolly community after their deportation is the immediate adjustment of their appearance to their new relationship with the Beydane culture. Among the visual features of their Mauritanian culture, some garments were adopted from the Beydanes. These were discarded from the refugees' habits as soon as they arrived in Senegal. One of these outfits, called *darra* – traditional short trousers that do not reach the calves and are very common among the Beydanes – is particularly interesting in that it is unfamiliar to Senegalese culture:

These belong to Mauritanian culture and have not "crossed" to this side. They are unknown to even someone of Mauritanian descent who has been living in Senegal and is not acquainted with the other side (…) whenever you put on one of these elements, even a child will identify you as a Mauritanian with the utmost certainty. What has changed is that we are no longer putting on the *darras* which are typically an element of the Beydane culture. It would give us the appearance of Beydanes. And since we strongly resented our bitter experience with them, we've just given up this way of dressing. It was adopted in a context of a peaceful cohabitation and quest for harmony, which implies an effort to show the other that we have things in common. We have eliminated this point, I mean dressing up like them, out of anger and disappointment.

In the light of Parker's (2006) model, this move in boundary dynamics corresponds to a shift of the cultural boundary from the characteristics of the fluid frontier to those of the static, linear border. The rejection of Beydane material culture entails a displacement of the cultural boundary and its juxtaposition with the political border.

Integration also takes on a psychological dimension that we have mentioned in the experience of deportation. Discarding Mauritanian dressing habits that belong to the Beydanes is interesting first in that it

has been adopted both individually and by the group. And at both levels, this attitude has a therapeutic dimension: either spontaneous individual rejection or more complex mobilization of the group is a strategy of forgetting, which aims at curbing the traumatic effects of the deportation experience.

These choices are symbolical of transition, with elements of a failed national integration process that are discarded in an effort to start another national/communitarian integration enterprise in the host country. Part of this enterprise is the acquisition of Senegalese nationality,[21] which allows them to go safely and even spend time in Mauritania to reconstitute their assets under the cover of Senegalese citizenship. Back in Senegal, refugee status is brandished and makes them eligible when migration opportunities negotiated by the UNCHR arise.

Furthermore, expunging Beydane traits from their cultural capital emphasizes similarities with the host communities given that what remains is common ethnic patterns.

Outcomes of integration: villagers, wrestlers and travellers

Several aspects and elements of the above testify to integration of the Djolly refugees into the host communities of the district of Thillé Boubacar. One of them is the discovery of self and other that is revealed by the refugees' new self-perceptions through the differences with their Senegalese fellow citizens in the borderlands. Daïbou, a young man, confirms:

> Young people are integrated here to the point that some of them would like to stay. In the beginning differences would break out, there were misunderstandings, but it was because we didn't know each other very well even if we are relatives. We had different ways of life, different characters and styles. There is a frontier between the temperament of the Senegalese and that of the Mauritanian, in the same way as there is one between the two countries. (...) You can easily identify a Mauritanian, I cannot explain why. We feel at home now in Senegal, but we'll go back as soon as we have the guarantee to recover our possessions, in spite of the 20 years. The land we had there was our own, not one exploited by contract.

Integration, as we can see above, is accompanied by preservation of the Mauritanian identity. Integrating does not mean being naturalized.

Another positive outcome of integration has been the rise of a citizen consciousness among some of the refugees, like A., urging them to take action on claims to recover their rights and raising the awareness of fellow refugees:

> I was "young", unaware of my rights, and they could make their bed on it. Now I won't let anybody sleep in this bed. They know I'm totally devoted to my reinstatement in my rights for now. It's no longer a matter of eating, drinking and sleeping, of comfort; now there's more to it.

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[21] Citizenship is obtained essentially thanks to the civil status documents (marital status…) that are issued by the local authorities such as the mayor or the head of the Rural Community. This makes it possible for the refugees to acquire an identity card.

Yet there are residual aspects that still affect this integration, such as a persisting vulnerability that is partly due to the lack of refugee cards (which they ought to have received 22 years ago), which refugees interpret – not wrongly – as an unwillingness by the Senegalese government to grant them clear refugee status. The land-access difficulties also are blamed on the state (see Santoir, 1990b: 588; 1998: 115-116 for the attitude of the Senegalese government).

In addition, there is the lack of reciprocity on behalf of the local population that is still resented by the refugees, on the issue of land-sharing, and because of the obvious tendency to exploit refugee labour: "For twenty years we have been the wrestlers, preparing their fields for them", says Kadiata Diack, hardly hiding her bitterness, "But we cannot blame them for it; we must blame this situation on our country. It's true that we have strong kinship ties, and that if they wanted to help us, there is enough land for all of us in Senegal…".

This reinforces the transient subjectivity of the refugee: "You are a stranger wherever you don't possess land, and you'll always be a stranger there. That's why we are travellers; we've been on a journey for 20 years!" The state of being away from of home – out of their *space* – has thus survived the twenty two years spent in the home country – their *place*. The dialectical relation between the two notions is intact, thus accounting for residual "cultural disjuncture, displacement and distress" (Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 9).

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to examine how local integration is approached by refugees through strategies stemming from a particular experience, and how their imagination was called upon in this process.

Their vision of the border complexities, of which they are a central element, reveals realities that do not seem to have been taken into account in the management of the refugee problem. Neither does their relationship with the land and homeland, which appears to be motivated by socioeconomic concerns, but is revealed by refugee perceptions and discourse as transcending this dimension.

If "agency and structure are mutually influential and interrelated in the shaping of emerging and integrated borderlands" as goes the core theory of border studies (Brunet-Jailly, 2005: 644), the contribution of this paper is its modest attempts at examining an aspect of agency that is important in understanding the motivations, beliefs and subsequent practices of refugees. It is the study of the refugee imagination through discursive and cultural strategies. The powers of deconstruction as well as of reconstruction of this imagination that are mobilized by the refugees to act upon a particular geographical context of continuity and discontinuity, of bridging and isolation, deserve particular methodological attention.

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MIGRANTS, BORDERS AND LABOUR REGIMES IN MAURITANIA: BETWEEN MILITARISATION AND MOBILITY

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Introduction

Migration into Mauritania from the south is composed of the following highly volatile and confluent channels: 1) pendular border crossings of the Senegal River from neighbouring regions in Senegal and Mali, which may be daily or itinerant for traders, and seasonal or longer-term for those seeking employment; these migrations also incorporate southern Mauritanians moving northwards to urban areas; 2) labour migration from further afield in West Africa, linked historically to fishing and mineral-led growth; 3) intended migration to Europe from West and Central Africa, including people who head directly to the coast to depart for the Canary Islands, or "step-wise" migrants who will seek informal employment to fund the onward journey; 4) refugees.

This paper is concerned with reconciling the connections and contradictions between migration and borders, which represent opposing economic and territorial regimes and are often viewed separately.[22] It will first examine how and why people move from one place to another in this West African context, particularly focusing on labour migration. Secondly, it will show the how Mauritania's boundaries attempt to regulate these flows at the local level. Confronting and reshaping channels of migration, there are an unprecedented number of checkpoints and frontiers, as well as institutional boundaries that enforce the "global life-chance divide" with efforts to contain people in Africa (Duffield, 2010; Traoré, 2007). Mauritanian territory plays a critical role in enforcing this divide along with the other Maghreb countries. This paper's focus on migrants from households to the south of the Sahara does not, however, connote the treatment of Mauritania merely as a "void" territory, nor a strategically important desert territory, detached from the rest of Africa and from the discourse of development. On the contrary, its status as a transit country, formalised by the EU, will be compared with its own evolving migrant labour regimes. This paper is underpinned by ethnographic research among migrants who have returned from, passed through, or remained in Mauritania. A multi-scalar analysis highlights the broader, structural causes of mobility and restriction, drawing attention to key historical factors in these competing political economies.

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[22] This paper was presented at the fifth annual conference of the African Borderlands Research Network, Centre of African Studies, ISCTE, Lisbon University Institute (Lisbon, 21-25 September). It was part of a PhD project, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, which incorporated ethnographic research among migrants in Senegal, Mauritania and Spain with further observation in Burkina Faso and Mali.

The development of migrant labour into Mauritania

Migration is often viewed as the "mere displacement of a labour force", with a surplus labour force on one hand, and no questions asked as to the reasons for this surplus, and then jobs that are available on the other hand, with no questions asked about the reasons for this availability (Sayad, 2004: 3). This section considers the nature of this displacement and argues that the principal driving force of West African migration into Mauritania and towards Europe is neither inequality of income, poverty nor the 'opportunities' expected in globalisation, or there would be higher numbers emigrating. Africa, particularly West Africa, has been included in accounts of a culturally globalised world, yet it is excluded from discussion of global capital flows (Ferguson, 2006: 30-4). These latter, however, are key to displacement, mobility and development. Migration continues to be strongly linked with ongoing capital accumulation, by which land, labour and natural resources are commodified. This accumulation leads to the "freeing" of labour by displacement, and because labour-power is a commodity, it is subjected by global capitalism to patterns of trade that resemble other commodities, thus economically concentrated and unequal (Cooper, 2008: 182). "Irregular" mobility is predominantly concentrated between sending households that are dispossessed of the means of subsistence, and areas of transit or recruitment such as the ports in Mauritania or the farms in Spain among other places of convergence in the Maghreb and Southern Europe. This binds the causes and consequences of migration with the process of working across borders.

The divergence in development trajectories between the previously equivalent Sahara-Sahel and European entities has been linked historically with the latters' development of the Atlantic slave trade (Amin, 1972: 511). Prior to the French delimitation of Mauritania's borders, Portuguese entry to the Ile d'Arguin placed the focus of European competition on the coast in the 15th century. Further down the West African coast, the Atlantic trade strengthened the port towns of Abidjan, Bissau, Banjul, Dakar and Saint-Louis, weakening inland trade structures sometimes by force. Coastal states, previously peripheral, embedded themselves in merchant capitalism and preserved their power with military assistance (Findley, *et al*, 1995: 471; *L'Humanité,* 2008). It is argued, however, that historiography has been shaped by the colonial reality, thus directing knowledge, as well as merchant capitalism, to the coast and to sub-Saharan regions. In contrast to accounts of the successful and damaging realignment of trade, "there was a thriving desert-side commerce in which gold, grain and slaves from the Sahel were traded for salt from the desert and the interregional networks buttressing this economy (…) were so strongly entrenched that the Europeans could not successfully penetrate" (McDougall, 2007: 19). This has contemporary relevance to our examination of migrations, which are heavily managed by Europe and the US whilst particular routes run alongside these interventions. A brief historical account of West African migration patterns will show how sub-Saharan migrants continuously circulate in Mauritania's political economy as labourers and, more recently, also enter the country as an intended stepping-stone to Europe.

The making of migrant labour patterns into Mauritania and Europe

The Atlantic slave trade was followed by a strategy to keep labourers at home for the development of a colonial economy that in West Africa would constitute "the exchange of agricultural products against imported manufactured goods" (Amin, 1972: 511). Migrant labour, more than an epiphenomenon, was "manipulated" as a separate but related process to the restructuring of the economy (Riddell, 1981: 372-3). The coercion lay in the underdevelopment of communities, where production was hampered by trade monopolies and subsistence had to be paid for with wages, leading dispossessed producers to enter the labour reserve. It is widely accepted that colonial labour lacked freedom of circulation. There were, however, different forms of colonial labour, some of them "free", reflecting the complexity of interactions between workers, local authorities and government regimes. In Senegal, early patterns of "step-wise" migration provided the choice of a few destinations and opportunities for social mobility (Conway, 1980), but this mobility was necessitated by a stringent taxation policy. To escape forced labour, some workers were driven to Mauritania and the Gambia, including a large-scale desertion by Senegalese Fulani (Fall and Mbodj, 1989: 266).

Before colonial conquest, Mauritania was organised into emirates. It was most densely populated in the sub-Saharan region to the south of the Senegal River, where Tukolor and Fulani (both Halpulaar'en), Soninké and Wolof groups constituted sedentary village communities. They would pay tribute to chieftains representing the emirs. The Saharan tribes, speaking Hassaniya Arabic, were hierarchically divided into bidan tribes of Arab and Berber descent, black haratin (freedmen) and domestic slaves. Administrators would install "native henchmen" at the apex of this hierarchy and accountability shifted from local councils to distant administrators, exacerbating divisions in the traditional order (Bennoune, 1978; Seddon, 2000; Bonté, 1981). As a protectorate in French West Africa from 1903, Mauritania had its capital in Saint-Louis, Senegal. Sub-Saharans living here had to pay a head tax on every person over the age of ten and joined the reserve of labour for groundnut plantations. Saharan groups had to contribute a proportion of their herds and crops to the colonial administration. The imposition of colonial taxes and the opening of the market to French manufactured products launched the population into the international order (Bennoune, 1978: 35-8; Seddon, 2000: 209).

The Saharan population primarily engaged in agriculture and herding, up to the time of independence, while wage labour was of secondary importance. Substantial mining activity, which began after independence, changed this. A railway from Zouérat to Nouadhibou was constructed to support a two kilometre-long train, which would carry iron ore to the coast for shipment to Europe and the United States. The combination of drought and heavy state taxes produced a labour reserve for the mines (Bonté, 1975: 105; Bennoune, 1978: 46). As well as incorporating black citizens from the south in production, Mauritania also attracted cross-border migrants. Senegalese, Malian, Guinean and Beninese labourers were employed at the time of independence in 1960. By 1970, the population in Nouadhibou was composed of 11,500 Mauritanians, 3,000 sub-Saharan Africans, 1,800 French and 1,000 Spanish immigrants, mainly

from the Canary Islands (Choplin, 2008: 75). Senegalese migrants entered the fishing zone, followed by Ghanaians from 1980 onwards. The Ghanaians began to salt and dry fish for export to the Gulf of Guinea.

In the "glorious years" between the mid-1940s and the mid-1970s, northern Europe drew on its "labour reservoir" north and south of the Mediterranean to complete its postwar reconstruction (Amin and El-Kenz, 2005: 107). After recruitment in the French army during World War II, Soninké labourers, in a region that straddles Mauritania, Mali and Senegal, could subsequently visit France and work, chiefly in automobile factories, before returning home (Dussauze-Ingrand, 1974: 243).

The contemporary era of migration can be linked with economic collapse and subsequent structural adjustment programmes in the 1980s and 1990s. As former labour regimes diminished, migrant workers were increasingly distanced from employers. They would enter a greater range of countries in "step-wise" patterns while Europe closed down its borders. This era was also punctuated by expulsions in West Africa. In 1982, Ghana closed its borders with Togo, and Sierra Leone expelled Fula community members. In 1983, Nigeria expelled roughly two million people and there were further expulsions from Liberia and Ghana. Conflict between Liberia and Sierra Leone in 1990 produced half a million refugees (Mafukidze, 2006; Arthur, 1991). In Mauritania, the traditional system of land management was abolished under structural adjustment programmes. Land was distributed according to clientelistic relations. Peri-urban settlements accelerated and financial speculation governed land transfer. A clandestine market grew and prices reached more than ten times the official amount. Land reform also affected the Halpulaar, Wolof and Soninké groups along the Senegal River. Abolishment of the system of collective land ownership led to dispossession by ruling factions. The land was passed over to haratin for cultivation (Crousse and Hesseling, 1994: 89-90). The resulting disputes precipitated conflict between Mauritania and Senegal, and within Mauritania between the bidan and black citizens, including the haratin. From April to May 1989 and in the months that followed, villages in the Trarza-Est region were cleared out by the Mauritanian army. Residents, mainly Halpulaar and Wolof, were expelled to Senegal and Mali. In February 1989, almost half of the fishermen in Nouadhibou and Nouakchott were Senegalese. By August, Senegalese migrants did not appear in the registers and were replaced by Mauritanians, Nigerians and Ghanaians (Choplin, 2008: 76). By 1991, five hundred black officers in the armed forces were executed in response to a fake coup and hundreds of civilians were killed. Senegal also expelled Mauritanians, mainly traders, as a result of the same conflict (Jourde, 2007: 80; Charmes, 1994: 77).

In this era, new labour reserves developed in addition to the established ones, reflecting the dual characteristic of labour, as producers needed to sell their labour power as a result of the collapse of commodities and political crisis. The "commodity" of labour-power from underdeveloped communities also faced political and economic change. The system of migrant labour has reproduced because new territory continues to be opened up in the "global" era. In Senegalese coastal communities, for example, new forms of "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2003) have led to new migrations. These processes have

included the development of international fishing agreements, the suppression of local forms of production and consumption and neo-colonial appropriation of assets. They have led young fishermen to sell their boats and abandon their activities.[23] A repatriated migrant explained: "I'll no longer fish (...) Because of fishing agreements that Senegal has signed with other countries, it has become very difficult, not to mention the high price of oil" (Interview, Thiaroye-sur-Mer, 3 June 2008). Also reflective of accumulation, the mother of an emigrant in Spain explained that his father sold an inherited plot of land to fund the journey. Presently, her son's remittances were supporting his brother's family, who would not otherwise eat breakfast (Interview, Thiaroye-sur-Mer, 6 June 2008).

This reveals a dependence on remittances to meet basic household needs, resulting from the loss of land and livelihoods. However, legal and safe options for African migration fail the youth who need them. For the 31,000 migrants who reached the Canary Islands from the West African coasts in 2006, their entry to Spain usually represents *unfree* labour mobility, which has a great human and economic cost. It is linked with political and legal constraints that proscribe free circulation in the labour market, for example by indentured labour or the prevention of entry into particular sectors (Miles, 1987). Spain's growth before the 2008 financial crisis was the result of "increased labour utilisation and capital accumulation" (OECD, 2009: 104). Its comparative advantage in labour costs signifies large, growing pressure to pay the labour force at a lower rate than the cost of reproduction and subsistence (Bush, 2007: 57). Migrants become adversely incorporated because they are excluded from receiving "indirect wages" in the form of family allowance, pensions, unemployment benefits and sickness cover. This means that sending communities cover these costs. Furthermore, foreign workers can be reproduced, nourished, housed, trained and habituated without extra cost to the state (Cohen, 1987; Meillassoux, 1975: 120-2).

The structural conditions of dispossession that have been sketched in this section do not, however, predict migrants' trajectories. This is evident in the diverse histories of migrant workers in Mauritania, which reveal a range of previously visited countries, including those in West Africa, as well as Libya, Morocco and Algeria in unsuccessful attempts to go to Europe. Furthermore, intentions are unpredictable, with religion, border experiences and opportunity in Mauritania influencing migrants' decisions. Mauritania's role in the migration regime is contradictorily to help determine that migrants towards Europe are unfree, whilst also revealing a Saharan economy that provides a lifeline to famished and dispossessed men and women and their households, often with freer movement and higher returns than Europe can offer. It became the first African country to adopt a national refugee law, following three years of capacity-building with UNHCR (UNHCR, 2004).

In Nouakchott, the Cinquième District is populated by migrants from Ghana, Nigeria, Togo, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Gambia and Mali (labour-sending countries); and refugees from Mali, Sierra Leone and

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[23] This is examined in more depth in H. Cross (forthcoming, 2013), "Labour and Underdevelopment? Migration, dispossession and accumulation in West Africa and Europe", *Review of African Political Economy*.

Liberia, amongst other nationalities. As provisions for refugees in Mauritania are limited, refugees ultimately become labour migrants. Women from Gambia, Senegal, Mali and southern Mauritanian villages gather outside the church in the Tevragh-Zeina district of Nouakchott and seek recruitment as domestic workers. They explain that it is easier to find work and the wages are better than where they live. A Gambian migrant was sending home 20,000 UM (€54.70) every three months via her ambassador, and planned to start a clothing business (Interview, Nouakchott, 7 May 2007). A migrant from Podor, a Senegalese town along the Senegal River that has experienced severe environmental degradation, explained: "We go and come back (…) when we have the money we want, we go back". In Senegal, "it's not difficult to find work but the wages are very low compared to here in Mauritania" (Interview, Nouakchott, 7 May 2007). It is part of a process that is also known as "straddling", by which different family members move back and forth between local agriculture, urban wage labour and overseas jobs, contributing to village social resources. This does not reflect "an outdated culture that values collectivity over individual achievement, but rather strategies to preserve social ties vital to communities whose historical experiences include the slave trade, colonial depressions and the ups and downs of government programmes and export markets" (Cooper, 2008: 188).

Furthermore, the port in Nouadhibou continues to offer work to migrants, where there is high demand in the fishing and mechanical sectors (Ministère de l'Emploi, de l'Insertion et de la Formation Professionelle, 2008). A Ghanaian migrant explained that it was easy to save because the cost of living was lower (Interview, Nouakchott, 20 May 2008). These informal possibilities are connected with displacement and migrants' lack citizenship rights, but their modes of migrating and remitting reflect the superficial nature of capitalist transformation, particularly in this supposed "vacuum territory" within which Europe would separate the two continents by military means (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005; Bennoune, 1978: 36).

A frontier country?

Whether or not Mauritania is "naturally" a transit country has been challenged. It is argued that its "Saharo-Sahelian identity is no ideological fiction", but it has historical roots in a double Maghrebi and West African identity (Ahmed-Salem, 2005: 492; 2010). An additional argument is that the "Saharan frontier" that separates Arabs and berbers from black Africans is "artificial" as cross-cultural interactions transcend this boundary (Lydon, 2005: 293). These statements are not contradictory but signify a constructed divide between strongly interlinked regions. We will see in the contemporary outcomes of the border regime that there are contrasting realities: one of continued exchange of goods and labour between the Sahara and regions to the south and another of progressively hardened border controls. The border crossing between Senegal and Mauritania must be one of Africa's most strikingly "natural" boundaries as the environment rapidly changes to desert landscape and livelihoods. This should not, however, be confused with the ideological boundaries that separate Mauritania, a West African country itself, from

"Africa". It is usual for large countries, let alone continents, to encompass dramatic geological and climatic differences, so this does not account for the separation. It is instead a continuous process in representations of knowledge that disengage the Sahara from the historical development of Africa (McDougall, 2007: 23).

In addition to the EU's efforts to limit migration, the US also includes border security and the control of human mobility in its regional strategy. Particularly in 2005, after West and Central Africans were confronted with bullets in the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco, Mauritania became the stepping-stone for step-wise migrants. Pirogues carried roughly 20,000 clandestine emigrants from Nouadhibou in 2006, with human losses ranging from 20 percent up to 40 percent in February and March (Choplin, 2008: 85). Mauritania therefore linked with the "buffer zone" that includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya (Baldwin-Edwards, 2005: 4). It joined the arrangement that is now known as the Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean in 2007, partnering Mediterranean, Middle Eastern and more recently, Balkan states with the EU.

Mauritania's incorporation in European border management sets it apart from its sub-Saharan neighbours, which are engaged, but with a smaller role for the military, in the policy of restricting "unwanted" migration. In Mauritania's post-independence trajectory, foreign rents have defined the state and its borders. Characteristic of a rentier state, the receipt of substantial revenues from iron ore and fisheries is combined with economic stagnation and political authoritarianism (Bush, 2007: 133). With neoliberal reform guided by the IMF and the World Bank, the *ouguiya* currency was devalued by over 500 percent per US dollar between 1980 and 2002. Food prices more than doubled in this period without proportionate salary and wage rises and unemployment reached almost half of the population (Ould-Mey, 2006: 349-351; Charmes, 1994: 76). Oil-based speculation stimulated a surge in growth in 2006, but indebtedness also increased with the import of exploration equipment for remote and diffuse deposits (EIU, 2009: 6). However, lessons from the past reveal that these hard statistics obscure the everyday exchanges and social relationships that have endured waves of accumulation.

The state is distant from society, which has been under military governance for much of its post-independence history. The War on Terror has usurped the political development that was hoped for after the country's first democratic election in 2007. In Mauritania's ongoing but modest participation in the Arab Spring, protesters have demanded the retreat of the military from politics and to address the appalling hikes in food prices (Ekine, 2011; Ahmed-Salem and Samuel, 2011; Bush, 2010). In addition to iron and oil rents, migration rents have provided military aid and, in a converging fund, "terrorism rents" (Keenan, 2009: 206). The latter is not a new phenomenon. The use of anti-terrorist discourse enabled President Ould Sidi-Ahmed Taya's neo-authoritarian regime to gain external Western support in the early 1990s and to crack down on opponents (Jourde, 2007: 87).

The upshot of the War on Terror in Mauritania was that poverty, weak governments and unmonitored borders were declared as dangerous, and control of African territory, "both urban and rural, and its land, sea and aerial borders" would make African countries and American targets safe (Cilliers, 2003: 102). The US strategy of establishing bases to be maintained by local troops, combined with an offshore naval armada, has been compared to military operations in the Persian Gulf and Caspian Sea region, when they were declared as national security interests (Klare and Volman, 2006: 302). There has also been comparison with the Cold War on the basis of US support to authoritarian dictatorships and the broadening of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) into a quasi-security agency (Hills, 2006: 632).

This undermines the EU's "Global Approach to Migration and Mobility", which aims to manage immigration by "holistic" and "integrated" means. Yet its Member States' relationship with the US is one of cooperation. The US Navy and sea patrols have cooperated on the West African coast, with the stated aims of combating terrorism, illegal migration to the Canary Islands and drug trafficking, as well as securing oil interests from the Gulf of Guinea (Flynn, 2007). Furthermore, French nationals were ordered to rapidly exit an "exclusion zone" in May 2011, in a vast area to the east of Choum, Chinguetti, Tidjikdja, Ayoun el-Atrous and Bou Steile (Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et Européennes, 2011). This was attributed to terrorism and it was claimed that the army was ordered to open fire on "suspect vehicles" in this territory that borders Western Sahara, Algeria and Mali.

The significance of this buffer zone for migrants is that the management of their mobility lacks the normative framework of EU partnerships that are practised in Senegal or Mali, as unbalanced as these partnerships are (Cross, 2011). Aminata Traoré (2007), former Malian Minister for Culture and Tourism, has argued that Africa is becoming a prison in which violence is subcontracted to countries of origin and transit. Mauritania's partial integration into "Fortress Europe" gives it a double role of receiving "returned" migrants and also expelling sub-Saharan Africans who may attempt to go to Europe. The European Council definition of return is "the process of going back to one's country of origin, transit or another third country" (Cassarino, 2006: 2). In other words, European states can "return" migrants of any African nationality to Mauritania, and also Mauritania can "return" sub-Saharans just outside its borders. Spanish authorities and the Mauritanian government installed a detention centre in Nouadhibou for migrants who attempted to leave Mauritania's shores, which came to be known as "Guantánamito", in 2006. A fisherman explained: "I know people who have left this beach but now it's forbidden and if someone is caught, they are imprisoned" (Interview, Nouakchott, 7 May 2007). Furthermore, Mauritania signed an agreement with Spain in July 2003 that concerned not only readmission of its nationals but also of those who were presumed to have transited in the country. As boats leaving the West African coast pass Mauritania en route to the Canary Islands, the agreement reinforces the constructed divide with "Africa" as it becomes a European frontier. It takes roughly four days to reach Nouadhibou by pirogue from the Cap Vert peninsula in Senegal and it is common for boats to break down or run out of supplies.

In Mauritania's role as a returner of migrants, foreign workers can be arrested or directed to the southern border on suspicion of irregularity (Samy, 2008; Yessa, 2008: 1). In 2003, fifty migrants were sent back to the border, rising to 11,637 in 2006 (Mohamed-Saleh, 2008: 2). The International Organisation for Migration, the Mauritanian Ministry of the Interior, Post and Telecommunications and the French International Service of Technical Police Cooperation (SCTIP) arranged visits for Mauritanian officials to French posts in Modan, Lille, Strasbourg and Perpignan (Confidential document, anonymous international organisation). Border posts were established in 2010 at the frontiers with Senegal, Mali and Western Sahara. Since the fieldwork period, Mauritania has launched an initiative to enrol Mauritanian citizens and foreign residents in a national electronic database, using biometric technology which is meant to identify people at ports of entry. A new government agency has been established, the National Agency of the Population Register and Secure Documents, and this has verified the identity of over 100,000 individuals. The EU and the Spanish Guardia Civil joined in a ceremony to mark a US$ 2.6 million investment in Project Western Sahel, which introduces new technology for border screening and training for border guards (US Dept. of State, 2011). At the same time, a border economy between Senegal and Mauritania continues, in which currencies are easily interchangeable, taxi drivers ferry cash and goods from migrant workers to their families and traders benefit from the different political economies. These "border rents" are gained as a result of arbitrary state divides (Gregoire and Labazée, 1993: 10). However, it is not an entirely parallel political economy because migrations are highly volatile and intersect in unexpected moments.

Conclusion

> They cannot stop people. They will try to control it but they cannot stop it; it's impossible. Before, there was nobody in Mauritania taking that risk; they'd go from Morocco. But when they blocked Morocco, people started in Mauritania, and if they block Mauritania, people will start from Libya, and when they block Libya, people will travel to Tunis, and when they block Tunis, people will start from Algeria. (Interview, Nouadhibou, 17 May 2008)

The historical background to labour mobility in this paper has raised the importance of explaining how and why migrants continue to confront increasingly dangerous border regimes. It has examined separately the opposing agendas of mobility and militarisation that circumscribe migration into and out of Mauritania. It raises questions about which trajectories present a challenge to West Africa's established role in global capitalism, and which ones entrench its underdevelopment. Local contexts enrich this enquiry because they show that the global labour market in its institutional form does not predict local outcomes.

The securitisation agenda we have seen in Mauritania challenges democracy and the aims of normative and institutional development. This is in the dual sense that it provides rent to a state that is autonomous from society and that this rent is also directed at repressive apparatuses that target particular

groups and reinforce the military style of leadership. Sub-Saharan migrants not only enter a key frontier in imperial struggle but are also integrated into its strategy. The paradox of this paper is that the highly securitised territory in which Europe has externalised its border restrictions is also one that sometimes offers migrants the most "freedom" – by means of circulation in the labour market and retention of existing social structures. A historical examination of the Mauritanian state helps to unravel this mystery. Its populations have developed in divergence from the state's boundaries, its political economy, and external constructions of the Sahara. This analysis illustrates the importance of reimagining the autonomy of migrants beyond the successful crossing of borders. This is a complex question that needs further enquiry into ever-changing dynamics in their historical context.

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FORCED MIGRATION OF CHADIANS
# IN THE FARO DIVISION IN NORTHERN CAMEROON (1980-2010)

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ABSTRACT Since independence, there have been successive skirmishes in Africa, especially the Biafra war in Nigeria from 1967 to 1970, the sidelining of opponents to the regime of Sékou Touré in Guinea and the war of liberation in Guinea Bissau. Chad is not exempted from this. In fact, the political history of Chad from 1920 to 1990 is characterised by repeated violence, and coups d'état. Since the end of the seventies till the dawn of the 21st century, Chad has witnessed and still witnesses permanent instability. These various conflicts have led to great human loss and the displacement of hundreds of thousands refugees. Cameroon, which shares a border with Chad, is politically stable and acts as a host land for Chadian refugees. The acceptation or introduction of a new member into a society has always raised controversies. This is why the coming of Chadian refuges to the Faro Division has given birth to some changes whose effects are now visible. A question then comes to mind as to how the settlement of Chadian refugees in this area can be considered as an explicative variable of economic, socio-cultural and political dynamics in the division.

Introduction

Migration in central Africa is a field of studies that is still has to be researched. This domain can even be considered as marginal in the historiography of this region. Yet, wars and political skirmishes, which have plagued it since independence, have led to the displacement of populations. These populations move from town to town or from country to country for security's sake and in search of asylum or peaceful, stable host lands that can shelter them from conflicts and persecution and guarantee them a degree of security. Cameroon remains a choice of destination for many refugees and asylum seekers from central Africa and the Great lakes region, in spite of the economic crisis and some socio political tensions linked to the high unemployment rate and cost of living. This position makes Cameroon a new basin of migration based on the geography of violence and wars. In 2008 a total of 4,600 families of about 30,000 people were registered by the UNHCR and they expressed their wish to stay in Cameroon to escape temporarily from unrest in N'Djamena (Spindler, 2008). This is how the Faro Division hosted thousands of refugees from neighbouring Chad. The arrival of these refuges in this division resulted in a number of changes whose consequences are still visible. A question then comes to mind as to how the settlement of Chadian refugees in this area can be considered an explicative variable of economic, socio-cultural and political dynamics in the division (see location map). The choice of the Faro Division is not fortuitous. The settlement of refugees did not take place in all the divisions of the north. Only two divisions received refugees, Benoué and Faro. Nevertheless, no in-depth study has been carried on refugee issues in the Faro Division (Poli-Tapare). My long stay in Poli, the divisional headquarters, is a reason for my choice as I am very familiar with the Poli-Tapare area, which receives Chadian refugees.

Figure 1: Location of the study area
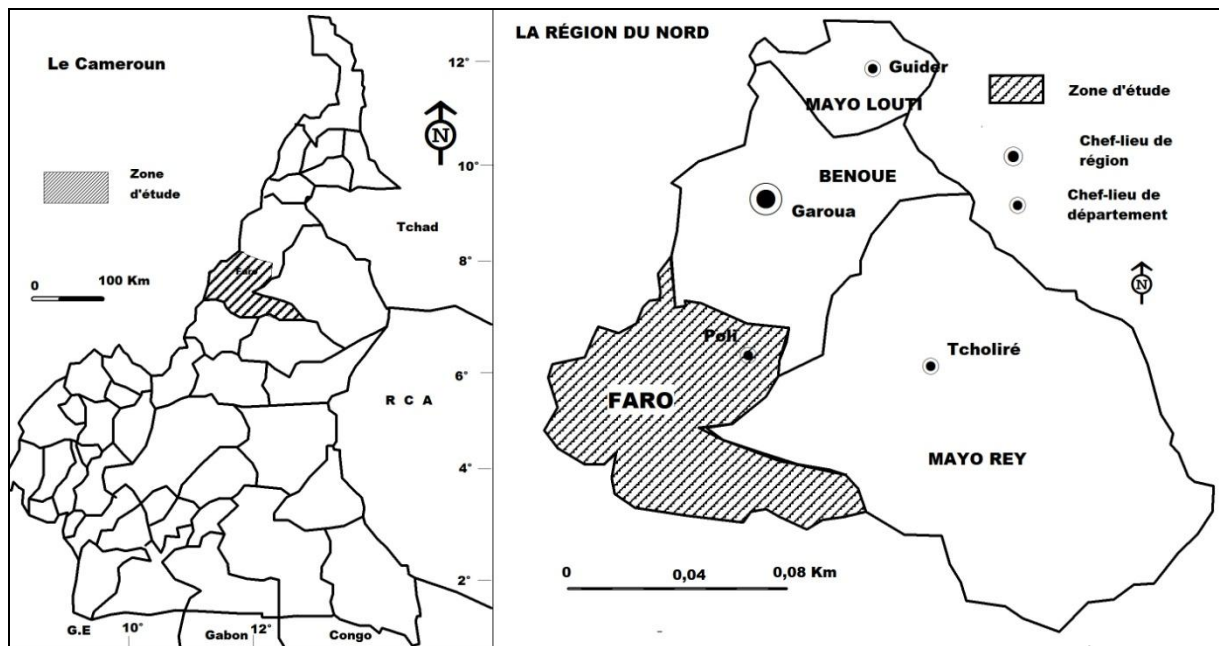
Source: Base SIG des villes du Cameroun, Laboratoire de Géomatique/université de Ngaoundéré. Adaptation: Baska Toussia, 2011.

Involuntary displacements

The early eighties were characterised by a massive entry of Chadians into Cameroon in general and the northern region in particular. This massive influx can be accounted for by the blend of many factors including political, military and economic. The sites were not chosen at random. The choice was based on set rules. These migrants who fled from wars generally belonged to various socio-professional categories, including ethnic and religious categories. Before exploring the causes of their migration, it is necessary to trace their origins.

Migration in Africa: an old phenomenon

> Very widely associated to forced migrations which affect southern countries, the notion of refugees is relatively new. It owes much to the Palestinian crisis of 1948 and three years later to the signature of the convention of Geneva, which oversaw political asylums procedures and resulted into the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Cordell, 2002: 16)

If the notion of refugees is recent, migrations on their part are not new phenomena in Africa. Along the same lines, Cordell (2002) states:

> Largely assimilated to forced migration affecting countries of the south, the notion of refugees in its modern meaning is relatively recent. Its construction is rooted highly to the Palestinian crisis of 1948 and the signing, three years later, of the Geneva Convention, which regulates the procedures of political asylum and gave birth to the United Nation High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR).

The present profile of populations in Africa results from a long-lasting process of migration whose sources are deep-rooted in history. Factors provoking migrations are generally centred on crises, be they political, ware-based or ecological.

From the valley of the Nile up to the region surrounding Lake Chad, the central Africa of the 19th century witnessed many slave raids, which prevailed after the spread of Islam in the region. This led to the displacement of populations whose situation was far better than that of people who suffered the effects of the "Holy War" of the Fulani Jihad in West Africa in the same era (Cordell, 2002: 18). This situation resulted in the displacement of populations in relatively stable zones. They had to handle their security throughout their displacement and resettlement. Ancient migrations are also accounted for by the weakness of agricultural systems.

In rural African societies, moving from one site to a more or less close site is a compelling solution for those who embark on this venture when basic needs are not fulfilled (poor productivity of land, lack of space or food, to name a few). In contexts of land saturation and demographic pressure, access to resources becomes competitive. In such a situation, migration is the last viable response. As such, part of the population moves from more populated regions to less populated ones. This was the case with the Tupuri people in the 17th century, part of whom had to move from their native soil (South East Chad) to a less populated, woodier region in North-East Cameroon. It was not a global migration that drained all the Tupuri people towards Cameroon but only a part.

During colonisation, the European administration particularly set up job migrations which where seasonal and intended for cities in a bid to provide manpower. Development migration was aimed at channelling manpower into public works. Guided by the search for profit, colonisers laid more emphasis on the quantitative aspect of manpower to the detriment of quality. The *negriers* spontaneously preferred to turn to villages instead of cites to look for the human resources that they needed. In this period, 90% of the population lived outside the cities. In far northern Cameroon for example some regions were considered manpower stores. They consisted of non-Muslim populations that were large and hardworking. The exploitation of colonies has always pushed colonisers to encourage the displacement of populations. This can be inferred from what Collette Dubois (2005: 8) upholds.

> Human mobility can be seasonal: the displacement of "navetanes" (seasonal manpower recruited to harvest groundnuts in Senegal), the migration of Mossi people to the Gold Coast to cultivate cocoa, the recruitment of workers to forest work-sites in Gabon and the recruitment of Khroumen (crew men and dockers) on the coast of western Africa by shipping companies.

At the dawn of independence, the creation of new industrial units in some places became a sine qua non condition for the development of new states. This entailed a big need for man power as was the case of Mbandjock in the central region of Cameroon. The state organised migrations intended for the

agro-industrial company SOSUCAM (Societé Sucrière du Cameroun). Tupuri, Massa and Mundang people were displaced to serve as manpower there.

As economic constraints of the dawn of independence and political alternation problems kept worsening, population movements diversified in the last decades of the 20th century.

Causes of forced displacement of Chadians

The situation in Chad worsened progressively before independence on 11 August 1960 resulting in a series of wars and the bankruptcy of the country. Many displacements, including Chadians, resulted from it. The political and economic crises were the immediate causes of departure. They paved the way for a massive forced displacement of migrants. A review of the country's recent political history would undoubtedly make the present work more comprehensive. The creation of the Chad National Liberation Front (Front de Liberation National du Tchad - FROLINAT) in 1966 by Ibrahim Abatcha at Nyala in Sudanese Darfur triggered a series of armed conflicts among various central governments at Ndjamena and armed political movements. There were political, economic and military reasons for these conflicts (Mbaïnaye, 2004: 22).

Politics

In 1962, President Tombalbaye banned opposition parties. Some of his conceited collaborators, especially some members of the armed forces, committed atrocities against the population in the north of the country resulting into the creation of the FROLINAT in 1966 (Ley-Ngardigal, 2008).

The balkanisation of this movement after the death of its founding father led to the creation of rival wings (Forces Armées du Nord - FAN, Front de Libération du Tchad - FLT...), which took power in February 1979. Soon after, however, given the prevalence of rivalries over the control of power, tribalism and money-mindedness, those rival wings entered into endless, generalised armed conflicts against one another (Ley-Ngardigal, 2008). This further worsened the country's fragile social, political and economic equilibrium. This does not apply to Chad alone. The same happened in a good number of countries in Africa. This is what the Secretary General (Sec. Gen., 1998: 3) once said on the subject to the United Nations' Security Council.

> More than thirty years after the independence of African countries, Africans themselves realise the African continent should find the solutions to its problems elsewhere. More than ever before, Africa should examine herself. The major source of conflict in the continent is the nature of the political power in many African countries as well as the real or so-called consequences related to access to power and its confiscation.

Indeed, instead of contributing to progress this conception of power is a stumbling block and a source of disagreement and social skirmishes wherein the holder of power becomes wary and locks himself among his tribesmen supposedly for protection. Absence of dialogue and mutual wariness

between the administration and the population result in non-satisfaction of basic needs. This general problem in the population creates an unstable situation in the state as the people constitute a fertile ground for complaints and revolts. This makes power instable and leads to a situation of perpetual conflict that destroys the economy. We are talking here about the destruction of the traditional economy to be replaced by a sort of "distress economy" where the local population is far from being the beneficiaries.

Socio-economic causes

War affects the economy and leads to the destruction of infrastructures and the food production system, thus causing under-nutrition, famine and death. This portrays the direct impact that the political scenario has on the population's social and economic conditions. Political quarrels have paved the way for under-nutrition, health problems and a high degree of unemployment. Faced with such a chaotic situation, the most common remaining option is to leave. What matters is the search for asylum and means of survival. As mentioned earlier, the confiscation of power by a tribal minority and political merchandising result in the appropriation of the country's resources, which are then considered private property to the exclusion of the majority of the population. Given that they are excluded from the management of resources, they feel marginalised. This therefore speeds up their quest for greener pastures. In their migration, forced migrants do not follow the same track; they obey certain parameters.

Choice of land of settlement

Before describing the study area that hosts Chadian migrants, it is a good idea to show Cameroon as a haven of peace in a sub region in perpetual unrest. Thus, for decades now, Cameroon has been a land of settlement for many migrants from different countries. It is a kind of receptacle, a melting pot of African traditions. This cultural mix is not originally from Cameroon but instead a general issue in every country due to multiple contacts between people. Some historical facts related to the settlement of foreign migrants can be traced back.

Between 1966 and 1970, at the peak of the Biafran war in Nigeria, thousands of refugees, especially nomads (Mbororo) and Hausa Muslims settle in Northern Cameroon (Bocquene, 1986: 207). In 1978, Cameroon once again welcomed Equatoguinean refugees escaping the dictatorship of Macias Nguema. This event coincided with a declaration of cooperation between the HCR (High Comission of Refugees) and the government of Cameroon. Between 1980 and 2000, Cameroon welcomed thousands of R. D. Congolese refugees running from Mobutu' dictatorship. After ethnic clashes in Nigeria in January 2002, close to 20,000 Nigerians settled in the grassland region (Dunga Mantung, Banyo). Between 1979 and 1990, the northern part of the country received more than 100,000 Chadian civilians who fled the war (UNHCR, 1991-2003). Many reasons account for this massive influx of Chadians to northern Cameroon.

The proximity between Chad and northern Cameroon is the most obvious factor which facilitates displacement at low cost. The short distance made regular access to news from their native Chad easier. The relative superiority of Cameroon in terms of economic development contributed to attract them.

The climate is Sudano-Guinean, as in the whole province, and has two alternating seasons. Located in the south of the region, the field of study has wet and cooler conditions, with an average annual rainfall of 1,400 mm and an average annual temperature of 25° C, varying between 11℃ in December/January and 37° C in April (Brabant and Humbel, 1974). According to P. Brabant and Givaud (1985) the population density is roughly 10 inhabitants/km². It is therefore less populated. This also involves the availability of cultivable land. Moreover, northern Cameroon in general and the study area in particular share many linguistic and cultural similarities that facilitate the integration of refugees from southern Chad. Refugees who settle in the Faro area are of various origins.

Typology of migrants

The refugees who flooded Poli-Taparé have different socio-professional profiles. This can be inferred from the following:

> Running away from conflicts or prosecutions, or facing despair, a good number of Chadian migrants have now settled in Cameroon... Some are civil servants, degree holders, unemployed, students, traders, simple farmers... Others are statutory refugees or asylum seekers. Others are ordinary nomads, economic migrants or adventurers from all walks of life (Mbaïnaye, 2004: 22).

The effects of war gave them all something in common: they are refugees vying for survival. Based on field investigations, refugees members of the armed forces, teachers, health workers and a majority of farmers. According to estimates from informants in the field, Taparé village has received 5,000 Chadian refugees since the beginning of the politico-military crisis in Chad.[24] The arrival of so many forced migrants in the Faro area has certainly had multiple consequences.

Effects of migrant settlement

The intrusion of new people in a social environment has always been a source of problems. The settlement of Chadians in Taparé has resulted in changes. These changes are felt at the socio-cultural, economic, political and environmental levels.

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[24] Between 1990 and 2002, Chadians returned to their country due to the relative calm that was restored to the area. These arrivals and departures are common whenever there is unrest in Chad. This was the case with the latest upheavals in Chad during which resulted in the town of Kousseri, which shares a border with N'Djamena, receiving thousands of refugees.

Socio-cultural impacts

The arrival of Chadians at Taparé has ushered in a new type of relationship with the local population. These relationships are most often characterised by an attitude of wariness vis à vis the refugees based on the reasons for the refugees' departure. This wariness and suspicion are further reinforced by lasting stereotypes of Chadians as brutal and cold-blooded. This stigmatisation is seen further in insults like as "dirty Chadians". In fact, due to the economic situation in Chad, this position is further reinforced, thus presenting Chadians as very poor, living in misery and abject poverty. Given their status as new comers, the displaced are positioned at the bottom of the social ladder. This status of eternal need does not favour a change in attitude toward them. They become more vulnerable.

The misery in which they live increases their vulnerability, as refugee status is given on the basis of general and not individual conditions in Africa. The 1969 convention of the African Union Organisation, in effect broadens refugee status without necessarily demonstrating that there is individual persecution. This is sign of irresponsibility of western countries vis à vis crises which are not directly related to them (Rodier, 2002: 25). As such, while 80% of refugees were given their status on a collective or prima facie basis, there seems to be a big contrast with Europe, where the majority (if not all) of applicants were given the status of refugees on an individual bases. The HCR (2005: 6) thus holds "regional differences with regard to the recognition of is accounted for by the nature of the existing judiciary frame as well as by the level of economic development(to determine the status of refugees on individual basis is demanding in terms of resources". These legal provisions contribute to the irregularity of general assistance to refugees. Refugees are abandoned to their own fate and are therefore more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infection.

Many factors contributing to the increase in the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission among refugees are quite well known. Refugees are far removed from their native soils. They do not have anything to live on. This institutional and social breakdown has an effect on the cohesion of the community, thus disrupting social sexual norms which underlie behaviours. Being a refugee living far from one's native land can contribute to the consumption of alcohol and drugs, which might result in the destruction of the notion of risk in individual and collective attitudes. In refugee camps women and girls face sexual violence and exploitation. The refugees struggle to satisfy their basic needs for food, water and housing. In these conditions, women and girls often use their charms or beauty for money, food and protection. Children without parental support who are orphans or separated from their families are particularly vulnerable to violence and physical and sexual exploitation (Hankins, *et al*, 2002). The presence of Chadians at Taparé has increased the population. If pieces of land shared among refugees do not pose problems from the onset, as the population increases, access to land becomes a major concern.

Migration in northern Cameroon in general is a source of much conflict related to access to land. The most famous disputes are those opposing natives to migrants. Though less visible, intra-family problems are also rife. Conflicts over land are usually triggered by a series of causes. Though the scarcity

of land itself is a credible reason for this, this however fails to veil other causes, such as disagreement on the interpretation of previous transactions, the renewal of generations and a rise in money-mindedness (Mahamadou, 2008: 2).

Old transactions have been considered as definitive by Chadian migrants, while for local populations the land is just lent to migrants. Furthermore, refugees' descendants tend to free themselves from the shackles of verbal agreements on land exploitation, while the offspring of the local population question their parents' agreements. Finally, money-based transactions are also ambiguous. The results are divergences based on the interpretation of agreements. According to the sellers, the lands were simply exchanged for money with refugees for long-term exploitation, which therefore does not free the buyers from traditional obligations.[25] For migrants buyers, the plots were bought and should therefore be considered their property and they are thus exempted from all obligations vis à vis the sellers. The seller's behaviour is accounted for by the fact that a plot cannot be definitely sold to a refugee since the he will sooner or later go back to his native country. Problems faced by Chadian refugees with regard to access to land result in a difficult economic insertion.

The economic insertion of refugees

The concentration of refugees in camps does not ease their insertion. Survival being the daily leitmotiv, after refugees in Taparé have spent a few years in the area, they start looking for jobs outside their settlement. This situation was worsened by the economic crisis of the late 1980s, which made access to the job market difficult. This is why in most cases these refugees succeeded in finding jobs but as night watchmen at personal residences or in services. This difficult insertion favoured the multiplication of small jobs in the informal sector. This includes cobblers, shoe polishers, water sellers and soya sellers.

As far as women are concerned, they have developed other strategies as a suitable response to their situation. They have naturally embraced the *bil-bil*[26] business. Given the linguistic and cultural proximities between some populations of southern Chad and northern Cameroon, it can be held that the production of this beverage is not specific to the population of northern Cameroon. This is why Chadian women make *bil-bil*, which does not require much to get started. Their involvement in this sector is noticeable in big towns in northern Cameroon, particularly in Maroua. Gigla (2009) says that:

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[25] In the African land tenure beliefs, land is a collective (family, village) not of an individual good. It belongs to ancestors and cannot be sold. Nevertheless, traditional mechanisms permit foreigners to have access to land. Care taking is one of these mechanisms. For the locals, caretaking organises refugees' access to land through money lending. In this way, the seller becomes the "refugee's caretaker" and the buyer has to respect certain local obligations and customs. This is done generally through gifts of part of the harvest to the caretaker and respect for rites at the start and end of the farming season.

[26] Bil-bil is a local beverage brewed from millet and consumed in north Cameroon and south Chad. Millet is soaked and conditioned to favour germination. The ground, germinated, dried millet is soaked in large clay pots ready for cooking. After a few hours of cooking, the juice is placed in other clay pots. After this phase, the liquid is left to cool followed by all-night fermentation. By sun rise the fermented liquid from the millet is ready for consumption.

> As one takes a walk in bil-bil quarters in Maroua town, it is easy to note the
> degree of involvement of Chadian women. They work with local brewers in main
> quarters where bil-bil is brewed. As such, they are found in Hardé, Fasaw,
> Domayo Pont called "world market" given the scope of the bil-bil phenomenon.
> They have ushered in new techniques in the brewing of bil-bil which they fabricate
> in iron cans.

Incomes generated from this business have enabled Chadian women to meet the basic needs of their families. The use of millet and corn has influenced the quantity of local annual production. Refugees themselves have thus ended up being involved in agricultural activities.

Their insertion into agriculture was more successful in spite of the hurdles faced in their quest for plots. The arrival of Chadian migrants at Taparé has boosted the production of cereal, leguminous and oleaginous products. This is visible in the market in the Faro division. Before the arrival of migrants, this unimportant market was not known to the population of the main town in the division. As time went by, the market specialised in selling groundnuts produced mainly by the refugees. The presence of refugees in Faro has political implications.

From a political standpoint

After several years at Taparé, refugees and above all their descendants tend to mix with the local populations. The acquisition of national identity cards of their host country constitutes a guarantee of protection and a peaceful living for refugees.[27] This is what Mimché (2006b: 60) said with regard to it.

> For many neighbouring populations, this double nationality consists in concretely
> looking for official papers (national identity card) of the country of residence in
> order to escape from prosecution by forces of order and that of the country of
> residence for eventual visits to the country of origins of family members, to have
> rights in foreign territories. Moreover, the search for double identity gives refugees
> some rights in their host country: right to land, access to the job market, and right
> to education with the same status as natives of the country.

In so doing, a new identity emerges characterised by dual nationality and the status "new citizens". The phenomenon of dual nationality and transnationality is an unavoidable reality, given the multiple conflicts that plague Africa This is true for Ivory Coast with the concept of "ivority" as portrayed by Mimché (2006a: 62) in the following excerpt.

> Today it is difficult to analyse the immigration processes and strategies in the
> world without considering the development of transnational identities and double
> identities. The Ivorian crisis and the invention of the concept of "ivority" tells more
> on this issue which, far from being an implicit form of scientific stigmatisation as
> mentioned earlier, is a living reality.

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[27] Refugees do not acquire national identity cards immediately after their settlement. After several years of continuous settlement in a place, a relational tie is created between the refugees and the local population. The relationship between traditional chiefs and refugees is less suspicious by then. Thus, birth certificates can be issued to refugees easily for a few thousand CFA francs. This document then removes all obstacles to getting an identity card issued as it is the basic document required.

Taking advantage of linguistic and cultural relationships, former refugees will easily mix among northern Cameroon populations and benefit from the same advantages as Cameroonian citizens[28]. This is the case of Tupuri, Mundang, Massa and Sara refugees who use these linguistic and cultural advantages to integrate into their new society. These integrations reappear in politics as conflicts when these former refugees occupy high positions at state level.

During Cameroon's "hot years" at the beginning of the process of democracy, use was made of the presence of refugees in the political field. The 1990s witnessed a wind of democratisation blowing in Africa. Cameroon did not escape from this political gift. This democratisation was marked by many claims, with violence and "ghost towns" paralysing the country. This socio political crisis situation did not force the displacement of the population to other neighbouring countries. But resorting to refugees' votes was an electoral asset for opposition parties or the party in power. Owning official documents was made easy in the perspective of political interests. Refugees constituted an electoral store where political interests were met. The contribution of Taparé refugees has not been just political, as their actions have had impacts at environmental level.

Environmental impacts

The arrival of at least 5,000 refugees at Taparé has had many environmental impacts. Given that the presence of refugees has many effects on the environment, environmental problems related to it are major and constant concerns of the HCR. A report from *Section Programme and Technical Support* (HCR, 1991: 2) outlines three particular conditions of the massive displacement of refugees.

- Disproportion between high population density and available resources in the settlement area of refugees
- The tendency of allowing the settlement of refugees in ecologically fragile zones

Refugees are not motivated to protect the environment, due to the trauma of war and displacement and the fact that the land they live on does not belong to them.

In the study area, this is noticeable and comprises all the conditions outlined in this report. For them to settle, refugees had to cut down trees on a large scale. To meet their needs for wood, they have to fell multi-purpose trees. It is obvious that in a fragile ecological environment this leads to an ecological breakdown. The extreme poverty in which refugees live does not give them the opportunity to care for ecological equilibrium. At Taparé, they have specialised in the sale of wood and production of charcoal, which requires dense, naturally sustainable trees that have enough calories. In this light, (Jacobsen, 1994 cited in Black, 1998: 32) hold this:

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[28] The Tupuri and Mundang people are found on both sides of the Cameroon-Chad border. This is as a result of the partitioning of Africa in the Berlin conference in 1884-1885. This divided these people who share not only the same culture but also linguistic roots. Thanks to this link, whether in Cameroon or in Chad, a Toupouri, Moundang or Massa can easily fit into the host localities as he/she does not feel like a foreigner to cultural practices.

> As the need for wood increases, new markets are created and forests are more or less affected: trading places are also created for other natural resources such as water or thatch. Firewood is sold or exchanged for food during periods of food insecurity, such as "shortage seasons" after harvest, when stores of food run out

This rush for multi-purpose wood leads to its disappearance. Wood plays a important role in rituals and traditional rites. As such, they disappear alongside the traditional knowledge that has been transmitted from generations to generations.[29]

The disappearance of the vegetal cover from a site is caused by the destruction of soils. Soils which are not covered by trees can easily be eroded by rainwater. Research carried out by Long, Cecsarini and Martin (1990: 12) suggests that tree killing caused by the presence of refugees led to massive soil erosion after heavy rains in 1989 "taking away the soils from the treeless areas". In the long run, this destruction of soils and the killing of trees could have terrible effects on the weather and even agricultural production and thus constitute another cause of displacement.

Conclusion

The subject of migration movement has hardly been researched in Central Africa, in spite of the plethora of conflicts there. Migration in this area is ancient. Many factors have caused them. Regarding the presence of Chadians in Faro and more precisely in Taparé, the politico-military conflicts in Chad explain this. The choice of the settlement zone was not made haphazardly. Geographical, linguistic and cultural proximities explain why the Tapare area was chosen. This village witnessed the arrival of a considerable number of migrants with diverse socio-professional profiles. This massive presence of Chadian refugees has caused many socio-cultural and economic changes. There have therefore been many conflicts related to land and an increase in production. From political and environmental standpoints, changes include the question of double identity and the disappearance of trees to the extent of threatening the ecological balance.

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[29] Several centuries of continuous relations between the people of north Cameroon and their plant environment has favoured the development of indigenous know-how. This knowledge of plant species is seen in every aspect in life. Whether in the socio political, religious or cultural domain, many centuries of coexistence has provided a rich multiplication of traditional knowledge transmitted from generation to generation through rituals and oral tradition. The extinction of these species leads directly to the loss of know-how about plants as the future generations can no longer transmit this indigenous know-how.

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TAXATION AND THE DYNAMICS OF CROSS-BORDER MIGRATION BETWEEN CAMEROON, CHAD AND NIGERIA IN THE COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL PERIOD

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Abstract Taxation is an important factor of social and political upheavals and revolts in the history of humanity. Populations in northern Cameroon, even those accustomed to taxes, have hardly integrated modern taxes into their universe, as they are considered to be opposed to traditional taxes. Colonial tax is therefore regarded as a factor of enslavement or impoverishment. For the colonial administration, however, acceptance of tax was the barometer of the local people's submission to authority. Any refusal was treated as a challenge, insubordination or open rebellion. It was partly to avoid the effect of this shock and especially humiliation due to taxes that many people opted for temporary or permanent migration. The colonial administration described this as tax evasion or a form of delinquency. For the people, the idea was to seek a tax haven, a place where tax rates were lower. The Cameroon-Nigeria borders are therefore comparable to sieves because of their porosity. The result was the depopulation of certain areas to the benefit of others and, by extension, the economic fragility of the departure zones.

Introduction

The issue of human mobility is a major puzzle for governments. It is structured in terms of a challenge to national integration and a global world vision. While in the past major historical migrations and human mobility were more related to random factors such as food crises due to drought or weather conditions, captures, wandering, periods of insecurity, slave trade or religious wars (Brunet, 2000; Dumont, 2006), today they seem to be determined more by armed conflicts (civil wars, border disputes and ethnic crises, etc), education, political or other ecological factors. Thus, it would not be consistent to talk about migration in the current context only in terms of hunger, although it is alarming, because it comes from many factors. In Africa's history for example, labour migration has long been a phenomenon in fashion under colonization and beyond. It favoured waves of voluntary and involuntary worker displacement. It is therefore appropriate to distinguish displaced people from real migrants due to various factors. It was in this perspective that the people of the Mandara Mountains in the far north of Cameroon were forced to leave their refuge sites for the plains. For the colonial and postcolonial administration, it was about decongesting the overpopulated Mandara Mountains in favour of the agricultural development of the plains. Populations from the mountains and plains were also displaced by President Ahmadou Ahidjo's government for agricultural projects planned in the Benue valley.

In general, examination of colonial and postcolonial archives revealed numerous references to labour migration, tax evasion, i.e. related to a harsh taxation policy or high tax rates. However, the abundant administrative reports in the archives unfortunately seemed to be downplayed, probably for fear of social tensions and escalation of tax revolts. Yet, while appreciating their destabilizing effects in African

societies in general and Cameroon in particular, it clearly appeared that migration was the basis for massive population movements driven by the idea of finding a tax haven. This was the case in the border regions of Cameroon and Nigeria on the one hand and Cameroon and Chad on the other. Aware of the resulting population drain and its impact on colonial farming policy, the French government took tax migration very seriously. Measures were often taken to limit or contain the phenomenon.

But how effective can these measures be when we know we have in Cameroon "peuple trait-d'union" (people who share brotherhood through language and culture despite state boundaries such as Mundang, Toupouri, Massa and Moussey in the far north of Cameroon) and whose proximity is an important factor of cross-border mobility? And what about pastoral people (such as Fulani, Bororo or Arab choa) whose vocation is to be in constant movement in search of pasture for their livestock? How is it possible in this context to regulate migration or human mobility? Which measures in African borders as drawn by European powers after the Berlin Conference and colonial settlement potentially carried the seeds of an incentive to defy the ban, especially in a context marked by past free human mobility? Why not cross these boundaries especially if they are customarily considered invalid? Our aim in this study is not to conduct a critical review of migration theories, but to show how the porous nature of the Chad-Cameroon and Nigeria-Cameroon borders, plus the transnational community phenomenon, represent challenges in terms of control of human flows. We finally focus on measures and tax policies as undeniable bases of constant seasonal or definitive migrations of the "peuples trait d'union".

Figure 1: Location of the study area
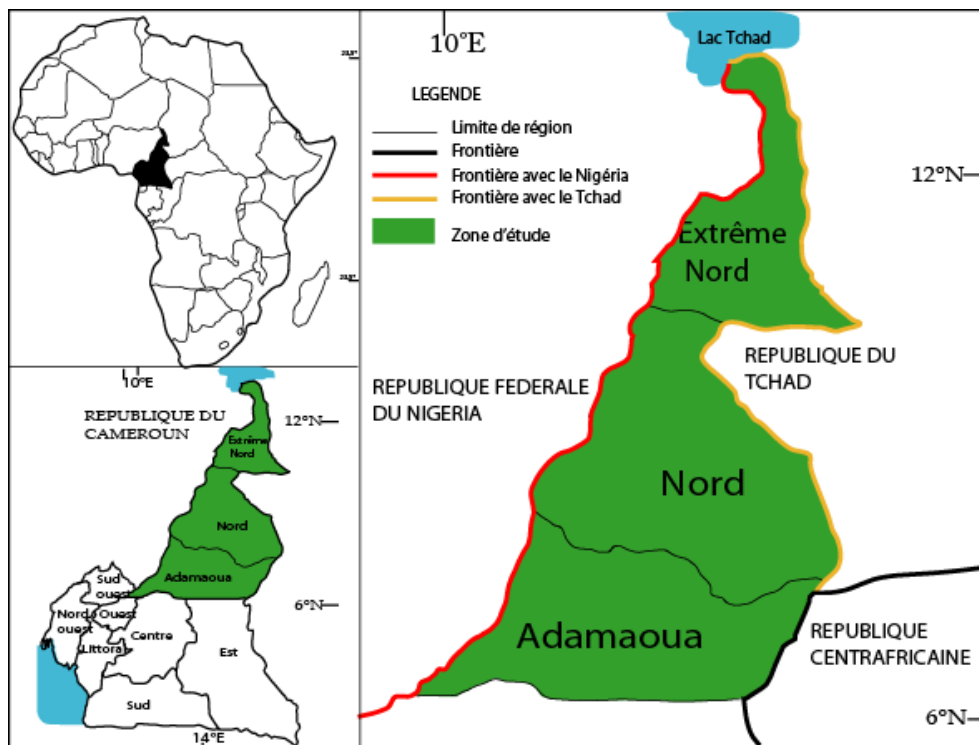
Source: Atlas de la province Extrême-Nord Cameroun, 2000 (base-map); adapted by Félix Watang Zieba.

Theories of migration, borders and ideological justifications

Migrations are universal phenomena. They are the basis of dissolution and social restructuring in many countries. Their relationship to space and territory are developed enough so that it is impossible to talk about human migration or mobility without reference to departure and arrival areas.

In the context of this study, migration is defined with regard to the boundary and movement related to them. Several factors explain different human mobility, especially in a socio-political and economic context determined by instability, insecurity and various crises. Migration theorists like Everett S. Lee (1966) have carried out studies devoted to issues such as education and migration, gender and migration, distance and migration and labour and migration as fundamental in the understanding of human mobility. Other studies, however, focused on migrants' areas of origin and destination, potential barriers that served as an excuse or reason for travel and, to a lesser extent, personal factors.

Whatever the case, the migration issue goes beyond personal or natural factors. It involves cultural factors, as if to say that there are people who are defined by their constant migration propensity. This would be true for nomadic pastoralists (Fulani and Arab Choa in northern Cameroon) whose instability is related to the search for pasture for their livestock. To that extent, they are a serious trans-state challenge to security and control of demography. This has also led to the formation of migration networks, essentially defined by genuine cultural connectivity and solidarity. In fact, according to D. Mokam, it is clear that "intra-ethnic relationship and socio-political organization do not respect borders" (2000:15).

Because of its magnitude, the issue of migration has led to mobilization of expertise so as to better understand the issue and especially to limit its more or less perverse effects. Many theories have been developed for this purpose. Some attempt to explain the phenomenon of migration through its factors. One can also invoke income differences between the country of origin and host countries, the labour market, cultural and linguistic proximity (Lerch and Piguet, 2005: 5-6). Some also mention economic crisis as an amplifier of population movements; prosperity is then seen as a human stabilizing factor (Nganawara, 2009).

Furthermore, another consideration of migration is based on neoclassical economic theory. According to this theory, just like internal migration, international migration is caused by geographical differences between labour supply and demand.[30] However, this theory is accused of ignoring the international political and economic environment, economic effects at national level and policy decisions that influence individual decisions to migrate or not. For others, however, the issue of migration is more related to structural causes acting globally and particularly in countries of origin: poverty, lack of work or low-paid jobs, overpopulation in the third world, wars, famines, environmental disasters, dictatorships and

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[30] These theories were developed by Lewis (1954) and by Harris and Todaro (1970).

persecution of minorities, prompting more people to emigrate to the West. This argument is developed by Ambrosini[31]. It is established that only socio-historical large scales are likely to cause significant migration flows, and not micro-or individual decisions (Castells, 1989; Wallerstein, 1974).

Overall, these theories assume the decisive role of obstacles or random factors in the increase in migration. However, it is not our perspective of untimely wanderings or migrations as is often the case in the speeches of politicians, for whom the issue of migration has become a real syndrome. All this is to justify that forced migration is generally explained by reasons of work and effects such as urban sprawl and rural areas. Anyway, the issue of immigration is becoming a nightmare for states, insofar as it seems to jeopardize the national balance, especially in terms of income distribution, social, educative and health infrastructures, etc.

Despite the fear that immigration is on the rise, nowadays we see a form of discrimination, because European countries generally accept so-called "useful migrants", while huge crowds of generally unskilled illegal migrants are undesirable. This probably justifies the concept of selective immigration and admission quotas advocated by former French President, Nicolas Sarkozy. To this extent, the brain drain, a kind of migration of skills, seemed to be formally more and more encouraged, mainly in the current context of globalization. However, considering the diversity of migration flows and the profile of migrants, we cannot uphold the widespread idea that tends to present migrants as poor residues of nomadic societies.

As mentioned above, several factors explain international migration dynamics. We should recognize that fear, poverty, social or economic insecurity and instability in any society largely determine human mobility. People leave their homelands for vital reasons (such as the pursuit of well-being, prosperity, social harmony, better working conditions or career prospects). According to experts, future migrations will not be related to labour, hunger or disease, but mainly to climate disruption (Victor, 2009). After an overview of these considerations, we can now look at the very concept of migration. At this level, several complementary approaches are to be taken into account.

For Everett Lee, "Migration is defined broadly as a permanent or semi- permanent change of residence. No restriction is placed upon the distance of the move or upon the voluntary or involuntary nature of the act, and no distinction is made between external and internal migration" (Lee, 1966: 49). R. Lucas however defines it as follows in relation to its size: "Migration is comparable to a flow of water or electricity − an adjustment flow responding to pressure differentials at opposite ends of a pipeline. This view suggests that it is neither the absolute level of normal push nor pull factors which matters, but existing difference in relative attraction elements" (Lucas, 1981: 85).

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[31] Cited by Ambrosetti and Tattolo (2008).

In this case study, migration is perceived as a kind of human mobility on a large or small scale, generally depending on random factors. Due to the complexity of the migration phenomenon, the idea of a deliberate attempt to migrate should not be ignored. Indeed, whatever the reasons, there is a decision to leave, stay or give in by facing challenges. Some migrations are forced. This was the case, for instance, of labour migration in the colonial period. In fact, for the French administrators of northern Cameroon, the purpose was to encourage people to come down from the mountains to the plains for an agricultural project. This policy continued even after independence, when the government encouraged the Kirdi (a name given to non-Muslims and used in a different context to the inhabitants of mountainous areas in northern Cameroon) and populations of mountainous zones and plains in the far north of Cameroon to move to the Benue Valley again for agricultural purposes (Akam, 1998: 48-49). It was largely forced migration, a form of requisition for labour and farms. However, it was not closely related to taxes, although better agricultural production directly impacts farmers' tax capacities.

Today in Cameroon seasonal migration is the most prevalent. It is very different from the rural exodus. This is the case of Mafa and Mofu (people from the mountainous area of northern Cameroon) who, owing to harsh, saturated environments, are forced to descend seasonally to the cities on the plain in search of paid work (Iyébi-Mandjek, 1993: 421). The factors and actors of migration are quite complex. Similarly, it is part of the overall process of globalization by linking human societies (Baby-Collin, *et al.*, 2009: 16). Furthermore, on the basis of all these complexities, Nganawara estimates that one can regard migration as a "generative mechanism of development and reduction of tensions in times of economic growth", or a "carrier of social tensions and dysfunctions in times of economic crisis" (Nganawara, 2009: 2). This consideration is justified in many respects, especially against a background of economic distress.

In this study, we achieved a better understanding of the migration phenomenon in terms of borders. We have divergent views on the subject. Should we consider boundaries as impervious barriers, demarcation lines or links? Or should we consider them as sources of conflict and geostrategic issues? The very perception of borders has changed over time. For some, the word boundary in both French and English, expresses the idea front, if not of confrontation. But cities and frontier regions are primarily places of confrontation. Therefore, it must be understood in terms of a border zone but not a dividing line. English terminology distinguishes frontier and boundary (Kotek, 2009: 17; 22-23).

In Africa, however, the perception of borders seems to have been trampled on for the sake of hegemonic considerations. As Coquery-Vidrovitch said, "In the nineteenth century especially, the border came to mean an expansion zone or cultural regression. This is an age when population movements, wherever you are, take a scale probably never seen before" (1999: 43).

The idea of an impervious boundary separating people, although not acquired in pre-colonial Africa, finally prevailed in favour of colonization and the misfortune of the populations then integrated. It follows then that:

> International borders of Central Africa are (now) reflecting a spatial grid inherited from colonial competitions. They cover state entities that have been invented or created by European powers a century ago, when the continent was divided by treaty promptly signed on the basis of uncertain maps. The introduction of colonial borders in the late nineteenth century in Africa has been accompanied by the brutal and arbitrary introduction of a European model of state and importation "of a territorial order and spatial planning straight out of a Westphalian model abusively universalized" (Bennafla, 1999: 27).

Even if this view seems quite sharp, it probably reflects the resentment of people were not consulted in advance. The colonial diktat got the better of them, especially since it was a question of territorial marking, a kind of area of influence as a token of sovereignty and expression of genuine political and economic hegemony. Clearly, it is true that the balkanization of Africa is recent and due to the borders inherited from colonization. However, it remains plausible that pre-colonial Africa was not immune to prevarications. Indeed, commercial rivalry and problems related to territorial conquests or other struggles perfectly illustrate the difficult issue of disputes over space or areas of influence.

How can we understand the essentially conflicting reports of populations on space or land? Our study does not however attempt to survey these winding labyrinths of land seizures that are often causes of political conflicts. Thus, as stated by Achille Mbembe, "far from being the simple product of colonization, the current boundaries (African) reflect business realities, religious and military rivalries, power relationships and alliances that existed between the various imperial powers, and between them and Africans throughout the centuries preceding colonization" (Mbembe, 2005: 47). Because of the colonization of Africa, we entered a critical phase that would not only participate in the restructuring but also the disintegration of African socio-economic and political entities.

However, just after African independence and especially with the foundation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the principle of the inviolability of African borders was firmly established. This clearly requires that there should be no change, for fear of creating new divisions. But what does an arbitrary line customarily invalid for trans-border or transnational populations in whose minds borders are neither boundaries nor barriers really represent? This reality simply seems to involve politics that are then forced to bow to political hegemonies. The porous nature of the Cameroon-Nigeria and Cameroon-Chad borders further reinforces this perception of the border as a line of continuity. These boundaries remain in effect like sieves for both nomadic peoples and trans- borders bandits (Issa, 2010).

In fact, if for some we can talk of border violations due to inadvertent, uncontrolled movements, for the "peuples trait-d'union"[32] however, mobility here means grouping. As indicated by D. Mokam, "Despite the colonial division, the Mundang and Gbaya[33] people would continue to move from one point to another of their territory and continue certain practices that were current in their societies (...)" (Mokam,

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[32] This sentence refers to the people who live across borderlands. It is the case of the Mundang of Chad and Cameroon. For more details, read the article by Mokam (2000).

[33] The Mundang are an ethnic group living in the far north region of Cameroon and in the south of Chad. The Gbaya are based in the Adamaoua region, east region and the Central African Republic. Both are trans-border communities.

2000: 15). This complex framework created by colonisation is however unable to reduce the essential mobility of trans-border communities for which family and community connections overrule border considerations. These connections are also amplified and relayed by broad economic and social exchanges… (Bangoura, 2001: 7). This applies both to the Mundang, Toupouri and Massa people of the plains and also to the Mandara.[34] Indeed, the mountain range separating Cameroon and Nigeria acts in all respects as a springboard for cross-border human mobility. It is therefore not an impenetrable natural barrier, especially when we know that there are no checkpoints on the mountain sides. Clearly, natural boundaries (mountains or political barriers) have been unable to contain the mobility of people and goods in this area, even in the context of modern African state borders, albeit intangible.

While analyzing the complexity of the border between Cameroon and Nigeria, S. Ndembou wrote:

> Cameroon ridge from the Mount Cameroon in the South to the Mandara Mountains in the north is not an impassable barrier to access of Nigerians to Cameroon. The front door of this screen is marked by the Benue which valley opens on Yola, a Nigerian territory, on a distance of several kilometers. The valleys of this river and its tributaries, as well as the Diamaré plain provide access to the vast plains of the Logone and Chad to the east and northward. All are corridors and boulevards to the movement of people and goods [...] (Ndembou, 2001: 8).

Geography is an important asset for perpetual migration or cross-border mobility. Unfortunately, it also maintains commercial smuggling networks which makes highly unsafe. Smuggling along Cameroon and Nigeria border probably reflects refusal rejection of the idea of borders, of which perception as exclusion or separation zones is more negative. Our analysis of the extent of tax evasion and its relationship to the problem of controlling the human demographics and mobility is based more on a close examination of colonial and postcolonial archives.

Tax evasion and trans-bordermobility

Tax evasion is a well organized system that consists of strategies to escape to taxes. Taxpayers seek to indefinitely avoid the levy that the tax administration wishes to impose on their income, or at least reduce it (Gaudemet and Molinier, 1997: 226). The phenomenon of tax evasion resulted in many respects from the idea of disobedience, and especially a desire to preserve what they perceived as meagre income.

According to tax specialists, evasion is often the result of tax fraud. Indeed, through non-declaration or misrepresentation, significant income escapes taxation and therefore constitutes a loss to the tax administration (Brémond and Gedelan., 1981: 190). However, the phenomenon of tax evasion or fraud is not exclusive to modern societies, though it has increased considerably. Indeed back in feudal Europe, the British kingdoms were perceived by the Spanish as a tax haven, since the per capita tax there was three times lower than in their homeland (Léon, 1978: 154).

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[34] The Mandara are an ethnic group living on the Mora plain (Mora, Mémé, Makalingaï, etc.). They created one of the powerful kingdoms of the Chad basin and conquered some mountainous populations such as Molko, Mbokou, etc.

In the far north of Cameroon, the Choa Arab sultanates developed the art of evasion as victims of multiple abuses by the Kotoko. They regarded mobility as their only weapon but they eventually suffered the thrust of other nomads like the Tubu (Hagenbucher, 1973: 6).[35] The Tubu are a large group of Sahelian ethnic groups. They are found mostly in Chad, but also in Niger (northwest of Lake Chad) and Libya (Baroin, 1989: 9-10).

Many investigations that we conducted in the Diamare plain and Mandara Mountains from 2003 to 2010, however, indicate that tax evasion was quite negligible before the colonial period.[36] This is justified by the fact that prevailing insecurity discouraged anyone from leaving the village. The context was the inter-tribal wars and slave raids. As indicated by Coquery-Vidrovitch, "the border in pre-colonial Africa was essentially an area of contacts, exchanges and rivalries" (1999: 41). This is probably why borders have resulted in important positive and sometimes strained interactions between populations in Africa.

Despite peacekeeping operations in the so-called refractory zones by armed militia in the French period, security remained precarious. The colonial context seems to have created favourable conditions for evasion. How can we justify such a change when we know that taxation is not new among these peoples of the mountains and plains of north Cameroon?

Everything starts from socio-political perception of tax. Tax in these societies is a form of recognition and also allegiance to a legitimate authority. However, the introduction of the colonial tax system meant Africans had to renounce their traditional tax. For Africans refusing to pay tax as a symbol of colonial power reflected their attachment to the traditional order received from ancestors represented by the chief (Fotsing, 1995: 135). The situation was even more radical in northern Cameroon, especially in a context of strained relations between the Kirdi people (pejorative name given to the people called pagan in the northern regions of Cameroon and today reinstated by some of them as part of their "socio-cultural identity") and the Mandara and Fulani potentates. These conflictive relationships were built around the thorny question of authority and sovereignty. This also continues to stoke tensions between ethnic groups (Pahimi, 2010: 71). The Mandara and Fulbe exercised strong authority over the Kirdi and committed numerous abuses. The Kirdi responded to this abuse with robberies (Issa and Adama, 2002).

These tensions justified the idea that taxation raises the issue of the legitimacy of the state and its political leaders (Mbata Mangu, 2007: 3). Thus, refusal to pay tax can be likened to a kind of social censure against state policy, or all authority in a legitimacy crisis. With colonization, the symbolism of tax was enriched by new considerations. The following comment by the Maroua district head perfectly shows France's native policy:

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[35] The Choa Arabs are a nomadic group. They live in the Logone valley (Chad basin).
[36] We are not suggesting that human mobility was impossible during the pre-colonial period. Markets were already active and provided opportunities for encounters and intermingling. There were some security measures. For more details see Barth (1965).

> Willingness to pay tax is the clearest sign of rallying and the only pledge of loyalty that we can receive from natives too frustrated to learn all aspects of our indulgence. Consequently, any refusal to pay a tax, any manifestation of hostility, while a political preparation has been carefully made, are the characteristics of a mindset that we must avoid allowing to crystallize.[37]

This option was materialized through peacekeeping and taming operations that for the people were more like terror and expropriation of their meagre income. Determined not to suffer from double taxation because of the juxtaposition of traditional and modern taxation, some of the people eventually chose to flee. This is a perfect illustration of the illegitimacy of so-called modern colonial taxation in a customary context. These taxable populations chose to escape injustice, malpractices perpetrated by the colonial agents and their own leaders now converted into instruments of the colonizer. Escaping taxation is considered the basis of temporary or permanent migration of populations, especially those in border areas. Indeed, living in a border area offered real benefits to those who in the name of poverty or rebellion wanted to escape taxation. Many are attracted to neighbouring countries that levy relatively low tax rates, hence the idea of seeking tax havens.

Sultan Diagara of Goulfeï (border area of Nigeria and Chad) complained because many Arabs under his command fled with their possessions to Nigeria and Chad. They protested against tax rates[38]. In the same vein, the Lamidate of Doumrou (Cameroonian village border of Chad) experienced real difficulties in tax collection. Its proximity to Binder (Chad) was exploited by taxable populations. Thanks to their family connections for example, Moundang, Tupuri, Massa and Mussey people take refuge there when they are asked to pay high taxes.[39]

The head of Garoua division complained that many natives migrated to Nigeria, some to avoid paying their taxes, others because they had committed crimes and were wanted by the colonial authorities.[40] These indications reflect the fear of colonial administrators of seeing any decrease in population in their territories. In these waves of "tax migration", the Kirdi element is the most important.[41] The exodus in the form of temporary or permanent migration occurs especially during tax collection, after which the migrants return. How could they minimize this phenomenon whose magnitude was recognized by the colonial administrators in their administrative or economic tours to view the general agricultural situation, especially grain production and cash crops such as groundnuts and cotton and generally inquire into the local socio-political atmosphere? This attention from the administrative authority was justified because the populations in this region of the country were constantly dealing with food crises, closely

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[37] ANY APA 12033, Lettre du chef de Circonscription de Maroua à Mr le Commissaire de la République (17 January 1926).

[38] ANY, APA 12033, Rapport de tournée dans le Sultanat du Logone (18 December 1920 to 06 January 1921)

[39] ANY, APA 11854/A, Compte-rendu de tournée, Circonscription de Maroua, p.14.

[40] ANY, Vt 38/17, Rapport du chef de Bataillon (Langlois) commandant le Région Nord à M. le Commissaire de la République, p.1.

[41] ANY, Vt 38/17, Rapport du chef de Bataillon (Langlois) commandant le Région Nord à M. le Commissaire de la République, p.1.

linked to climate crises. After finding disparities in tax rates between Chad and Cameroon, both administered by France, the governor of Chad made the following comments:

> The natives of Cameroon live in areas identical to corresponding regions in Chad. They are from the same race, their resources are identical and trade from one bank to another of rivers Logone and Chari are very active. Therefore why those differences? Probably because the powerful colony of Cameroon is rich and Chad is subject to a multitude of easements in favour of the nearby settlements or the General Government of AEF[42] (French Equatorial Africa) and must follow a policy of high tax yield.[43]

Thus, the flow of border populations from Cameroon to Chad for tax reasons was a constant concern for the administration. It was clear to the French administrators of Cameroon that cross-border migrations were a threat to economic stability and population of the territory. It was particularly important to monitor this phenomenon. This fear is reflected also in a note from the General Labour Inspectorate dated 1946: "Prolonged emigration could seriously affect the total manpower of the Territory".[44] The administrators' fear was justified because people moved without seeking their advice. One can only understand this attitude through the perception of the border, which was a political and not an ethnic issue for local people.

If tax migration (evasion and seeking an illusory tax haven) were feared by colonial administrators, cases of nomadism were too. Indeed, because of their constant mobility nomadic peoples' (Bororo in this case study) livestock escape tax census and therefore taxation. This was the case of Choa Arabs of the banks of the Logone. Faced with the appetites of the Kotoko Sultans seeking to benefit from heavy grazing taxes and many other charges and taxes, the exasperated Choa Arabs were forced to flee. They then crossed the Chadian border on an annual basis, fleeing tax and temporarily migrating with their cattle, the Kotoko sultans' targets.[45] For others, however, rhis attitude shows their pettiness. This was the case of the Fulani settled in the Mundang, Guiziga and Toupouri areas,[46] who not only benefits escaped requisitions, but only paid a small tax of one franc.

As stated by the head of the Maroua District in 1938, they (Fulani or Bororo) were about fifty in each canton. They argued that they were crossing the territory with their cattle.[47] Moreover, in a strictly traditional or religious framework, C. Durand noted that cattle breeders were less willing to pay their zakkat than farmers and fairly systematically sought to avoid it. This unfortunate trend continues with the creation

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[42] AEF: Equatorial French Africa. This is an extension of the French colonial empire in Africa. Cameroon and Togo were associated territories.
[43] ANY, APA 10779, Note sur les migrations de population au Cameroun Français, p.4
[44] ANY, APA 10779, Note sur les migrations de population au Cameroun Français, p.4.
[45] For more details on this issue, please see Issa (2001:182-185).
[46] The Bororo or Fulani nomads have no fixed territory. They can be found both in Central and Western Africa. In Cameroon, some Bororo groups have settled. They are those of northwest and northern Cameroon. Mundang and Toupouri on the other hand are those people called "peuples trait d'union" because they are located in northern and southern Cameroon, and southern Chad. The Guiziga, are found in the Diamaré plain in far northern Cameroon.
[47] APM, C. 1938- III, 1.1, Lettre du Chef de Circonscription de Maroua à M. le Commissaire de la République (25 February 1932), p.4.

by the French colonial rule of a tax on livestock (Durand, 1995: 12). In the 1930s, with the economic crisis, the trend for farmers to flee capitation or cattle grazing tax grew.

In his analysis of the worrying exodus phenomenon, Commander Lee of the northern region of Cameroon said in a report:

> I noted movement of some importance to Nigeria only in cases of maladministration of natives, when the Sultan and the district chiefs commited abuses. Generally, the natives returned as soon as the guilty chief was replaced. [...] Although the part of Cameroon attached to Nigeria is free from the rest of Nigeria, our capitation taxes on livestock are not likely to cause the departure of our natives. On the contrary, the Kirdi people and livestock are taxed less.[48]

Although this statement is true, it unfortunately seems to minimize what relief of tax rates represents for taxpayers. Apart from abuses by local chiefs and their agents, there remains the   question of the tax burden itself. Otherwise, the attraction of border regions would not usually be associated with periods of tax collection. After multiple reports of mass exoduses of populations, the French Minister of Colonies thought that departures of populations might have causes other than defective methods: local command mistakes, excessive demands in the recruitment of forced manpower, this disproportionate to the taxable power of the population.[49] Aware that the tax issue was a potential bomb or engine of socio-political revolts, the metropolitan authority had to recommend an equitable tax and a policy for attracting populations.

It was the colonial authority's duty to create farmland in plains, a less hostile environment in order to facilitate the descent of the mountain peoples (Pahimi 2010: 37).

Tax measures and control of cross-border migration

In its wish to perform well and thus curb the phenomenon of tax migration on the Cameroon-Nigeria and Chad-Cameroon borders, the French administration in Cameroon began a series of consultations. These focused on heads of division, districts and regions. Campaigns and propaganda to this effect were designed to present France as the only guarantor of the colonized peoples' interests. It was important to take urgent measures, particularly since the political balance of the border regions was due to prudent administration, attentive to the emotional reactions of people often incompletely attached to the land, who would not hesitate to move from one territory to another if they thought it was in their interest[50].

The main concern here seems to embellish the quality of the French command. But on closer attention, this reflects the French administration's fear of seeing its authority diminish because of a

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[48] ANY, APA, Compte-rendu de tournée du chef de Circonscription de Maroua (June 1934), p.11.

[49] ANY, Vt 38/17, Rapport du chef de Bataillon (Langlois) commandant le Région Nord à M. le Commissaire de la République, p.1.

[50] ANY, APA 10895/A, Lettre du Ministre des Colonies à M. les Gouverneurs généraux de l'AOF et de l'AEF et à M. les Commissaires de la République au Cameroun et au Togo (25 June 1935), p.1.

decrease in population. One measure that was proposed by the witnesses of these tax migrations was the levelling of tax rates to make them uniform on both sides of the border. The French administration had to be prudent to this matter. The fear was that a thoughtless measure taken to solve the exodus problem might reinforce a propensity to challenge administrative control of human mobility. The same concern emerges from the following letter:

> It was not my intention to use such methods as fixing rates below those of neighbouring countries to attract people. You should increasingly recognize that this did not influence the movement of natives from Chad to Cameroun.[51]

The French strategy was to follow an attraction policy that also ignored the interests of neighbouring countries.[52] It was probably in that perspective that the French Minister of Colonies had to challenge the protagonists in these terms:

> Regarding the policy of attraction to the territories I have recommended, you point out that neighbouring countries have for several years granted tax exemptions to the natives who settle there from a foreign colony,. You think that similar action in Cameroon could produce results in several regions, particularly in the Logone, where some heads of families or Bororo Fulani, fleeing the atrocities of the sultans of Bornu, tried to settle in the Diamaré. It is impossible in a mandated country to enact an article that foreign natives would, for several years, be exempted from taxation-, leaving to the original inhabitants of the territory, the burden of public expenditures that benefit all. But in practice nothing would prevent, the local government from waiting before putting a foreigner on the tax roles, when he has resided in Cameroon for a minimum time.[53]

Tax migration was a puzzle to the French colonial authorities and those of independent Cameroon. In addition to economic insecurity and high tax rates, these migrations were driven by a kind of civil disobedience that caused small producers unable to pay their poll tax to temporarily leave their village to settle via their multiple networks. They generally returned to Nigeria when the pressure to pay tax fell (Akam, 1998: 44). Some opted for a permanent migration, however.

However, failing to contain effective, permanent human mobility across borders, the French administration favoured settlement in plains in the name of its policy of decongesting the overcrowded Mandara Mountains. This policy was pursued by independent Cameroon's administration (Akam, 1998: 46-47). In addition to these operations, north Cameroon experienced significant internal population mobility, mainly from the mountainous areas of Mokolo or Meri-Koza (Douvangar, Ouazzan, Douroum).

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[51] ANY, APA 10904/B, Lettre du Gouverneur du Tchad au Commissaire de la République française au Cameroun (17 March 1931).

[52] ANY, APA 10904/B, Lettre du Gouverneur du Tchad au Commissaire de la République française au Cameroun (17 March 1931).

[53] ANY, APA 10904/B, Lettre du Gouverneur du Tchad au Commissaire de la République française au Cameroun (17 March 1931).

Exoduses from mountains to plains were already intense in the French colonial era, but the administration did not see the need to hinder them.[54]

In short, strict application of the colonial pact was partly the cause of population migrations. Therefore, migration was a refusal to submit to a system entirely beneficial to the city. Added to this were many cases of abuse that exasperated taxpayers and resulted in antisocial behaviour or tax delinquency.

Conclusion

Human mobility is now a serious issue in international relations. They have imposed a reinterpretation of issues such as trans-nationality and border considerations. Migration generally reflects social, economic or cultural unrest. In this study, we highlighted the porous nature of the Cameroon-Nigeria and Chad-Cameroon borders, and the role of transnational communities in the increase in temporary or permanent migration of populations. Ethnic, linguistic or cultural communities globally continue to serve as a springboard for generally uncontrolled human mobility. In this study, we noticed that tax migration is closely related to the search for social and economic security. It also appeared to be a reaction to unpopular tax policy. That is why borderlands were used as springboards by transnational communities to escape to tax censuses and taxation.

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[54]ANY, APA 10985/A, Lettre du Ministre des colonies à M le Commissaire de la République française au Cameroun (21 March 1935).

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IS BOTSWANA CREATING A NEW GAZA STRIP? AN ANALYSIS OF THE 'FENCE DISCOURSE'

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ABSTRACT In 2003 the government of Botswana announced plans to construct an electric fence, officially to stop the spread of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) among livestock. From 2001 to 2003 Botswana witnessed two epidemics of FMD, which heavily affected its cattle industry and caused resentment among local communities. In both cases the source was traced to Zimbabwe. The epidemics coincided with growing tensions between Botswana and Zimbabwe. Due to the unrest in Zimbabwe, many of its citizens have chosen to emigrate to Botswana, whose economic success and political stability are viewed as a positive example across the continent. Thousands of illegal Zimbabwean migrants have begun flocking into the country, shifting the fence discourse beyond what the government initially presented as strictly phytosanitary concerns. Therefore, we argue that the fence has many parallel meanings, and the decisions concerning its erection, maintenance and possible electrification not only remain ambiguous, but also touch upon a wide range of other issues concerning the economy and wildlife.

Introduction

In September 2003, the Zimbabwean high commissioner to Gaborone, Phelekeza Mphoko, stated that "Botswana is trying to create a Gaza Strip" (*Daily Mail & Guardian*, September 8, 2003) by building a fence on its border with Zimbabwe. This rather radical rhetoric often appears in Zimbabwean political discourse. Obviously, the situation on the border between Botswana and Zimbabwe can hardly be equated with the state of affairs between Israel, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority in terms of their engagement in the Gaza Strip. The origins of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, together with the geopolitical and demographic setting in the Middle East, as well as the involvement of the United States in the region, are major dissimilarities. While the Gaza blockade created by an iron fence and heavily armed Israeli forces is clearly a matter of national security, the Botswanian fence was officially erected as a result of phytosanitary concerns stemming from the risk of transmission of Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) among the local cattle. Nevertheless, it is argued that the real agenda of the government was to put a stop to the uncontrolled influx of Zimbabwean illegal immigrants crossing the border. This paper's objective is to shed more light on this issue.

Botswana has more border posts with Zimbabwe than with any other country it is a neighbor with, although it is not its longest border. The length of the border with Namibia is 1,300 km, and with South Africa 1,840 km, whereas with Zimbabwe it amounts to 813 km. The border between Zimbabwe and

Botswana is poorly demarcated,[55] which was the most visible during unrest concerning the Kazungula Bridge Project. Nevertheless, the local communities on either side of the border have always coexisted rather peacefully, some of them even sharing water sources. Furthermore, family links between Batswana and Zimbabweans are common. The two countries share a long history of coexistence, and relative sympathy towards migrants (and refugees from apartheid in the RSA). Botswana's government's decision to raise a fence of this length and height is quite extraordinary in present-day African politics, although fences created in order to protect cattle from wild animals and diseases are quite common in the region. Historically, such huge infrastructural projects were usually raised in conflict zones, and their aims were almost exclusively associated with the idea of defense during war (Sterling, 2009). We argue that the fence on the border between Zimbabwe and Botswana is an example of a classic barrier adjustment to current socio-political conditions, and its idea and understanding are constantly being redefined depending on ideational structures that influence our perception. In the age of globalization, when traditional physical barriers are disappearing and new types of barriers are being created (e.g. economic disproportions), Botswana has decided to raise a fence that is reminiscent of Cold War rivalry and the period of anti-apartheid campaigning. In this paper we trace the developments of the fence project and its status in discourse.

This article is a result of academic research and a field study conducted in Botswana. The paper is divided into four parts. The first part presents the historical patterns and typology of migration in Southern Africa. The second part is devoted to the chronology of the fence's construction. The paper subsequently discusses the five different dimensions of the discourse concerning the fence, namely – environmental, phytosanitary, political, economic and social. The final section presents a summary and conclusion.

The problem of migration in Southern Africa

The subject of migration was the original departure point of this research. For a citizen of Botswana, illegal migration from Zimbabwe is probably the most important issue currently underpinning relations between the two countries. Although, as the authors argue, migration is only part of the story, it is useful to shed more light on the problem in the context of Southern Africa and to contextualize the multiple meanings of the border fence between Zimbabwe and Botswana. The problem of migration in Southern Africa is mostly economic in nature. It is usually traced to the discovery of gold and diamonds followed by the aggressive expansion of the mining industry that marked the last decades of the nineteenth century (Crush, 2000: 14). For many years the industry was in constant demand of cheap labour, which drew people from various parts of the region. The migration at that time was strictly controlled and had a fixed contract system that allowed workers to stay only for a limited time (and also prevented them from bringing

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[55] The official border treaty was never signed.

their families). According to J. Crush (2000: 14), between 1920 and 1940 the number of foreign workers in Southern Africa increased from 100,000 to 200,000 (at its peak, at the beginning of the 1970s, the number stood at a staggering 300,000; 80 per cent of the entire workforce in the mines was estimated to be of foreign origin). An additional factor behind this movement in colonial times was the taxation imposed by the British administration (to be paid in British pounds) and dispossession of the land. This was, for instance, the case of Bechuanaland, whose population was literally decimated by the mineral rush in neighbouring South Africa (it is estimated that a quarter of the male population worked in South African mines) and further weakened by the hut tax required by the British (Harvey and Lewis, 1990: 17). Migration driven by the expansion of the mining industry further increased as the British colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia became the region's magnet, bringing about new cross-border migration of unskilled labour – both between mineral countries and from other, non-mineral countries (Crush, Williams and Peberdy, 2005). The inter-regional migration to mines, and to a lesser extent to commercial farms (which on many occasions concerned illegal migration), has made Southern Africa in fact a huge regional labour market which, albeit reshaped and reduced in scale, still continues to exist today.

There are also political motives behind some of the cross-border migration, albeit the scale of this phenomenon is significantly lower. As the independence struggle unfolded in the 1950s and 1960s, some Southern African countries hosted refugees and asylum-seekers from neighbouring states who were involved in fighting against the white minority rule. During the struggle against the Apartheid regime, Botswana (but also Zambia) became a popular refuge among activists from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. It might be said that there is an established tradition of Zimbabwean migration to Botswana. During the internal conflict in Southern Rhodesia, more than 20,000 Zimbabwean "political refugees" were welcomed in Botswana, and some were allowed to become citizens of Botswana (Crush, Williams and Peberdy, 2005). Botswana adopted an open door policy because of the lack of manpower in the country. Many Zimbabweans obtained important positions in Botswana. It is worth mentioning here that the first permanent representative of Botswana to the UN was a Zimbabwean migrant.

Nowadays the most popular destination for migrants in Southern Africa are Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. It goes without saying that in the 1960s and 1970s the idea that Zimbabweans or Zambians would one day flock into countries such as Botswana and Namibia was rather unthinkable. According to Southern African Migration Project (SAPM) findings, the majority of cross-border migrants in Southern Africa are temporary and circular. Their prime motive is improving their economic situation, and once this is accomplished the migrants prefer to return to their home countries (this only partly applies to Botswana, where a great number of foreign workers wish to stay permanently) (Crush, Williams and Peberdy, 2005). Virtually all countries lack a pro-active immigration policy, and in the vast majority of them immigration – both legal and illegal – is perceived as a source of potential trouble, rather than economic opportunities. This attitude is also rooted in the post-independence legislation that was created with the

intention of perceiving outsiders as threats. Interestingly, Botswana stands out as a country with a relatively open policy towards skilled migration, which is reflected in the number of temporary work permits issued each year (more than in South Africa). At the same time, however, skilled migrants are far from regarding Botswana as a place friendly to foreigners, since they face many formal and informal barriers, and as a result feel more like "permanent temporary" visitors. Recently, this "open door policy" has changed, especially towards migrants from Zimbabwe, who are increasingly perceived as threats.

The geographical factor must be taken into account while discussing migration from Zimbabwe to the RSA and Botswana, as it is relatively easier to sneak into Botswana than to South Africa, since in order to enter South Africa, illegal immigrants must cross the Limpopo River.

The fence's chronology

The official reason to erect the fence was to control the spread of Foot-and-Mouth Disease from Zimbabwe. The fence was originally intended to be 4 meters high, but it was finally reduced to 2.4 meters. This still did not convince the Zimbabwean authorities, who argued that the fence was designed as a barrier against people, not animals.

The idea of erecting fences is not new in Botswana. Fences were constructed for veterinary purposes already in the 1950s (the Kuku cordon fence) to segregate livestock from wildlife. An example of this is the 100 km-long Nxai Pan Buffalo Fence, built in 1968 (Keene-Young, [1999; Albertson, 1998]). Neither is it a new idea to construct a fence along Botswana's international borders (e.g. the fence between Botswana and Namibia raised in the 1960s). Nevertheless, it is the potentially electrified fence along the border of Botswana and Zimbabwe which captured the world's attention and stirred a bilateral debate between the two countries. It is argued here that this may be a result of the multipurpose and dynamic nature of the fence and, more importantly, the changing perception of it.

The history of the fence can be traced back to 2003, when the government of Botswana announced plans to build an electric fence, officially to halt the spread of Foot-and-Mouth Disease among livestock. From 2001 to 2003, Botswana witnessed two FMD epidemics, and in both cases the sources were located in Zimbabwe. As a result of the FMD outbreak, Botswana lost 13,000 cattle, which was significant not only in terms of the economic costs incurred by the local communities, but also symbolically, considering the high status of cattle in Tswana culture. The epidemics coincided with growing tensions between Botswana and Zimbabwe which first came to the fore in January 2003, following a prison fight between Zimbabweans and Batswana inmates which resulted in three deaths. In February, Zimbabwean traders clashed with Batswana on the streets of Gaborone over an alleged theft of clothes (Mukumbira, 2003). Botswana's government was among the most vocal critics of Robert Mugabe's regime. It was even accused of planning a military intervention in Zimbabwe together with the United States and United Kingdom (Merafhe, 2003).

From 2006 onward, due to the deteriorating political and economic situation in Zimbabwe, Botswana experienced a large influx of illegal migrants crossing its northern borders in unprecedented numbers. Thus, the fence was increasingly seen as a way to put a stop to "tidal waves" and "floods" of Zimbabweans (as noted by Crush and Pendelton (2004), illegal migration in Southern Africa is often described with "aquatic imagery"). In 2006 Botswana deported more than 56,000 Zimbabweans. In 2007 the illegal migration problem escalated even further, as the Zimbabwean economy took a nose-dive with hyperinflation exceeding 50 per cent per month (the minimum rate required to qualify as hyperinflation), to soar higher than the world record rate. As a result, only a few months later, in November, the month-over-month inflation rate was close to 80 billion percent (Hanke and Kwok, 2009). It was accompanied by a rise in unemployment (the unemployment rate stood at 80 per cent in the peak period), and shortages of food, fuel and foreign currencies.

Although the fence was primarily intended to be electrified, in 2006 the government decided to abandon the idea, as this would make it "lethal" and thus inevitably attract international condemnation (*Mmegi*, April 28, 2006). The only step still considered was using low voltage that could deter infected animals from grazing on Botswana's side of the border (it was actually tested in some places, but the installation was damaged by people and animals). The government's announcement caused some resentment in local communities, whose cattle had been decimated by FMD and smugglers. The money originally meant for electrification, estimated at P8 million, was diverted to increasing BDF and police presence, and intensifying security along the border (*Mmegi*, July 24, 2006).

In 2008 Botswana completed construction of the fence. The fence, however, originally expected to be 500 km long, was not fully constructed (there are still some missing parts due to the difficult terrain and supply of material). The question of electrifying the fence seems to be still under consideration, however, and is being picked up here and there by the local media. Nevertheless, the Agriculture Minister, Christian De Graaf, stated in May 2011 that, according to his advisors, it would be difficult make the electric fence fully operational due to its length and risk of being destroyed by wild animals (*Mmegi*, May 6, 2011).

The government, interrogated by MPs, announced that the total cost of the fence was estimated at P35 million (approximately 3.5 million Euros) (*Mmegi*, March 2, 2006).

The various dimensions of the "fence discourse"

The environmental dimension

The first dimension of the "fence discourse" pertains to wildlife, which may be adversely affected by its erection. Environmentalists have long suggested that dividing the natural game parks with physical barriers may be harmful to the ecosystem, as it hampers free movement and reproduction of animals

within the area, along with many other negative effects (Boone and Hobbs, 2004: 149). The fences "introduce an entirely artificial constraining upon wildlife movement that is historically unprecedented, in terms of scale, magnitude and extent of impact" (Darkoh and Mbaiwa, 2001: 44). Furthermore, it should be noted that "many game species depend for their survival on seasonal migration between rangelands and water sources" (Darkoh and Mbaiwa, 2001: 44). The decision to erect the fence in Botswana runs counter to emerging projects in the region that entail removing fences in order to create transnational parks and game reserves. A good example is the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park shared among Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

It should be noted additionally that whereas putting up the fence may be effective with regards to smaller animals, larger ones not only do not find it impenetrable, but in fact do not hesitate to demolish it. Reportedly, elephants have been responsible for devastating the fence which then has not been repaired, thus making it easy to cross the border for both infected cattle and "border jumpers". The elephants have been also accused of destroying the crops and livelihoods of residents (*Mmegi,* February 15, 2008). On the whole, the fence is regularly destroyed by wild animals (mostly by elephants), which increases the cost of its maintenance and creates gaps through which cattle from Botswana and Zimbabwe can mix.

The fence complicates work coordination between park rangers on opposite sides of the border. Reports about the unfair treatment and widespread arrests of Zimbabweans in Botswana were politicized by the government in Harare in February 2010, when two park rangers from Botswana were arrested in Zimbabwe while hunting a pair of lions. The rangers were detained and accused of possessing illegal weapons. At the same time, Botswana announced the recall of its defense and intelligence attaches from Harare, and said it expected Zimbabwe to do the same (*Africa Confidential*, February 19, 2010). In real terms this meant that diplomatic relations between these two states were one step away from breaking down. At this point, the environmental commentary and claims that wild animals do not recognize state borders began to overlap with the political discourse and tensions between Harare and Gaborone.

The phytosanitary dimension

Phytosanitary reasons are the most common in the discourse, and were officially used to legitimize the fence's construction. Botswana's government argued that the fence was necessary because Zimbabwe did not fight FMD effectively enough due to the limited resources spent on anti-FMD vaccinations. One of the most strongly questioned issues was the height of the fence. While contemplating the decision to raise a 2.4-meter-high fence, the authors asked themselves the question, "How high can a cow actually jump?". To their surprise, they discovered that cows can jump quite high, and a 6-foot-tall barrier should not present a problem to them (*Telegraph*, December 17, 2009). More importantly, FMD can be spread not only by livestock, but also by wild animals. During the FMD outbreak in 2003, a lame and emaciated wild Kudu was shot in Botswana, and the samples obtained from it were confirmed positive for

FMD (Mokopasetso and Derah, 2005: 22). No matter how strange the question about cows' jumping abilities might be, the same question becomes less so in regards to wild animals, an example being kudus, which are allegedly capable of jumping over the fence.[56] Consequently, it may be suggested that erecting a 2.4-meter-fence is legitimate when it is perceived as an anti-animal measure. It is worth mentioning here that from the perspective of phytosanitation, there is no point in making the fence lethal, as a lower voltage of electricity can effectively scare animals and prevent them from crossing the border.

The practice of fence-building in order to prevent animal disease outbreaks is quite common in Southern Africa. There is a fence on the border between Namibia and Botswana, and many more smaller fences all around the region. The outbreaks of FMD between 2001 and 2003 are strong rationalizations for the construction of the fence. Nevertheless, the dominant discourse does not exist in a vacuum and should be correlated with the traditional importance of cattle for Botswana and the economic dimension of FMD outbreaks (i.e. the EU market ban on beef from Botswana – this issue is discussed later). The phytosanitary discourse strongly contradicts accusations that the fence is aimed against the Zimbabwean people and Robert Mugabe's regime.

International and political dimensions

The fence's construction can be perceived as another example of Botswana's desire to manifest independence in the international environment and to send a clear signal to the Zimbabwean regime that the government in Gabarone will not accept Robert Mugabe's policy towards opposition. President Ian Khama is the most vocal African critic of the Zimbabwean president. During recent years, Botswana's foreign policy has been quite extraordinary when compared with other African states, as the government in Gabarone has been trying to establish itself as a continental champion for democracy.[57] Botswana did not reject the International Criminal Court call to arrest Omar Al Bashir; it supported the NATO intervention in Libya, and was the very first African state to recognize Alessane Ouattara as the president of Ivory Coast, despite many other African governments' reluctance. Botswana is considered a state where AFRICOM command might be hosted, and is also the only state in the SADC which hosts the Voice of America. The fence might be perceived as the most visible manifestation of Gabarone's disapproval of Robert Mugabe's regime and a signal that Botswana will not accept economic refugees from its neighbor. Simultaneously, Botswana's government is fully aware of possible international condemnation if the fence is electrified and lethal.[58] Besides, although Zimbabwean officials have used "Gaza Strip" and "Berlin Wall" analogies while

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[56] Interview with Dr. Casper Bonyongo, Okavango Research Institute, University of Botswana, August 30, 2011.

[57] However, in the internal political discourse, the current president, Ian Khama, is being accused of authoritarian tendencies. Interview with Professor Zibani Maundeni, University of Botswana, Department of Political and Administrative Studies, August 22, 2011.

[58] During the peak of the crisis in Zimbabwe, Botswana's Minister of Agriculture, Johnnie Swartz, admitted that "in today's world, we can't erect a lethal fence, as that might attract international condemnation".

speaking about the fence, its construction has not been criticized internationally. Botswana's opposition parties have supported the idea of the fence, and the internal political debate accompanying this issue has not concentrated on the need for the fence, but rather on financial matters associated with the fence's construction.

The economic dimension

The official explanation of the decision to erect the fence primarily focuses on the phytosanitary concerns. Each time FMD strikes in Botswana, the cattle industry is adversely affected. It should be recalled that Botswana's economy continues to be reliant on cattle production and export. Although in macroeconomic terms its significance is small vis-à-vis the diamond industry, which is the backbone of the economy, on the micro level many communities are dependent on cattle. It should be equally stressed that Tswana tribes have been historically defined by a pastoral tradition, and livestock are kept not only for commercial but also for socioeconomic and cultural reasons (Makepe, 2008: 122). Interestingly, the human population in Botswana is smaller than that of its cattle. Having said that, the FMD outbreaks potentially carry high social and economic costs. This is compounded by the fact that the EU, being the most lucrative market for Botswana's meat, has strict regulations concerning the quality of the beef (Mapitse, 2008). The areas that export beef products to the EU market (EU-areas) have to adhere to regulations, which means that when FMD is detected the authorities are either compelled to kill the cattle within a certain area so that the area can maintain its EU status, or vaccinate the cattle and wait until the area opens up for the EU. There have been instances of Botswana's meat being banned from the European market (e.g. in 1980).

It should be stressed that the fence was not meant to affect the legal cross-border movement of goods and labor that continues to thrive and essentially has not been disrupted (formally, Zimbabweans do not need visas to enter Botswana, but obtaining travel documents is, however, a different issue), even though it causes frictions in border towns, as Zimbabweans contribute to the raising of prices (*Mmegi*, April 24, 2008). Botswana has been a logical destination for Zimbabweans due to its renowned, widely acclaimed economic success, but also, of course, because of its geographical proximity. This has increased due to the weakening of the Pula (against the Zimbabwean dollar), the lack of job opportunities, and a shortage of basic commodities. As a result, legal migration is on the rise and the economic situation in Zimbabwe is getting worse. Migrants from Zimbabwe take on jobs that many citizens of Botswana frown upon as too low-paid, such as housemaids, farm-laborers, gardeners and street vendors. In many instances, they are forced to work far below their formal qualifications and/or their new jobs hardly correspond to their prior professional experience.

Having said that, the fence is rather associated with the issue of undocumented migration that arguably provoked Botswana's government to make a more aggressive stand against the influx of

Zimbabweans, although officially the step, as mentioned above, might be explained differently (as a barrier against cattle). The problem of illegal migration "stealing" jobs has been a part of the political debate for some time now. At the same time, according to many locals interviewed by the authors, Zimbabweans are hardworking, efficient and reliable, surely not deserving the negative reputation they have throughout the country. The "border jumpers" are also accused of contributing to the spread of FMD, as they do not go through the proper disinfection process, cutting the fence (allegedly along with some farmers) in order to look for jobs as herdboys (*Mmegi*, July 29, 2011).

While discussing economic rationales behind erecting the fence, a few other issues come into play, namely the costs of handling the migrants who have successfully made it to the other side, as well as the cattle which are allegedly being stolen by Zimbabweans.

In 2003, according to Botswana authorities, each day the enforcement arrested 200 Zimbabweans crossing the border illegally. The number grew swiftly. In 2006, the Francistown police reported that between April and September alone, 30,000 Zimbabweans were deported, which means 5,000 per month on average (*Mmegi,* October 26, 2006). Captured migrants are transported to detention facilities, before being returned to the other side of the border. According to the government, these activities are a significant drain on the budget. Botswana's immigration officials have estimated the costs of deportation of illegal migrants at more than P1.7 million a month. Having said that, erecting the fence can be defended as an economically justified project.

The idea of the fence was also presented to the public as part of a plan intended to curb the smuggling of cattle to Zimbabwe.[59] This is, for example, how the Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Peter Siele, explained the government's decision to the people of the Bobirwa in Gobojango (*Mmegi,* July 24, 2006).

Social dimensions

Throughout its recent history, Botswana has received a great influx of migrants, and the current situation poses an unprecedented challenge for both Botswana's government and its society. The number of illegal migrants from Zimbabwe is being described as the biggest immigration problem since Botswana's independence. Nobody really knows how many Zimbabweans live in Botswana. The number ranges from 100,000 to 200,000 (Lesetedi, 2007: 7). While speaking with people from Botswana, one may assume that they have a passionate dislike for illegal immigrants – especially African ones. In Setswana, African migrants are described by the word *makwerekwere,* which literally means a person who speaks a non-Setswana language. During their field research, the authors discovered that they were not referred to as *makwerekwere*, while Zimbabweans were, and in reference to Zimbabweans the expression *makwerekwere* had a derogatory and xenophobic meaning (Morapedi, 2007: 231). Generally, the authors

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[59] In some cases, it is assumed that locals are also involved in cattle-smuggling and stealing.

felt that words used to denote white Europeans carry no negative connotations, while this word, used for Zimbabweans, does. Hostility and xenophobia in Botswana towards immigrants, particularly African ones, has also been confirmed by a SAPM study (Crush and Pendleton, 2004). The study reveals that among the many policy measures towards immigrants that Botswana wishes to implement, there is electrification of the border fence. According to E.K. Campbell's public opinion survey, almost 60 per cent of Botswana's citizens prefer an iron fence to be constructed on the border with Zimbabwe and switched on to the lethal mode. The survey result is even more shocking when one takes into consideration the resemblance of this fence to the electric fence raised by the South African government on its border with Mozambique during apartheid, and the widespread criticism of the construction at that time. Illegal migrants are also being targeted by the press. The qualitative and quantitative study of David A. McDonald and Sean Jacobs (2005) revealed that the press in Botswana, when compared with newspapers in the RSA and Zimbabwe, published the most xenophobic articles. The media in Botswana argued that the country was experiencing a severe rise in the crime rate. Zimbabweans are being accused not only of hijacking and burglary, but also of murders and brutal attacks on Batswana. According to "Mmegi", in 2006 Zimbabweans were responsible for over 50 per cent of the criminal activity in Botswana (*Mmegi*, October 26, 2006), and throughout the whole country there have been small-scale outbreaks of xenophobic violence against Zimbabweans (Throup, 2011: 10). The other factor that has hardly ever been taken into account in either the media or in the official political discourse is the information that due to the political and economic unrest in Zimbabwe many Zimbabweans have been crossing the border in order to steal cattle from Botswana.[60] This factor is significant, considering the symbolic meaning of cows in Botswana. The idea of the fence's electrification was also supported by the opposition; in January 2009 the Botswana Congress Party presented a petition in which it demanded the fence's electrification in the Bobirwa region (*Mmegi*, January 7, 2009). This issue was also raised by the Bobirwa chief in the House of Chiefs. Nevertheless, political parties in Botswana did not attempt to make use of xenophobic feelings among people in Botswana during the political struggle, whereas some MPs, immigration officers and chiefs were quoted making xenophobic remarks about Zimbabweans (Morapedi, 2007: 246).

The fence's construction can also be seen as one of the dimensions of the struggle against the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Botswana. The migrants who live in Botswana illegally are excluded from accessing healthcare and other public services. Botswana is the only state in the world where HIV-positive citizens are provided with antiretroviral drugs free of charge, whereas foreigners are barred from the treatment. Nevertheless, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment is important for the country's whole population. It is even more crucial when we take into account the common accusations of Zimbabwean women working as prostitutes in Botswana. It is difficult to find statistical data about the number of Zimbabwean sex workers, as the sex trade is criminalized. The halfhearted position of Botswana's government in regards to HIV-

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[60] Interview with G.R. Motlaleng, University of Botswana, Department of Economics, August 24, 2011.

positive foreigners was revealed in August 2011, when it announced that "it will not provide foreign inmates with life-saving ARV" (*Mmegi*, August 25, 2011).

The recent influx of Zimbabweans can be seen in the ongoing debate about building the nation of Botswana, and in terms of the question of who is a "true" citizen of Botswana. According to a survey conducted by Egene K. Campbell and John O. Oucho (2003: 13), the ability to speak Setswana was a primary condition when defining a Botswana citizen. Two thirds of the respondents stressed the importance of being born in Botswana, while "many feel that it is essential that the parents of a 'true' Motswana should have been born in Botswana as well". The fence may manifest here the desire to distinguish citizens of Botswana from "others". Zimbabweans may play the role of "constitutive others" in the process of Botswana's self-definition.

Conclusion

The core ideas behind the fence's construction are not easy to disentangle. The existence of the fence has many hermeneutical dimensions. The official statements of the Zimbabwean government were highly critical towards the fence, which was compared to the Berlin Wall and Gaza Strip; Botswana was accused of working against regional integration in the SADC and causing environmental damage to the border ecosystem. After analyzing this situation, the authors have distinguished five major dimensions of the discourse with which the issue of the fence has been discussed. None of these exist independently. They are interconnected and facilitated by internal changes in both countries, the SADC region and the international environment in general.

The first dimension under analysis, namely the environmental dimension, implies that the "fence discourse" is potentially significant. The authors are not experts in wildlife conservation, and thus are unable to comprehensively assess the potential damage that the fence may create for the environment. Moreover, the environmental aspect of the fence's construction is beyond the scope of this research. Nevertheless, the authors conclude that the environmental discourse is not an integral part of the decision-making process concerning the erection and maintenance of the fence. This discourse rarely intersects other aspects of this problem. Further research in this area is required.

The phytosanitary aspect of this problem was officially used to legitimize the fence's construction. Outbreaks of FMD are quite common in Botswana, which has created a situation that justifies the quarantining of livestock. Prevention of the spread of FMD is closely connected to the economic situation, as FMD generates severe losses for the cattle industry. When one looks at the political rhetoric of the government in Harare, it seems that it is very difficult to defend the statement that the fence is aimed at "ordinary citizens of Zimbabwe", as Zimbabweans are allowed to cross the border without visas. However, this argumentation is only valid if we assume that the state of Zimbabwe functions properly. Due to the internal situation in Zimbabwe, it is very difficult to obtain either a passport or emergency document that

would allow one to cross the border officially. Passport prices, corruption and the time needed to have official documents issued, force many Zimbabweans to resort to illegal crossing of the border.

In the internal political discourse, the idea of building the fence has not been challenged by any political party. Botswana has sent a clear signal to Robert Mugabe's regime that it would take all necessary measures to stop illegal immigration, including having Botswana Defense Forces concentrated on the border. Internationally, Botswana has confirmed its dedication to democracy and the possibility of working together with Western states.

In the economic dimension, the problem is essentially twofold. Firstly, there is the cost of FMD incurred by local farmers, which is linked not only to phytosanitary concerns but also to the social dimension, due to the importance of cattle in Tswana culture (the latter being compounded by cattle-stealing and smuggling across the border). Secondly, there is the fence's construction as a measure to halt illegal migration, which connects with the social dimension in two different ways - a fear of jobs being stolen (mostly false) and an increase in the crime rate (in many cases true). This, in turn, makes it a political issue which the government of Botswana is expected to address.

The last aspect concerns Botswana's perception of foreigners. This intercepts all other aspects, with the exception of the environmental aspect. Perception of the real or imagined threat of the influx of people from Zimbabwe can be correlated with the spread of FMD, which can be seen as a reasonable rationalization for the fence's construction. Negative stereotypes about Zimbabweans, connected with an increase in the crime rate, jobs being stolen from the citizens of Botswana, and economic perils, also strengthen the idea of the fence. Botswana's government and political elite are concerned about the public's anxiety towards Zimbabwean migrants and the international disapproval of Robert Mugabe's regime, thus the decision about the fence's construction has been relatively easy.

To conclude, there are many dimensions of the debate concerning the fence, which, however, should not be treated as autonomous. The fence has multiple and dynamic meanings which depend on the perspective from which it is examined.

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BEYOND THE 'GENIUS OF SUFFERING': THE PARADOX OF AN ALIENATED BORDER REGIME - REFUGEE INTEGRATION IN CROSS-BORDER DAGANA (SENEGAL-MAURITANIA)

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ABSTRACT This article explores the nature and role of border regimes from the perspective of refugee regimes and integration. It looks at refugees as part of a border people whose agency informs the close relationship between border and refugee regimes. It analyses the transformative potential and achievements of refugee practices in local integration and their effects on borders and on refugee regimes. Focusing on the experience of a refugee community based in the cross-border zone of Dagana between Senegal and Mauritania, it contends that refugees are agentless even in the context of a rigid boundary regime. On the contrary, as authentic and legitimate actors of local integration, refugees participate in the transformation of host communities and the border regions they live in.

Introduction

Partition has never been an absolute reality in Africa. As in many other places in the world, people permanently challenge state borders through various social, cultural, economic and political activities (Asiwaju, 1985). Notwithstanding this breakthrough into the enquiry of post-colonialism, some groups of people are still deemed unable to significantly challenge state borders. Because they are minorities residing outside or inside state borders, though most of the time systematically settling along or across them, refugees for example have been portrayed as deprived of agency in bordering processes. Implicitly problematic is the assumption that while border regimes define refugee regimes it is inversely unlikely that refugees have much to do with border regimes.

This article "goes against this trend" by cross-fertilising a growing literature within refugee and border studies with empirical observations in a refugee and borderland context. Building on the social historical perspective of this context, this research brings out the agency and impact of refugees in border regions and regimes. It addresses the implications on the nature and role of borders of the integration of Mauritanian refugees in Northern Senegal. The key question is how such integration has been possible despite a structurally closed border regime. The first part characterises the borderland regime in cross-border Dagana between Senegal and Mauritania and the subsequent refugee regime it has yielded. The second section analyses the settlement and integration of Mauritanian refugees in Northern Senegal, and specifies the way and the extent to which refugees are involved in their integration.

Map 1: Border regions of the Senegal River Valley
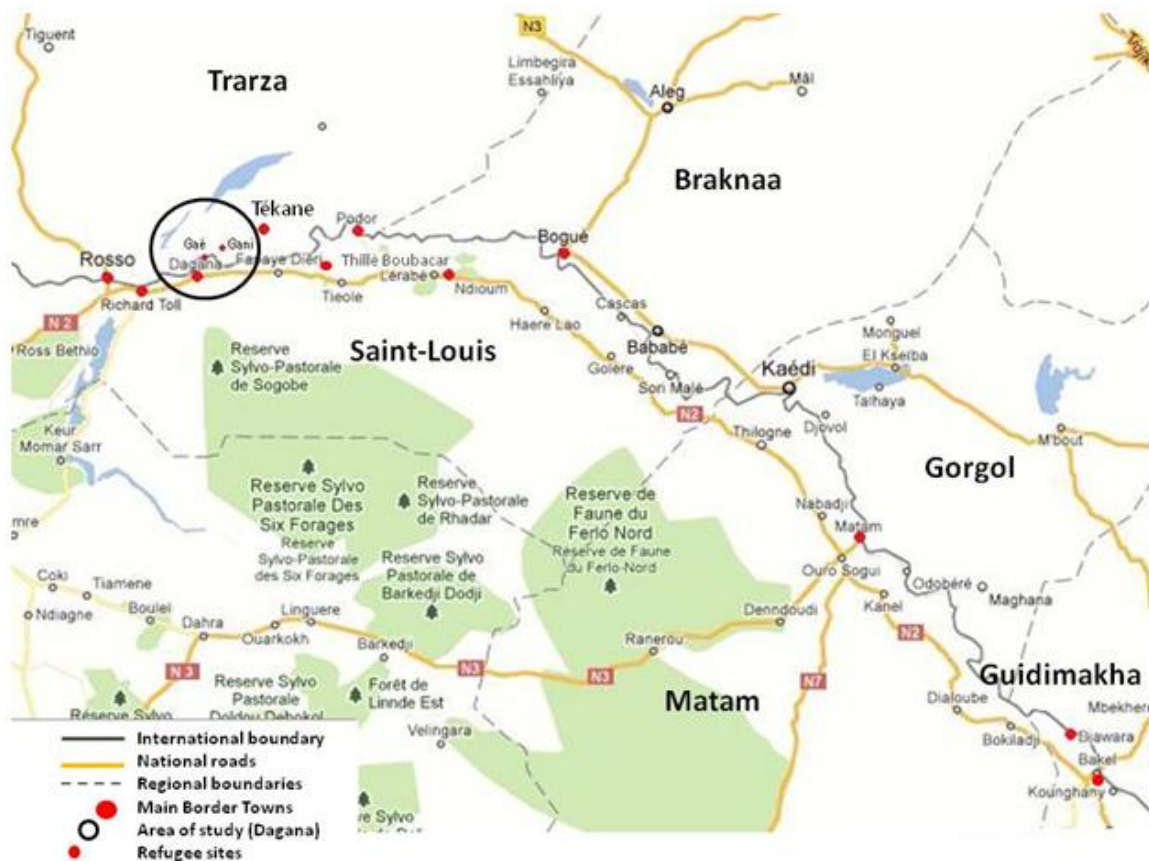
Source: Google © 2012. Reworked by A. Tandia.

Cross-border Dagana: twin-towns broken apart by deportation

Of importance in this section about the refugee problem and asylum regime is how the boundary regime has impacted borderland interactions. Rather than cooperation and integration, patterns of "alienation" and "coexistence" (Martinez, 1994) prevail at the same time, each in turn depending on concrete situations. The historical instability of the border regime is such that borderlanders and other border crossers are never able to foresee the disruption of border flows, or even anticipate bilateral crises.

In cross-border Dagana – both in the town of Dagana-Senegal and in the rural villages of Gaé and Gani – consequences in the borderland regime basically crystallise in the perceived "national divide" based on the cultural and even racial (re)bordering that policy has been nurturing between Beydan, Haratin, and Negro-Africans (Fulani, Wolof, and Soninke) within Mauritania and amongst nationals of neighbouring countries (Fresia, 2006; Santoir, 1998). Though disheartening to borderlanders (Dagana had been the main trading and administrative post of the colonial administration and was made a town at independence),[61] the borderland regime is described as follows by the Prefect of Dagana-Senegal:

> The crossing of the river is determined by a *convention* that has been signed at
> the level of governments of the neighbouring states. We sensitise our peoples to

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[61] The former village was made a commune on 1 February 1960 and Makha Sarr from the Parti Socialiste (PS) at the time was elected first deputy and mayor of the town.

prompt them to use the *normal tract* in order to circulate freely without prejudice to the *sovereignty* of states. The normal route is to request from the prefecture a *circulation permit* and pay a CFA150 fee. Despite such measures, we find it hard to avoid disputes as clandestine crossing is favoured by the locals, though the gendarmerie and the border police as well as the customs are there to ward off violations and smuggling. Local councils around here also indulge in sensitisation to foster *statutory circulation*. (M. Sane, Prefecture of Dagana-Senegal, 1 August 2011)

This reflects a situation of coexistence where neighbouring states reduce their tensions to a manageable level, "tolerate violations of their sovereignty along borders, as long as these violations are not made public and do not become part of political conflicts" (Nugent, 2008: 495; Donnan and Wilson, 1999: 51), and *public* here meaning inter-state and political conflicts referring to bilateral skirmishes. Patterns of coexistence are most of the time reduced to illicit interactions, through a repressive regime of border policing, as suggested in the discourse of the Prefect of Dagana-Senegal:

The problem is that clandestine crossing is a guise for smuggling. But we don't spare our *sanctions* as we must *preserve our national economy*. We are doing our best to deal with this plight though we know it is not possible to eradicate it! We give firm orders about that to *crush trouble-makers* and contain harms on national economy. If it happens that nationals from either country violate statutory regulations, through joint action or not, *we make sure that the law is effective.* (M. Sane, Prefecture of Dagana, 1 August 2011)

Interactions never happen legally and no cooperation exists as it used to, apart from a few contacts before the arrival of Ould Taya in 1984. Serving on the spot since 1996, the Secretary of the Municipality of Dagana-Senegal acknowledges this pattern of coexistence:

Since my arrival I have never attended a meeting of representatives of the neighbouring constituencies of Dagana-Mauritania and Dagana-Senegal. I am not aware of any organism or authority of our commune charged with such collaborative tasks with the other bank. On the contrary, even if worse, there is no contact, though seemingly peace has come back between the two countries... Hey! I must say that is just apparent! I must acknowledge that there is still a feeling of distrust and defiance on both sides. In reality, the impression is that since 1989 the page has not been turned over for good. Indeed we have very limited encounters and it's all about crossing the river. Besides that, there is nothing else! (Y. Samb, Dagana-Senegal, 2 August 2011)

A sound difference exists on border regimes in urban and rural cross-border Dagana. While illegality is common to both border areas, in the rural border village of Gaé (5 km away to the north of Dagana Senegal) and Gani (300 m on the other bank opposite Gaé) a clandestine crossing post is tolerated by the Municipality of Tékane, 12 km to the east on the right bank, and looked after by the Senegalese local council. The reasons for this rural exception are mainly economic and have to do with patron-client relationships linking the latter with government officials and business men in the heartland:

The Mauritanian Government prefers to turn a blind eye to this situation that is the result of local arrangements that regard notabilities and formal authorities. The clandestine landing stage is close to the national road while cross-border trade, agriculture and fishing depend a lot on its existence. People do farming, fishing and trade along and across the river. Fishing is more rewarding in Mauritanian

> waters and fishing agreements at government level are favourable to
> borderlanders since as they concern only maritime fishing. This clandestinely
> arranged order does not encourage cross-border cooperation between
> administrative authorities, exactly because it would be questioned. The bulk of
> cross-border trade is illicit around here. Inhabitants of Gaé who work in Gani send
> back money to their families in the form of provisions and goods that are cheaper
> there. The closure of this landing stage would be seriously damaging to the fragile
> order around here as we are still facing the challenges of deportation and
> Mauritanian soldiers just left in 2007. Some returnees have their kids still going to
> school in Gaé where we in Gani cross over to go to for a dispensary. Ours here is
> 12 km away and expensive.[62] (I. Seck, Village Chief, Gani, 18 July 2010)

As a manifestation of this unstable border regime, the current crisis between Mauritania and Senegal on trade and transportation is seen as falling under the exclusive authority of governments.[63] Local authorities on both sides – they are never seen around in Dagana-Mauritania – simply handle daily emergencies and struggle against smuggling. It was in this context that the deported of the 1989 events moved from one side to the other along with other "refugees" newly resettled from other parts of Mauritania and Senegal. Accordingly, how such alienated coexistence is perceived by borderlanders and how such perceptions resurface and circulate across the border is of much relevance to refugee settlement, agency, integration and eventual impacts on the border regime.

The genius of success: from deportation to integration

After a brief introduction to the settlement of refugees in Dagana-Senegal and Dagana-Mauritania (for the returnees of 2010), we will link this borderland regime to the asylum regime that has developed from the policy framework of the relief industry, all the more as both regimes are drivers of refugee integration in the borderland.

Exiles at "home"

Santoir (1990: 587) pinpointed the strong cultural and linguistic similarities across the border. Invoking these cultural patterns, Marion Fresia (2006: 2) notes about Fulani refugees in Ndioum and Matam, respectively 95 km and 383 km to the east, that they "did not arrive in an unknown place". Just as their forefathers, farmers as well as cattle breeders used to come and go across the river, from one bank to the other, where they had their various livelihoods. However, the off-loading of exiles as of 1989

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[62] But there is another strong variable that structures this local order-making which is religion. Gaé is a religious town founded in 1826 by Madickou Koura Guèye Fall after a forced migration from Gani, formerly called Kajaar and inhabited by the Wolof and kin of Mandickou. Today Black Africans in Gani are allied with leaders of southern Mauritania Sufi brotherhoods. Today Gaé hosts one of the most important religious events in Senegal for the Tidjanya brotherhood whose founder Cheikh El Hadj Malick Sy was born in this border village in 1855 on the day French colonial army led by Faidherbe invaded Gaé.

[63] The Mauritanian government has recently decided – the official reason is illegal immigration and security policy – that Senegalese transporters cannot cross the border in Rosso anymore. Senegalese transporters have fiercely insisted that their government apply a reciprocity measure, which is likely to happen given the strength of national union, unless Mauritania defers its policy move. The case is still pending and is awaiting a durable written resolution as we write.

prefigured the complexity of the refugee problem in Dagana, as many among them were not "refugees" in the conventional sense of the term.

Refugee figures and settlements

The situation in Dagana-Senegal does not really differ much from those in other places of the River Valley. Just as the sites of Thillé Boubacar (183 km eastward), Ndioum and Matam, (Fresia, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009; Marty, 2003; Santoir,1990, 1998; Seck, 1991), Dagana-Senegal had its share of exiles estimated at 3,000 in urban settlements and 1,000 in rural Gaé (Trémolières and Gnisci, 2004: 30). Among them was a first group of deported (Black African nationals of Mauritania having but remote ties with local Senegalese hosts), a second group of repatriated (nationals of Senegal who resided and had jobs in Mauritania) and a third group of "intruders" or "expelled" populations (deemed to be nationals of Senegal, but many of whom had both nationalities, among them "cross-border peasants" (Seck, 1991, 2005) who had farming land on the right bank claimed by the Nouakchott Government (Santoir, 1998: 107). This influx does not only concern exiles from the other side in Dagana-Mauritania, but also "refugees" from other parts of Mauritania relocated to this border town from the Senegalese cities of Thiès and Dakar.[64]

The site of the town of Dagana-Senegal we worked on was a cluster of a couple of camps whose sociological differences are not only evocative of the politicised dimension of the refugee problem and how it resembles ethnic trimming of the state apparatus in Mauritania. This variation in profiles and settlements also indicates how difficult the refugee problem would become when appropriated by host communities and political structures. The first camp, Dagana 1, to be set up was named "camp des autres" (the "others" camp) gathering illiterates and the bulk of the Wolof and some Fulbe herders. The second camp, Dagana 2, was called "camp des intellectuels" (the "intellectuals" camp), in comparison to the illiterate status of the "others", because it contained deported civil servants and literate, educated Senegalese from the public or business sector in Mauritania. Ethnically, this "elite' camp" was composed of the bulk of the Toucouleur whose political leadership at the fore of the whole refugee movement made them stand out. A few among the deported in this camp were former farmers along with most of the Senegalese intruders and repatriated. Another distinction is between those who were totally despoiled (intellectuals and Fulbe stock breeders), those who were warned of unrest and were able save some baggage, and those who left before the events with property and baggage (Santoir, 1990: 587). There were none from the last group in the Dagana-Senegal urban camps.

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[64] Overall the influx of the whole administrative region of Dagana-Senegal was settled in 47 sites amongst the 280 existing along the border (Fresia, 2006, 2009) (see Lindstrom, 2002: 20; Santoir, 1998: 107).

As regards rural Gaé, M. Sarr refugee and former agent of the Senegal United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) office and the NGO Office Africain pour le Développement et la Cooperation (OFADEC)-Senegal meaningfully captures the situation as follows:

> We had a lot of predicaments to face on arrival and they pertained to the way things happened there in 1989. I would say that there is God's will behind the events. Yet many people did not take time to realise that. They just rose up and started butchering and humiliating the luckier and expropriating them, without showing any respect to the human beings they were. Mauritania considered all the deported as nationals of Senegal; that is why it immediately broke ties with them here. It had expelled its own citizens! Like my father, I was born there on the right bank in the village of Gani and grew up there and knew no other place prior to deportation. Can you imagine when one day someone wakes you up and asks you to belong and live somewhere you know nothing about?" (M. Sarr, Gaé, 17 July 2010).

The refugee regime: politicisation and the humanitarian stalemate

As a result of the borderland regime described in the previous section, the refugee regime in cross-border Dagana has been politicised by the web of actors involved from local to national and global levels. Arguably, this is perhaps the most prominent pattern of the refugee situation there as in all the other sites from Saint-Louis to Bakel. Of particular note is the illustrative fact that politicisation started from deportation in the sense that the "campaign of terror" bred by the national identity contention induced the confiscation and/or destruction of birth certificates of expelled nationals (Lindstrom, 2002: 20). As they say, refugees did not flee war, drought or famine (Santoir, 1998: 117): "we are nationals of a country which has never made efforts to accommodate us as if it had never considered us as belonging there" (O. Bâ, Chief Nurse, dispensary of the camp of Dagana 2, 16 July 2010).

At national level, both governments not only kept the relief system on the lead, but also tightly handled the refugee associations and political organisations in Mauritania and Senegal. Because they are deemed to be the most politically "dangerous" population in the camps, the refugees of the "elites' camp" in Dagana 2 were infiltrated and kept under close intelligence watch by the Mauritania and Senegal governments (Fresia, 2006). The Mauritanian government tried to spread division amongst refugees in order to tone down the national resonance of their ethnic nationalist mobilisation at the sites of Senegal by delaying the organisation of the census of refugees and making it drag on from 1992 and 1995. Most refugees believe that the "selective repatriation" of the early 90s was a government strategy oriented towards this end, while today "organised repatriation" has been blocked over the issue of reparations. Reparation would entail despoiling new riches and political clients that count for the weakened military and intellectual ruling ethnicity.[65] The Senegalese government on the other hand was seeking diplomatic and

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[65] This explains the current numerous border crises with Senegal. Commercial decisions are directed by business shares for these elite and local patrons (new wealth) and clients (franchised Haratin and some Soninke and Marabouts) in Nouakchott and border towns of the River Valley like Dagana, Richard-Toll and mostly Rosso on both banks of the river.

strategic leverage on Mauritania by instrumentalising refugee organisations and political mobilisation through sponsors or by depriving them, depending on the nature of bilateral relations and the global context. M. Harouna, a former civil servant who now teaches in the elites camp of Dagana 2, gives a description of state strategies within the refugee regime:

> Senegal created OFADEC-Senegal to replicate and thwart OFADEC-Mauritania and both structures are dedicated to attracting external aid and influencing the UNHCR. Senegal saw refugees as a lever to weaken and put pressure upon its *rival-neighbour Mauritania* on the issue of the river waters. In turn, Mauritania could see the question of repatriation as just a threat to the national Arabisation project. As a matter of fact Mauritania will never take us back! Every country might as well spy on the UNHCR and sabotage its mission to its own neighbourhood politics. (H. Mansour, Dagana-Senegal, 19 July 2010).

From the perspective of the UNHCR and NGOs the disengagement of the former and retrieval or handover of the latter to local associations and governments is due not only to the drying up of funds (Trémolières and Gnisci, 2004: 30),[66] but mainly to political pressure from western donors who played on aid as a lever to direct Nouakchott's foreign policy and internal politics − i.e. the Israel-Palestine issue and democratisation options (Santoir, 1998: 114). Neither the Senegal or Mauritania government wanted to recognise refugees so as not to upset the neighbour (Fresia, 2006, 2009; Santoir, 1998: 113). Refugees' provisions were rationed,[67] decreasing from 12 kg per person in 1989 to 9 kg in 1993 and 7.5 kg before a complete stop in 1995. Some NGOs like the Red Cross felt they were "of hindrance to the UNCHR and contending governments" as complains Vieux Diop (Dagana-Senegal, 18 July 2010) from the local Red Cross office of Dagana.

Several justifications (a new resettlement phase replaces emergency measures for some donors like the World Food Program − WFP) were given to the disengagement of the UNHCR and western donors to conceal a strategy aimed at forcing refugees into repatriation in 1992. Ultimately, this was meant to hide or suppress the humanitarian "black mark" and solve a conflict that was proving to be an increasingly serious threat to political democratisation in the post-Cold War context and foreign direct investments that had been achieved in the framework of new externally driven privatisations.[68] There was a poorly hidden intention of major external actors to keep the refugee problem invisible and win donors' favour. On a local scale, peoples and authorities showed an undeniable promptness to assist when relief interventions and subsequent channelling of donor funding were handed over by humanitarian NGOs (OFADEC-Senegal, Red Cross).

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[66] In Dagana-Senegal and other places along the left bank, the World Food Program is deemed as to have defected the refugees, even though it had been funding collection for the UNHCR and local NGOs (See also Trémolières and Gnisci, 2004: 25).

[67] Provisions consist of 15 kg of red sorghum, sugar, salt and a litre of cooking oil.

[68] This explains why the European Union (EU), probably dragged along by France, was often sanctioning Mauritania and putting pressure on Senegal.

These asymmetries in political priorities consequently left many issues either unattended or unresolved. Despite the 1991 Bissau agreement secretly patronised by France (Santoir, 1998: 103), the 1989 border dispute that led to the massacres has been forgotten. Hence the failure of selective repatriation: among the 2,000 thought to have left Dagana-Senegal, many have returned, while another few are plying between the two countries on circular and short trips. Obviously, this humanitarian stalemate leaves us with the question of how integration has been going since 1989 and how refugees and local hosts have been responding to the underlying border and refugee regimes that have clearly affected local borderland processes and refugees. A peculiar concern is how this response transpires in refugees' integration and agency and to what extent it has impacted and triggered any changes in these regimes.

Refugee integration: practising the border, transforming the borderland

Integration in cross-border Dagana is a social process in which the austerity of the refugee regime as described above concurs with the refugees' own perceptions of formal relief policy and experience of deportation and the host communities' appropriative hospitality.

Approaching local integration

"Locality" indicates the borderland space as a "centre", the core scale, of policy and practice of different actors, of course without negating the externalities induced in this dynamic. Therefore, the logics and scale of integration are at the same time cross-border, national and transnational. Besides the geo-spatial aspect of local integration as perceived here, a social-historical dimension involves much more than in situ and day-to-day inclusive experiences of refugees (Jacobsen, 2001; Valtonen, 2004). Policy outcomes or values of such day-to-day asylum processes may indeed derive much from wider policies of order making than mere relief as suggested by Jacobsen's definition (2001). As it manifests itself on the borderlands and through the variety of refugee figures and spaces (crossing returnees), local integration does not preclude either indefinite settlement in the host community (Crisp, 2004) or repatriation in the country of origin (Polzer, 2008a). Permanent asylum and repatriation can be coterminous in borderland settings where they may be linking in a vicious circle.[69] In this case, local integration seems more empirical than normative, contrary to what Crisp (2004) and Jacobsen (2001) suggest. Instead, it is a "social and political process of negotiating" modalities of social capital and cohesion such as inclusion, connections, possibilities, opportunities, and resources (Strang and Ager, 2004: 596-99; also see Polzer 2008a: 3). In the case of borderlands and border peoples, these elements suggest that refugee and host communities

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[69] In particular, when as in cross-border settings, both country of origin and host country offer different opportunities, like some peace and stability' in the first country and different opportunities such as secured property and safety (Crisp, 2004).

favour flexibility and opportunism in their social encounters, as well as socio-historical assets such as shared memory and culture.

In a more systematic way, local integration refers first of all to more than assumed conformity or non-compliance with policy frameworks. It is a political process of *incorporating* exiles into a social and political cross-border community. Second, it may refer to *local actors* and their *interests* who may be both formal external masters of order-making and various internal actors of the border landscape. It is therefore about *power relations* between stakeholders. Third, local integration involves *resources* that refugees locate, mobilise and expect from the immediate host borderland community and space, or from remote transnational outsources. Fourth, it is about the *tactics and strategies* implied by resourcing processes and power relationships above. Fifth, local integration as a political dynamic cannot therefore preclude *identity resources* which are status and attached rights of refugees.

Among the *sectors* of local integration, "identity processes" or identity strategies of resourcing borders and asylum regimes raise the issue of citizenship. On this point, integration does not mean assimilation or acculturation; it would be practically endangered if reduced to that (Strang and Ager, 2011: 592). However, more than a legal status, citizenship as a form of identity or belonging is a role of social engagement in civic and civil life without necessarily or exclusively resting on status and rights (Smyth, Stewart and Da Lomba, 2010: 412). Of particular importance is the comparative analysis that can be made of Polzer's (2008a) wider framework. It has been useful in distinguishing between urban and rural peculiarities of local integration in cross-border Dagana. Arguably, the transformative potential of refugee integration is better revealed through the comparability of local integration in different border and refugee settings and processes.

Refugees' political awareness: from assistance to emancipation

We already hinted at it and local integration is incepted at the interstices between the austerity of the asylum regime and the perceptions of this regime by refugees and hosts. We will now highlight the way in which perceptions of this austerity shape and make sense of the personal initiatives and the process of refugees' involvement in local integration.

This limitation and the previously experienced origin and character of deportation have been structuring of the refugees' perception and subsequent awareness of relief and of the challenges and responses to it.

> The UNHCR can only help refugees survive from immediate emergency crisis. They did help us for a certain time, but since as it has stopped its emergency assistance since 1995 refugees make their living now by their own possibilities and means. (Harouna, M., Dagana-Senegal, 18 July 2010).

Reminiscent of the origin and violent character of deportation, the issue of national identity is also championed in the construction of perceptions of relief policy and the motivations for integration. The

principle of assistance as such is resented and discarded shortly after (re)settlement of intellectuals from the elites camp in Dagana-Senegal, all the more because there was no welfare state as in northern Europe (Valenta and Bunar, 2010).

> We cannot forget that despite the hospitality kindly offered over here, space is limited in Gaé. We cannot all settle and live here for good and undertake our various activities. However, we do not pretend that we will be provided everything we have been offered here in Senegal. This country is not to be compared with Mauritania in terms of safety and mental and material wellbeing. And here we can at least speak Wolof with no fear. (M. Sarr, Gaé, 17 July 2010).
>
> We want to be heard, we need people to feel we are coming back home. We are aware that we need to indulge in local politics if we want to be considered as a community that has its specific challenges and its own interests to safeguard! (F. Sarr, returned female refugee, Gani, 18 July 2010)

These accounts are cross-cutting on the assessment of the refugee problem and subsequent formal assistance in terms of how they triggered the refugees' self-awareness and political consciousness that drive them to get organised and involved in local politics before and after their return. While for remaining refugees in urban Dagana-Senegal and rural Gaé limited resources and possibilities count in spurring ideas of self-help, returnees on the right bank in the village of Gani show a more ambivalent experience. Though yearning for self-mobilisation and re-integration in their home country, F. Sarr displays a sort of returned identity of self-defence and preservation. Her attitude may be explained by a lack of consideration in her home country on the one hand, and by opportunities still existing in the host country on the other, which were decisive in shaping her seemingly independent attitude. This prompts us to consider the extent to which conditions in the host community influenced refugees' imaginations and attitudes towards local integration.

Local community integration championed: hospitality and appropriation

Valtonen (2004) insisted that in the analysis of the processes of local integration attention should be also directed towards the institutional environment of the receiving society in relation to the capacities of the settling refugees. In cross-border Dagana, the integration of refugees draws not only from societal resources but also from local government and traditional powers. In the rural villages of Gaé and neighbouring Gani, which share a common attachment to religious capital and affinity that tie both communities, refugees benefited more from cultural resources than in the urban Dagana in Senegal and Mauritania. Polzer (2008a: 11) indicated how an analysis of resources enables us to look at patterns of "co-ethnic integration" as involving "existing resources such as language, cultural norms, reciprocity, kinship ties, common spiritual-religious origins (ancestors), etc., which act along with more material considerations". Yet, co-ethnics are more widely thought here in terms of racial or ethnic identities that coexist, mix or merge into borderland cultural and socio-spatial belonging and solidarities, between the Wolof rural villages of Gaé and Gani on the one hand, and between Fulani and Wolof in the towns of

Dagana-Mauritania and Dagana-Senegal on the other. This means that hospitality is a pervading pattern that triggers integration, as shown in the accounts below.

> On our arrival in Senegal, it was as if we were *coming from hell to enter heaven*. To be honest, thank God, the President of the rural council and his people welcomed, relieved and accommodated us. They told us we were coming *home*, and that we were the *same people*. You see? As a deported or a stateless person, one loses confidence, calm and much more. He, *the President who came along with community elders gave us back such states of mind* that enabled us to keep our face up and *uphold* our fate. We crossed the river from Medina Salam[70] to Gaé." (M. Sarr, Gaé, 17 July 2010).

> I don't know what the situation was in the other sites in Senegal, but in Dagana-Senegal we were given *everything we could expect from local authorities and the people* around here. We were given a developed site to build on, which was our main challenge and upmost need. We now live on the site we were given. It is totally safe. If a refugee and a local are driven to the gendarmerie by a dispute, *the gendarme doesn't care who is from where.* We *feel as equals with locals* in Dagana! We have built strong ties with our local host populations and we feel really integrated and attended. (H. Mansour, Dagana-Senegal, 19 July 2010).

Of course, as noted elsewhere by Strang and Ager (2011: 598), signs of recovered self-esteem and confidence for refugees manifested in the hospitality of hosts are as a source of emotional support. But more interestingly, there are mental and experiential dimensions of early-stage integration implying cognitive processes of cultural discovery and learning. Besides host-exile constructions of *home* and *self*, refugees develop a critical experience of host political culture exemplified in their perceptions of local governmental responsiveness, rule of law and justice. Actually, the reference to "home-state" through the comparison between home-land (hell) and home-place (heaven) and the story about the gendarme's righteous stance in justice delivery are constructed as imaginaries of a model of a "good public morality" that has to travel home (from Senegal to Maurtitania) where statehood is precisely not ruling out of law and justice.

While it is true that the effectiveness of integration is influenced by experiences from the moment of arrival' (Strang and Ager, 2011: 595), hospitality is not the only incentive to such welcoming experiences. In some respects, it shrouds a more utilitarian relationship of hosts with the influx of exiles. As Bakewell (2000) and Polzer (2008a, 2008b) already explained about Zambian and South African borderland hosts of Mozambican refugees, the influx of refugees often means new opportunities. While refugees may constitute an input of manpower, attending them may add to the prestige of community elders and local councillors as well as administrative authorities. In addition, returnees are potential farmers to hire for elders who are important land owners and dealers as well as local business operators. In Gani, where 30 returnees have resettled from Gaé, hospitality goes with some utilitarian expectations on behalf of hosts:

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[70] Medina Salam is the other name given to Gani. Actually it is the name used by Negro-Africans while Gani is a Beydan word cherished by Moors. Returnees from Gaé tend to identify it with the spot or district where they have been resettled, 3 km north of the border spot of Gani.

> It is fair that we share the resources we have in here and which they contributed in the production for those who left Gani. It is equally normal that they share what they brought along, if they brought something. *Their provisions and food are something to be shared with kin and neighbours. That is how we have been living ever since.* However, cows and other equipment are reparations for the wrongs they suffered individually. These are their *personal fated property*. As a community we have set up this *arrangement* with them as soon as we are informed of their imminent return. (I. Seck, Gani, 18 July 2010).

No doubt that the sharing or exchanging of resources may be morally legitimised with regard to the social history of the same people of Gani and Gaé. However, it may be a kind of regulatory arrangement drawn from cultural conventions to break the inconveniences of their return, as the idea of leaving returnees with their "personal fated property" testifies to that. Indicative of new power relationships in social interactions, the emergence of new regulations, arrangements and identity or cognitive experiences often epitomise social transformations that it would be interesting to deal with in further studies.

Conclusion

This paper investigated the agency of Mauritanian refugees in northern Senegal in the process of their local integration. The aim was, on the one hand, to understand the relationships between refugee and border regimes, and, on the other, to demonstrate how despite their being a socio-political "minority", refugees actively took part in their integration. In effect, it comes out that the relationship between a border regime and a refugee regime is not unidirectional.

Though they have been caught by a 22-year asylum regime in which they did not escape or challenge all the structural and formal determinants, refugees appropriated local integration as well as the underlying refugee and border regimes by means of various resources in the border region and from national and international spheres where they are linking with their diaspora. It is true that this has not led to functional or complete recognition as expected and claimed by the exiles' political leadership, even after two waves of selective and organised repatriation which was officially put to an end on 5 January 2011.

Effective refugee agency largely illustrates the need to go beyond the warehousing paradigm of refugee integration. Posing the hypothesis of a post-humanitarian academic and policy paradigm of refugee studies may yet require a deeper understanding of the ways in which borders and refugees are much related. Situational and comparative analyses of this link have been offered by other studies which we tried to invite in a new empirical context. Like these studies, borders are admittedly socially and historically uprooted instruments of state policy, mainly in contexts where there are loose or inexistent limits to state power and inter-state enmity, as is the case in Senegal and Mauritania. This raises the ethical issues about borders in a context of cultural "debordering" and political "rebordering" entailed by forced migration. In this guise, border regimes challenge both the moral economy of African regional integration and unity and the trajectory of state-building in Mauritania national.

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TERRITORY AND BORDER CROSSING FOR LIVELIHOODS AMONG (VOLUNTARY AND FORCED) MIGRANTS FROM DRC TO SWAZILAND: THE RE-IMAGINING OF A BORDERLESS SPATIAL SYSTEM

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Introduction

In people's livelihoods, migration across international borders represents an important strategy for asset accumulation (Moser and Dani, 2008). On the continent, men and women have always migrated to neighbouring countries or further afield in search of opportunities. Taking the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as a case study for the generation of cross-border migration, this paper examines ways in which, through the spatial trajectories of migrants from Democratic Republic of Congo, different meanings are assigned to bordered territories. It interrogates the extent to which (voluntary and forced) migrants create a borderless spatial system that circumvents the geographically defined state. I make use of an interpretive approach to demonstrate the extent to which migrants' experiences with border crossing are a livelihood and asset accumulation strategy within a somewhat borderless spatial system. My core argument is that the interplay of weak institutional policy apparatus along the inter-state borders makes it easy for migrants to create their own rules for free movement to fit their social aspirations and in this process a meaning to cross-border mobility is socially assigned and values are developed over time across geographical boundaries. To empirically substantiate this argument, life stories of migrants living in Swaziland were obtained from in-depth interviews. To link internal migration with international border crossing, each migrant is followed from the place of origin (in the Democratic Republic of Congo) to places of destination (in the sequence reflected in the successive moves to Swaziland). Narratives collected from migrants are used to inform on the changes affecting their socio-spatial strategies (motives, social networks of reference, labour use) as they cross one border after another to end up in Swaziland. To contextualise the narratives, it is important to provide some elements of historical and political backgrounds to cross-border mobility throughout the state formation trajectory.

Cross-border in historical, political and social contexts

The Democratic Republic of Congo (here and after DRC) shares land and water borders with a large number of countries of the central and great lakes region of Africa. The borders institutionalised since colonial times have never however ended the common cultural, social and economic ties that

historically characterise transmigration of people. Most of the populations in the region share common cultures, and have maintained relationships across borders, both before and after independence. This inter-relationship of communities in the region partly forms the human basis for the existence of cross-border mobility. Adepoju (2000) argues that movements across frontiers, fostered by shared culture, language and colonial experience, noticeable in many parts of Africa, as well as frontier labour migration, blur the distinction between internal and international migration, as well as that between migration in regular and irregular situations on the continent. Cross-border migration is not therefore a post-independence phenomenon as far as the DRC is concerned. It is part of the history and culture of the peoples of that country. In the pre-colonial time, most parts of the countries known today as Congo-Brazzaville, DRC and Angola (referring especially to its enclave of Cabinda) formed a territorial entity which was under the authority of the Kingdom of Kongo (Kongo-Diatotila or Banza Congo). The needs for survival and escape from domination pushed peoples to travel short and long distances, and settle in new areas. Nation states borders in politically defined terms were inexistent, although chieftaincies were defined according to customarily assigned symbols. From oral sources (gathered by this author), it is narrated that historically the kingdom of Loango which presided over the creation of the city of Pointe-Noire in neighbouring Congo-Brazzaville, was formerly established by one of the sons of the King of the Kongo peoples by the name of Nimi Lukeni. He rebelled against his father and fled all the way from the Equator region (in Zaire) to the Atlantic region of Congo. He migrated with a large number of his father's subjects, recruiting others along the way. The linguistic similarities between *Tsivili* spoken in Pointe-Noire, *Tsiliji* spoken in Cabinda and *Tsiyombi* spoken in the Bas Congo (southern province of DRC) are reflections of this historical transmigration of peoples. Through this, a culture of belonging to the same space was certainly fostered which, with time, has transcended the numerous constraints imposed by official borders on the mobility of peoples.

From the onset of independence, the informal trade in what was named Zaire (today the country has been renamed DRC) has always been influenced by migrants crossing the border to neighbouring countries (Brown, 1995). Under the Mobutu regime, the collapse of the formal economy led to this phenomenon reaching dimensions unknown elsewhere. Men and women flocked to neighbouring countries in search of income and survival, to trade or look for casual work. The same trend is being observed in today's DRC. The mobility of these traders is not specific to a destination country, rather it operates in a regional system influenced by a changing set of factors which include the political and macroeconomic frameworks in the DRC, the regional and political and economic environment and the international arrangements around economic integration such as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the *Communauté Economique et Politique des Etats des Grand Lacs* (CEPGL, the Economic and Political Community of Great Lakes States) and the Common Market of Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the globalisation of economic interests (exploitation of mineral resources).

Since the 1990s, with the end of Mobutu's regime, the Great Lakes region in which the DRC is located has witnessed some rapid transformations of which cross-border population mobility occupies a major place in the processes of spatial reconfiguration. The migration of peoples has gained further momentum because of the diversity in new forms of mobility –refugees, economic migrants, religious migrants and student migration, which add complexity to the many other aspects of the dynamics of the eastern African region. The DRC has numerous points of entry and exit along its very long borders with Zambia, Uganda, Sudan, Angola, Rwanda and Burundi, which facilitate transit to other countries further east or south. Monitoring these points efficiently is a very difficult task because of their location in undeveloped forest areas. The pervasive insecurity perpetuated by militia has doomed all attempts to control the borders to failure. The conditions mentioned above, combined with the understaffed and underfunded border control, have been compounded by the sensitive political issues raised by the continued flows of forced migrants at the borders and internally displaced persons in near-border towns. It is widely admitted that bilateral initiatives to reduce the flow of irregular cross-border migrants have had insignificant impact. Long and porous borders have rendered bilateral agreements ineffective. If migrants cannot enter through legal channels, they will break the law as illegal migrants or in disguised forms as long as they look for viable sustainable livelihoods or security. This form of mobility has increased over the past years because of the persistent violent crises and various institutional barriers that constrain the effective inclusion of mobility across national borders into the mainstream frameworks of regional economic integration.

Theoretical framework

For the sake of clarity, it is important to give a scope to what cross-border mobility covers and what it theoretically implies. Conceptually, cross-border mobility is defined to include all types of mobility, whether they operate near or far from the borders of the DRC, provided all these forms of spatial mobility involve passage from one country to the next. Most analysts recognise that the dynamics of migration can be adequately understood by embedding it in a system of interactions such as the one proposed by Giddens (1984) in his theory of restructuration. This provides a foundation for this study to build upon the structuration theory in order to understand the sub-processes associated with cross-border migration. Along these lines, such a system is composed of institutions, organisations or social agents driven by values and principles. Thus, in the system, migration (human behaviour) and social structures (components of the system, including families and households, where it takes place) are intertwined at varying interacting levels. People decide where to move within the spatial system according to the codes of signification they attach to places. It is therefore theoretically justified to analyse cross-border migration as embedded in social structures. Goss and Lindquist (1995: 7) claim that "inasmuch as people are restrained by the structure, they also allow the emergence of a certain time-space-structure", be it informal. In other words, people make use of the existing structure-rules, resources, institutions or, through

rules they create for themselves, they contribute to the creation of structures that suit their behaviours. Thus the interactions mentioned above operate in a two-way direction, migration ←→ social structures, with feedback effects. It is therefore assumed that although migrational behaviour may be restrained in space and time by social structures, it can also be creatively shaped by them. Hence the importance of the links that migration has with such institutions as market, family, household, regional integration policy, civic organisation, interest group, to name but a few. I regard cross-border migration as a part of a large, interacting, and interrelated bundle of changes, which the nations of the Great Lakes and southern regions have so far experienced. These changes include globalisation, regional integration, institutional restructuring, family transition, state reconfiguration, market failures, commercialisation of personal relationships, and so on.

Previous studies in the Great Lakes region have indicated that the movement of people across the borders is associated with various motives, among which those of survival play a major role (World Bank, 2011). The motives that drive this mobility display a great deal of heterogeneity. While some people have unclear objectives, for others the reasons for moving are subjectively well designed. These cross-border migrants are often denied equal access to formal resources and markets in the country where they temporarily reside. Repeated cross-border mobility is predominantly male-dominated, as it is adventurous physically, very demanding and risky to personal safety. The migrants are often young with lack of adequate education, training, and capital. Consequently, they tend to relay on social networks and other personal resources. Their migration proceeds on foot and is often of a short distance, moving temporarily to locations where the induced costs are low. Cross-border migration has always been associated with livelihoods drained from the informal sector (Brown, 1996) because people have to rely on temporary work in areas where they relocate.

With the increase, on the one hand, in market failure and tension and, on the other hand, inadequate initiatives of economic integration, governments in the Great Lakes region have somewhat lost control over their formal borders (World Bank, 2011). The reality of today is that for most people relying on their connections, moving across the border is much easier because the states have become to a large extent "borderless". Brettel (2000: 12) argues that cross-border migrants from one country to another are part of transnationalism. This author defines this phenomenon as "a social process whereby migrants operate in social fields that transgress geographic, political and cultural borders". Social distances between sending and receiving countries are now shortened, not only because of the various modes of travelling, but also because of the facilitating role of migration networks. Migrants transcend the constraints imposed by official borders by means of informal channels of communicating and moving from place to place. According to Ananta and Arifin (2004), they can maintain their contacts with others in the home countries. In the same vein, they use contacts they have to facilitate their move to other places. Places of stay for migrants become "one" integrated within a spatial system. They are not uprooted, but they move back to forth and freely, between different or similar cultures, social, economics, and political

systems. In places where they have relocated, migrants not only send economic remittances, but also social, cultural, and perhaps political remittances (Ananta and Arifin, 2004).

In moving across the border from country to country across the Great Lakes region, it is hypothesised that migrants do not rely on the so called "shadow" network of labour brokers, contractors and transporters as frequently reported in South Asian countries (Asis, 2004). They make use of their personal relations and resources to cover costs and find a way to the destination. As observed by Asis (2000) in the case of Asian migrants, families and friends stand out as the most cohesive element in the migration process.

Methods of information gathering and analytical framework

Using the migratory histories collected from eight self-settled Congolese refugees in Swaziland, an attempt was made to organise or rearrange, in a narrative manner, a set of differing individual experiences in relation to migrant status, location and housing, work and livelihoods. The migration trajectories were collected during the fieldwork I conducted in urban Swaziland in 2006 within the framework of research on Congolese migrants and assets for livelihoods. This research also collected data from 135 respondents using a semi-structured questionnaire. To gain deeper insights into the migratory trajectories, I supplemented this survey with fifteen in-depth interviews with informants who voluntarily revealed their migration stories from their place of birth to Swaziland (Tati, 2006).

The migratory story of each informant was gathered over a period of time from their departure from DRC to relocation in Swaziland. When gathering information, I focused on process, ambiguity and changes in one's personal life, assuming the absence of order and rationality. Thus I made use of biographical approach, focusing on personal crises and psychohistory (for details on the methods see Babbie, *et al*, 2010: 283-287). To bring individual's practical consciousness to a discursive level (Giddens, 1984), the in-depth interviews sought to scrutinise the practical consciousness underlying their mobility by asking them to report on the social and economic activities they were involved in at various stages in their trajectories.

Thus, rather than bringing together the eight narratives into thematic sections punctuated with verbatim quotes from respondents, as is the case in most narrative accounts using qualitative material, I have chosen to use each individual's piece of life to preserve the integral sequencing of events the interviewee went through during that period of his or her life from the first move in DRC to settling in Swaziland. The point is not only the determination of migration, but also way in which individuals assess the options open to them within a spectrum of multimodal alternative destinations. The interest in the narratives is focused on the circumstances of their initial move from their place of birth, what motivated them to cross the border and move to transit places, their economic and family situations at different

places (including Swaziland) and their ties to their area of origin. For ethical reasons, their real identities have not been used.

Narratives on migratory trajectories

Before narrating the individual migratory experience, it is important to first draw some cut-crossing features from the nine migratory histories. The migratory trajectories suggest some common traits emerging from migrants: a family-rooted departure from a locality, different places of transit within and outside the DRC and relocation in Swaziland through different events. All these events seem to have taken place without the individual acquiring an advanced educational or professional status. For clarity's sake, the trajectories are first examined separately, and then insights from the different migratory histories are brought together into a tentative grounded theory of the re-imagination of a borderless spatial system.

Trajectory 1
Identification: M. K. K.
Year of departure: 2001
Place of residence: Manzini (Fairview)
Year of birth: 1970
Sex: male

M. K. K. left the Democratic Republic of Congo three months after the sudden, violent death of President Kabila. Since 2003 his place of residence has been Manzini. He did not provide a detailed track line about his family background (when asked about his ethnic group, he even refused to reveal it on the grounds that he was suspected of being associated with the Baiamulegue ethnic group). He only said that he was from a family of nine children and was his father's second son. He spent his early childhood in a locality called Tshikapa, part of the Kananga district in the Province of Kasai-Occidental. His father could not afford to provide education to all of them. He always wanted to leave his parents and join his uncle living in Lusaka (Zambia), where he thought life was much better than in his home place. The military unrest that followed the power take over by Kabila motivated his parents to let him travel to Kipushi, close to the border with Zambia. He got there by road, and the trip was financially supported by his father. He then crossed the border and found his way to Chipata as, at the time he was leaving his parental home, he was told that his uncle had moved to this secondary city of Zambia to set up a furniture making business as a professional carpenter.

Upon arrival in Chipata, he stayed with two Congolese fellows from DRC who, through their local network of relations, helped him to trace his uncle. In the end, he managed to get in touch with his uncle. M.K.K decided to become a carpenter as advised by his uncle. After 14 months of training, he was not very satisfied with the way his uncle was making a living from his business. His apprenticeship was only on a part-time basis, as he gradually came to realise that being a carpenter was not the right occupation for him. Besides, aged 23, he felt that it was high time for him to become autonomous. He left his uncle's

workshop and entered a new apprenticeship deal with a Zambian running a hairdressing salon, convinced that this activity was more lucrative than being a carpenter. Being in a new country, he had no other choice but to accept these terms of training. He reckoned that under this agreement he was incapable of getting the necessary amount to "free" himself, and felt he was "trapped" for life in this apprenticeship deal. All this time, his residence status was not clear; he was neither a formal refugee nor an asylum seeker. Like most Congolese migrants, after several attempts, he managed in the end to obtain a letter from the UNCHR stating that his application for refugee status had been received and was being processed. Not further communication, however, was given to him by the UN agency in the following year.

The acknowledgement of his application was however an indication that he could use the letter from the UNCHR as official recognition of his status. At age 25, he decided to leave Zambia as he could no longer pay the fees for his apprenticeship. M. K. K. joined two friends of his, a Zambian and a Congolese, who were travelling to Maputo (Mozambique). At the border, he and the Congolese companion presented themselves as asylum seekers. They were transferred and admitted to an UN-assisted camp for refugees, while their applications were being processed for clearance. As in most African countries, movement of asylum seekers between the camp and Maputo was not restricted, and this free movement allowed him to make the necessary arrangements for crossing the border to Swaziland. Why did he choose Swaziland? To this question, M. K. K. responded that the information he had about Swaziland motivated him to envisage better living conditions in that country than in Mozambique. Besides, he also heard from friends in Maputo that it was much easier to move to South Africa from Swaziland than from any other country within the SADC region. In 2003, he successfully crossed the border (after a first failed attempt to do so), and once in Swaziland he submitted an application as an asylum seeker.

Since leaving his family home in DRC, M. K. K. has never gone back there for visit. It is too far by road and the border crossing from Zambia has become more risky than before. Relations with relatives at home are kept alive in letters sent home through an informal courier service using road travellers linking southern Africa and DRC, via Zambia, or by telephone (mobile phone using the network made available by MTN). The informal courier service is also used to send voice-recorded tapes to communicate with relatives at home.

Trajectory 2
Identification: N. E.
Year of departure: 1998
Year of birth: 1975
Sex: male
Place of residence: Manzini

N. E., born in Goma, has been living in Swaziland for just 4 months. He was interviewed on the premises of the Department of Home Affairs where he came to enquire about his refugee status

application. In his words, he is a forced migrant. The displacement of N. E. started in the same dramatic conditions caused by the military unrest. The period that followed the takeover by President Kabila (the father) was a very difficult time for most people living in Kayemba in the Kwango region, where the city of Goma is located. The physical context was characterised by a breakdown in the communication infrastructure, isolation of the city and barriers in trading with most places around the country. It was a time when most of the residents, especially the young ones, were looking for ways of leaving the city, and N. E. was one of them. He took advantage of the lack of control at the border caused by the military unrest to relocate in Angola in a locality called Soyo, in the region of Zaire, though the situation was even worse there than in his place of origin. From there, he moved to Lobito, a port city, where he was accommodated by a Congolese apostolic priest who had been living in the area for six years. He then decided to acquire some skills in gardening as it was the only offer of training he found available there from a florist's shop. The training itself was relatively short, and after this N. E. worked as an assistant florist in the shop where he was trained, as a way of repaying his apprenticeship. For a year and a half he could not change this job because he did not have enough money to pay his debt back. From 2001 to 2002, his occupational trajectory was not exactly predictable. Within a period of two years, he worked for four different florists involved in selling exotic flowers across the border to Namibia and South Africa (he claimed that he left each of these companies voluntarily). The last florist he worked for sent him to serve as a representative of his timber business in the Lubango area, which was under the permanent risk of being raided by UNITA at that time (before the death of Savimbi). After five months of employment, he lost his job because he did not want to be transferred to another site. Using transport by road, he managed to resettle in Luanda after a life-threatening journey in the company of some other internally displaced refugees. There, using his meagre savings from previous jobs, he set up his own business as a florist.

Living illegally without legal refugee status (he has never applied for this status though he always perceived himself as being entitled to it at that time), he was constantly harassed by the city authorities. He said that there was a prevailing xenophobic attitude toward Congolese among the locals. It is partly because of this that he relocated to Namibia, close to the border with Angola, using the contacts he had at the time of his training. But soon after arrival in Namibia, he was forcefully expelled back to Angola as he did not have proper documentation. Back to Angola, he worked again as a gardener in the same small town of Lubango, located close to the border with Namibia. N. E. did not stay there long and went back to Luanda. In the capital city, he rented a room which he shared with his female partner. His partner, a divorcee, was an Angolan national owning a grocery shop. From this liaison, he had a daughter while his female partner had also a daughter from a previous marriage. The only detail he provided about his itinerary to Swaziland was that he travelled by road to Swaziland passing through Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. From the interview, it emerged that N. E. has never visited his relatives at home. He said that he inherited two plots of land from his deceased father (who passed away one year after his departure

from Kayemba). One of his uncles, the youngest, is farming the plots. N. E. has no intention of going back to his village of birth, with which he has so far maintained weak links.

Trajectory 3
Identification K. K.
Place of departure: Kalima
Place of residence: Mbabane
Year of departure: 1999
Year of birth: 1964
Sex: male

In 1999 K. K. left his parental home of Kindu in the surrounding area of Kalima to move to Bukavu at the age of 32. From the description he gave about his social background, his parents were very poor. The father had three land holdings however. At the age of 22, he was compelled to find an income-generating activity. The motivation to find a job came from his father and his uncle, both heavily indebted, as they had to repay a debt. He first worked as a shop assistant earning a very meagre salary, for several working hours each day. From his parental home, he moved to Busuka because he wanted to escape from his tiresome, demeaning job. He reckoned that, even after moving to Busuka, his living conditions were not as different as they were at his parents' home. At 37, K. K. decided to move to South Africa as he heard that many DRC citizens were finding fortune there after claiming to be refugees. He found it extremely difficult to pay the passage fee required for the trip to South Africa however. He decided to become a pot maker and joined an artisan who was making a living by selling aluminium cooking pots. After a while, he could not stand the rude attitude of his boss. Unsuccessful in making ends meet and living under harsh conditions, he constantly thought of going back home. He even worked as canoe runner (ferry man) in a locality called Bemi, a job that familiarised him with the continuous influxes of refugees heading for Uganda. Perhaps this familiarity with people on the move motivated him in the end to cross the border and relocate in Marghuta Peak. He then moved to Kampala. From there, his ambition of moving to South Africa forced him to travel southward all the way to Swaziland in March 2000. He did not provide any details on how he travelled to this country, and restricted himself to just a few words "it was difficult, but I coped" (from an unconfirmed source, it was alleged that he travelled under a false identity as a Mozambican; I could not however confirm this allegation). He reckoned that his life in Swaziland had become more stable and that he had achieved some kind of autonomy. K. K. pointed out however that, despite his age, he had to start a new apprenticeship cycle to work as an operator in a laundry facility service. A more stable family life started for him as well in Swaziland. Five months after arrival, he was joined by a female partner he met in Uganda, and with whom he had a child there. While in Swaziland, he was informed that his cousins were exploiting the small plantation of palm trees left by his deceased father without sharing the profits from it with his old mother.

From the narrative above, one has to admit that the migratory itinerary of K. K. is particularly complex and his life course, for most of it, has been characterised by periods of life events that are not

clearly relatable or collectable, so to speak. There is a heavy presence of family influence in his cross-border migratory trajectory. Despite all these difficult events, K. K. has managed to stabilise his situation in Swaziland. The salary paid to him by the laundry's owner allows him to accommodate his family in an acceptable modest house equipped with electricity and to afford the costs of his daughter's schooling. He said that, having now settled down, his intention was to go and visit his mother. He has not seen her since leaving his home town. His plan is to go there by road to Lubumbashi, via Zambia, but he pointed out that the persistent military unrest and lawlessness in the region does not offer enough security for making it this way.

Trajectory 4
Identification: A.S.
Place of residence: Manzini
Year of departure: 1996
Year of birth: 1968
Sex: male

A. S has had a very long migratory life (13 years) as he reckoned it with a tone of bravery and adventure. His mother was his father's second wife in a family of 11 children. Two of the sons from his father's first wife also migrated and one was living in Germany and the other was living in South Africa at the time of the interview. The social background in which he grew up was relatively modest. At 22, A. S. was sent to Lumumbashi by his father to stay at his aunt's place to go to college. From that age, A. S. resided successively in Lumumbashi, Likasi, before moving to Swaziland. With the exception of Lumumbashi, the other steps were rather short. While in Likasi, he visited his family's home twice. In Lumumbashi, he provided some assistance to his aunt in the management of her business, a kind of informal restaurant located in a very popular market place in the city centre. At 26, while he was living in Likasi for about two years, he went back home and stayed there without working. In the heat of the fighting between the military factions, A.S. decided to stay there for a while (he said he wanted to join one of factions supported by Professor Ernest Wamba dia Wamba, but later changed his mind as his girl friend was raped by two fighters from that faction).

His migration to Likasi was quite specific in that he arrived there at a relatively young adult age and found accommodation at his father's half-brother's place (from the same mother). During that same period, he settled down with a woman from the area with whom he had two children. Finding it difficult to make ends meet, A. S. decided to move to Swaziland, advised to do so by his female partner. He was accommodated by his partner's brother, before finding his own place to rent. His professional life took a different path, as he went through relatively long periods of informally salaried job tenure interrupted by unemployment periods. His second child was born at a time when he was unemployed. He said that the reason for him marrying a foreigner was because he could not go back to his home place due to the war in DRC.

However, he did not perceive his relocation in Swaziland as a way of ending his career as a house builder (mason).This is reflected in his drive for entrepreneurship. A. S. also mentioned a third source of income related to the links he maintained with his place of origin. He frequently managed to send home some money he saved from his previous contracts, through his niece who was studying in Johannesburg, South Africa. The money sent home has served to build a small house that is being rented out by two of his three sisters. The rent is also partly used to cover the medical expenses of treatment of his mother's diabetes.

A. S.'s quite fragmented migratory life evolved in three steps. One can look at them as three distinct migrations. In each of these, there was neither a plan nor a personal long-term strategy. His first migration was motivated by his father's death, and since that first move A. S. has mostly remained connected to his place of origin during his migratory trajectory. He admits however that upon arrival in Manzini, the links with his home place have tended to weaken. Also he did not indicate whether he had any plan to apply for refugee status in Swaziland. All signs tend to point to a willingness to find his way in the host society as an economic migrant.

Trajectory 5
Identification: T. A.
Place of residence: Manzini
Year of birth: 1969
Year of departure: 2001
Sex: male

When one looks at his assets or his position as a prominent person within the community of origin, T. A. is to a large extent the archetype of a successful migrant. When he departed from Yangambi, close to Kisangani, his family home could be classified as satisfactory living conditions. His father was a primary school teacher and, at the same time, a landowner casually involved in land selling. He and his siblings attended primary and secondary school. T. A left his parents at 23 to study at the University of Kisangani. His studies were not successful as he failed to get a degree (BSc). He then decided to train as a nurse and was admitted in what was then the only state-sponsored institute of public health in Kisangani. After graduation he decided to look for a job in Kisangani. While in search of a job, he found accommodation at the house of one of his teachers at the institute. He worked for two years as a laboratory assistant in a private clinic. Unhappy with the low wage paid by the clinic's owner, he moved to Kinshasa to look for a better job in 1991. After a search that lasted two months, he ended up with one offer as a laboratory technician. The laboratory, owned by an expatriate from Belgium, was looted during the downfall of Mobutu's regime. He then left Kinshasa to look for a job in South Africa, but could not find one as he could not get a work permit. He reckoned that the two years he spent in Johannesburg without proper documentation were the most difficult of his life. He lived in hiding most of the time. His life took a different turn after he met a physician from Ghana who was visiting the owner of the house where he was living illegally. The doctor was working in Swaziland. He advised T. A. to try his luck there as the public

sector of that country was in dire need of bio-medical analysis laboratory technicians. It took him five weeks to finalise the arrangements for his relocation to Swaziland. He first lived in Manzini where he stayed at the Ghanaian's place for four months. With his host's assistance, he was eventually successful in finding a job as a laboratory analyst in the public dispensary at Manzini under an employment contract with the Ministry of Health. On the family side, at the time of interview he had eight children by two legally married wives. The first, with whom he had six children, came from DRC via South Africa to join him around 2000. The position of laboratory analyst has helped him to acquire a luxury car and to help his two wives set up their own businesses. An educated, experienced professional, A. S. is a person of reference within the community of migrants and refugees from DRC. He served as an elected representative of the community for almost three years. During his mandate, he set up an office in the business district of Manzini to deal with issues pertaining to the welfare of DRC citizens in Swaziland. The office also fostered of links and collaboration with other migrants from DRC living in Swaziland's neighbouring countries, especially those living in South Africa and Mozambique. The Congolese diaspora in the United States was also one of his networks. The office was quite a popular place as it also served as a meeting point for DRC nationals living in Swaziland, to discuss community welfare issues and mobilise resources.

A.S. displays quite a few other signs of a wealthy man for whom migration has paid off. He is in the process of buying a free-standing house in a residential area called "66", an affluent suburb of Manzini. He once owned a taxi run by a Ghanaian driver he is employing, as financial problems he experienced forced him to sell the car to repay a debt. During the field work, I picked up from other informants allegations that the money he was paying for the property was taken from the funds of a saving scheme set up by the Congolese. Accused of embezzlement, A. S had to resign his position as representative. His private business is now limited to two maize mills run by one of his daughters in the vicinity of the Manzini market. Nonetheless, A. S. is a clear example of a successful migrant who has managed to consolidate a comfortable life in the host society.

Trajectory 6
Identification: M. L.
Place of residence: Mbabane
Year of departure: 1991
Year of birth: 1977
Sex: female

M. L. has lived in Mbabane since 2001. Her life story illustrates the extent to which women in some parts of Sub-Saharan African, even when they are married, are relatively autonomous in their decision to migrate. This biography also provides a strong illustration of how complex a residential system can be in the reconstruction of a migrant's social life.

M. L. left her birth place, a small place called Kibombo in Kasaï Oriental, at the age of 13 to relocate to the town of Kindu with her mother. She said that it was her mother's second migration to that

town for a marriage-related reason. She then moved to Goma after her mother divorced her first husband. M. L. stayed in Goma for eight years, and during that time she did not pay a single visit to her birth place, though her father and sister were still living there. Thus it does not come as a surprise that she could no recollection of the living conditions she had had in the Kasaï before moving to Goma. In the first five years of residence in Goma, M. L. trained as a tailor and assisted her mother who was selling locally grown vegetables at the market place. At 21, she married a man who was involved in cross-border trading between Rwanda and DRC. She settled with her husband in Kigali and had two children with him. Five years after the marriage, the husband migrated to Zimbabwe, and later to Swaziland. She gave no clear indication of the reasons for these successive moves. What came out of the interview was that they had to do with her husband's association with some Asian traders involved in the wood pulp trade.

M. L. joined her husband by her own means in 2001, as she could not go back to Kasaï due to the military unrest around the border area between Rwanda and DRC. Soon after her arrival in Swaziland, she discovered that her husband was living with another woman from Zimbabwe as his partner. The husband had no source of personal income, and was materially supported by that woman. Because of this illegitimate liaison, M. L. could not stay with her husband and ended up renting a room to accommodate her and the two children she had with her, while waiting for her application for refugee status to be processed. She has not had a stable activity since resettling in Swaziland and is actively looking for start-up capital for a business. Despite his extra-marital life, her husband would like to go back home or relocate elsewhere in the country with her, once she has been granted refugee status by the Swaziland home affairs department. She does not consider refugee status to be a strong reason for settling in Swaziland. She intends to relocate with her two children to South Africa, which she sees as a good place to be as far as income-generating opportunities are concerned.

Trajectory 7
Identification: A. M.
Place of residence: Mbabane
Year of birth: 1970
Year of departure: 2000
Sex: Male

A. M. is the third son in a polygamous marriage. He is the only person in the family with migration experience. The reasons for his first migration, however, cannot clearly be defined. He first left his home place at the age of 19, while he was finishing his first year of secondary school (equivalent to grade 11). He enrolled at a school in Bukavu as a vocational student to train in basic electronics. He failed to pass the three-year course and decided to drop out. Using some skills learned from the training, he then joined a friend who was running an informal workshop providing electronics repair services (TV, radio,etc.). He said that the time spent at the workshop was used fruitfully to improve his practical skills in providing the service and later make a living out of it. He did not however pursue that plan, as in the end he decided to work as a security guard for a supermarket in one of the city wards. The city was predominantly inhabited

by Uthu refugees from Rwanda who fled there in the aftermath of the well-documented genocide of Tutsis. He decided to change jobs as he settled down for two years with a female partner with whom he has one child. He set up a electronics repair workshop in Bukavu but the business was unsuccessful due to the persistent climate of unrest perpetuated by the militia.

In 2001, he crossed the border and moved to Kabwe in Zambia (after a two-week stopover in Lumumbashi) by road via Kipasthi (a locality bordering Zambia) to join his wife's brother, after he was informed him one about a possibility of setting up a business there. He reckoned that making a living in Kabwe was harder than in Bukavu. One year after, he decided to migrate to South Africa, stopping first in Zimbabwe. The problems he encountered with immigration officers at the border dissuaded him from using this itinerary. He dropped Zimbabwe for Maputo (Mozambique). This step in his migratory trajectory was characterised by a quite unstable residential locations in the capital of Mozambique.

He lived in many parts of the city -from inner Maputo to the peripheral suburbs- in search of more secure accommodation. A distinctive trait of his Maputo itinerary is the way in which he set in motion a few adjusting strategies that were both diversified and complimentary in accumulating assets. A. M. is what one would call a "self-made and forward looking person". From 2002 to 2004, he held three positions as a salaried worker. Evidence gathered from him about his job tenure suggests that for each of them the decision to quit or end the contract came exclusively from him. He indicated, for example, that his decision to quit the second position was mainly motivated by his Portuguese employer refusing to increase his salary. Throughout the different stages of his migratory trajectory A. M. obviously demonstrated a strong drive towards material achievement. In Maputo, the first house he rented was of an acceptable standard. He proudly stated that the last house he rented cost him one third of his monthly salary. He owned a refrigerator and his house had air-conditioning. He had a stereo system and a gas stove. He stated with a note of dissatisfaction, however, that his earnings were much better in Maputo than in Swaziland. In Mozambique, he managed to save enough money to buy a plot of land in Bukavu and build a comfortable house on it, had he wished.

This high drive for social achievement did not however prevent him from investing in the schooling of his children. Since relocating to Swaziland, two of his children are attending an English middle school in Mbabane and at the same time he is providing assistance to his second-born son attending secondary school in Goma. He also said that his first-born daughter at his birth place also relied on him for subsistence. He did not give any details on how the remittances he sent home reached his children. Information gathered from other sources suggests that he may also be using a Western Union money transfer service in the border town of Tsipaka on the Mozambique side to send remittances home.

Looking into the diversified strategies he is involved in, we find a particularly complex life space. Mbabane is indisputably the principal centre (job, family, housing,etc.). Bukavu, where one of his sons is attending school, is the secondary centre, and the third is his home place where his daughter lives. He

also has some cultural projects for his home place. Throughout his migratory trajectory, he has kept positive memories of his childhood there. He intends to visit it soon to seek membership from the traditional leadership of the village. In line with this plan, he said that he was saving enough to cover the costs of the traditional membership ceremony. A secondary motivation for the visit is his intention to claim back a plot of land that he inherited from his father, which has been mortgaged by his uncle to cover the costs of his son's marriage.

Trajectory 8
Identification: T. M.
Place of Residence: Mbabane
Year of departure: 1999
Year of birth: 1974
Sex: male

Through the trajectory of T.M., we can see an illustration of "destabilisation", deliberate marginalisation and the repositioning of a forced migrant on fortuitous grounds. The same trajectory however reflects the individual's ability to take advantage of any opportunity that arises. T. M. is the fourth-born of a family of 12 children. As was the case of A. M. above, he too indicated that he was born in a remote rural area of the Bukavu region. His father did not possess land for all of them, and on his death, T. M. was left landless due to his young age. His two elder brothers are settled in Kinshasa and Matadi. When he was 14 years old, his uncle took him to attend a catholic school in a nearby small town. He passed the official exam Minerval, equivalent to General Certificate at 17 years old (which was a relatively good achievement for someone of his age), but failed to pass the General Certificate of Education (GCE A levels) after two attempts. He returned to his parental home, where he casually worked as a primary school teacher and, at the same time, provided some home-based private lessons in elementary mathematics to children from wealthy families. With the savings made from teaching, T. M. set up a stationery shop in the small town where he was living at his uncle's place. Lacking the required experience in business, or possibly because of the town's dormant economic activity (no major administrative functions were available there), he had to close down the business after two years.

At the age of 26 he migrated (voluntarily) to the city of Goma in the hope that his previous teaching experience would help him find a suitable job. His migratory trajectory from his small town of Dikesse (quite far from Goma) to Goma is quite difficult to track properly. He said that he first stopped at Kalima and then moved to Punia. From there, he went back to Kalima and then moved to Goma with short stops along the way. It was a singularly erratic migration during which his sojourn at any of the places rarely exceeded 6 months for him to be considered as a resident at each of these. In Goma, his failure to get a job as a teacher forced him to search for a better alternative. The spreading war in the region also made things difficult as the environment was not conducive to finding employment job. He joined a religious group (by faith, he said), which was touring the region as part of a missionary crusade organised by an apostolic church. It was then that he met a pastor from Uganda who was living in Swaziland. T. M.

had some ambitions to migrate to South Africa for better living conditions, and the meeting with the pastor was quite critical to him as he saw Swaziland as a way of getting closer to this destination. After the crusade, he travelled to Swaziland by road with the pastor and the rest of the church members. Along the way, the pastor helped him secure shelter and subsistence. He also facilitated his integration into the church community. It was during the trip to Swaziland that he got acquainted with a woman from the same church, who became his partner soon after.

Upon arrival in Swaziland, the pastor advised him to use his knowledge of French to teach the language at a local primary school. For five months, he tried his luck in the small town of Siteki (in the Lubombo region) teaching in a nearby school while waiting for his application to be processed. Throughout this period, he did not get a job, and was finding it hard to carry on day-to-day life in Swaziland, although the stay in the camp was a good way of not paying rent. His female partner during the trip provided him with modest financial support by selling fruit and vegetables at the local market. This unsuccessful job search motivated T. M. to relocate to Manzini, where he finally found employment in a Chinese shop. He perceived his job of shop assistant as a step down from the teaching position, even if the salary was much better than what he used to earn in Goma as a teacher. The job in the shop was also precarious. At the time of the interview, he was on a two-day visit in Manzini in search for a better job. With regard to his migration plans, he has no intention of going back to his country from which he has hardly received any news from family members in the last three years.

Some reflective insights from the differing trajectories

Through the examination of time-space in nine trajectories, the cross-border migrants from DRC appeared to be active social agents capable of using their knowledge of structures to move around, achieve goals in a step-wise manner and, through agency, reproduce their livelihoods in places of relocation. The biographical approach used in this paper builds on a structuration position in order to explore the concept of practical consciousness as developed by Goss and Lindquist (1995) in an attempt to identify the embededness of cross-border mobility in the individual search for livelihoods along the lines suggested by Giddens (1984). Giddens (1984) argues that practices and discursive consciousness inform conveniently about the conditions of the migrants' actions; what they know and say or verbally express about the social conditions of their actions. The interpretation of these values gets significance in the construction of rationalised self-identity that underpins certain aspects of voluntary or involuntary displacement. The biographical analysis informs that for each of those (forced) migrants, the place has a meaning that is not statistic. International borders seem to do little in preventing them from moving to places that can provide betterment. The trajectories seem to indicate that the people involved move across a borderless spatial system. Regardless of the length of stay in a location, each place of transit from the borderland to more distant destinations displays a set of intersecting social relations within a borderless spatial system into which the migrants are structurally embedded. The migrant appears as an

intentional agent capable of influencing or being influenced by the social environment in which s/he is located. This influence translates into repeated mobility across different borders. Interestingly, from an empirical perspective, it must be noted that despite the focus of this investigation on self-or family-initiated mobility, the narrative accounts indicate that the interviewees did not invariably choose the refugee status or the security concern as a dividing line in their self-definition of their life stages. This would suggest that interviewees were not overly concerned by this "refugee angle".

It must be acknowledged that the level of biographical details collected was particularly limited by memory problems in recalling events. This was mostly present in the exercise of eliciting migrants' formerly held values and interpretations that have been overwritten by their current perceptions of the meaning of their experiences as reported retrospectively at the time of a single interview. To unveil the meaning of migrants' experiences, the biographical interviews were supplemented by information collected from direct observation using a survey questionnaire. The life stories examined suggest that the meaning of an individual's migration or relocation decision is situated in the perception that boundaries are not institutional barriers across time and space, rather than just in the moment when the decision is made. It is not just a matter of reconstructing livelihoods from one border to another. When asked about their reasons for moving, migrant's responses provided some unambiguous, though limited, statements of their motivations. The responses revealed how a relocation or migration decision was embedded in values developed over a certain (if not entire) period of life course, rather than being linked only to some circumstances in the period immediately prior to departure. Some individuals wished to migrate regardless of the prevailing military conflict, suggesting that the intention to move long predated it.

It comes out that the trajectories are not linear but rather illustrate a step-wise or back and forth sequence in the temporal generation of movements across different borders. They serve to illustrate the long-time sequence involved in the generation of each move across the borders, be it involuntary. A set of values around which collected narratives concur or intersect is the significance of professional achievement or betterment that comes with the crossing of a border. Through this, mobility is a means of advancing materially or moving closer to that stage within a spatial system that is not geographically confined to officially bordered territory. The space of mobility expands as new aspirations arise. The differing trajectory patterns reveal that the border creates the conditions of social contacts and attainability of these aspirations.

Also reflected in the trajectories is, on the one hand, the developing meaning of migration to the individuals involved and, on the other hand, the multiple social influences shaping their perception of places. The personal objective of being independent of parents is juxtaposed with the perception of a happier life elsewhere. In the end this juxtaposition makes migration an option worth considering. The trajectories and biographical accounts also reveal a complex web of cultural values which one can interpret as favouring migration. The sources of social influence are also present in the shaping of

migration. Family environment, affiliation to a religious community, marital ties and countrymen contributed, to a varying degree, to the construction of the desirability of relocating elsewhere. These social influences are nested in the individual's general socio-economical milieu.

Certainly, an inherent problem in these narratives is that of practical consciousness. Understanding the motives behind the different trajectories becomes a complex task when one is seeking to establish what these persons knew about the implicit social conditions of their actions and values, but which they cannot express discursively, that underpinned their spatial mobility. As reported in this paper, the activities the individuals engaged in and the time period allocated to them to some extent reflected the importance of these activities in the particular social milieu in which they were situated. A set of values around which most collected narratives concur or intersect is the significance of professional achievements or betterment of one's life. To some of the migrants, these achievements appear to be a central goal in life, as illustrated by A. M.'s trajectory (number 8). Through the reported narratives, mobility is closely linked to the desire to advance materially or in terms of wellbeing. The biographical accounts demonstrate the link between an individual's move and the motive to achieve.

By way of concluding this paper, it must be pointed out here that a comprehensive analysis of the practical consciousness of these (forced) migrants would require more detailed documentation of incidences of temporal social interactions, and analysis of actions and conversations in which they were involved. However, such an analysis would demand more resources than were available to this project. Within the limitations of this study, it is not intended to claim that the different trajectories have revealed in detail all aspects of the interviewees' practical consciousness. Rather by approaching the issue from various angles for every life stage as defined by the interviewees, we were able to begin to trace the accepted values which shaped the meaning of their mobility decisions, and way in which their values and goals developed over time or across geographical boundaries.

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