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# Cross-border Migrations, Regional Integration and Conviviality in the Gulf of Guinea: Reality and Prospects

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## Introduction

The Gulf of Guinea region has always been a sphere of migrations, the production of identities and trans-ethnic as well as inter-ethnic relations. Although many countries in West and Central Africa lay claim to the Gulf of Guinea (GG) for strategic, military or security reasons (Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo), only Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea (EQ), Republic of Congo, Angola and Gabon are Gulf of Guinea states in the strict sense of the term. The GG states are endowed with an infinite wealth of natural and human resources. Gold, oil, diamond and bauxite abound and the first three African exporters of crude oil (Angola, Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea) are found therein. A large part of the African evergreen and mangrove forest is found in the GG. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa is also located there. Other economically important states in this region are Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana and Cameroon.

These states have combined to endow the region with a colourful *métissage* of people. The mixing of people on the Atlantic coast of West-central Africa predates the colonial era. Such movements were in all directions: north to south or

east to west involving Bantu speaking peoples. Some of the factors that account for inter-ethnic contacts over the *longue durée* in the modern period are the slave trade and commercial activities promoted by European traders and prospective colonial powers. The partitioning of Africa, while creating, carving and crystallising boundaries between colonial spheres, thus restricting movements across the new frontiers, triggered new internal movements under a labour imperative. This explains the movement towards colonial plantations and public work projects (roads, railway construction sites). Developments following the First World War were also responsible for the reshuffling of peoples. The retreat of German forces to Fernando Pó and the partitioning of the former German Cameroon between Britain and France were responsible for a new series of migrations and the erection of new spaces and frontiers likely to control population movements. The resulting contacts between peoples in this period gave rise to new forms of identity awareness, what Bourdieu has called the 'social categories of perception' that were in reality 'principles of a vision and division' of the world. Besides the colonial dichotomy between subject and citizen, new categories were introduced to take care of an awareness of the difference between insiders and outsiders such as the division between natives and strangers. Independence inherited both this legacy and also ushered in new forms of movements both within and across the post-colonial state boundaries: regular movements across the linguistic divide in Cameroon, the continuing presence and movement of Nigerians (especially the Igbo) within and across the commercial cities of Cameroon, and the movement of anglophone Cameroonians to Nigeria.

The development of sub-regional economic schemes was the basis of new waves of migration in the Central African sub-region. Although the dominant destinations are countries rich in oil but with a human resource deficit such as Gabon and Equatorial Guinea in the post-1980 period, or Nigeria in the 1970s, other countries have also hosted migrants from across the region. For example, migration towards Cameroon has been a function of its status as an economic and cultural power or its stability in a region marked by civil wars. Moreover the continuing patterns of ancient population movements, where former colonial boundaries at times split the same peoples into different national spaces, has been a very strong factor in what can be considered as cross-border migrations. These migratory movements have given rise to new forms of distinctions between insiders and outsiders, especially of nationals and non-nationals, grafted to older distinctions derived from the colonial era and resulting in several crises (expulsion of non-nationals, xenophobic attacks, violent attacks, and diverse forms of confrontations). Although belonging to the same economic community, the status of migrants in the CEMAC region has often been problematic within some countries (Cameroonians in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, Equatorial Guineans in Cameroon, Central African Republic nationals in Cameroon) even resulting in diplomatic incidents or prolonged border closures. This situation is paradoxical not

only because these countries all belong to CEMAC but also because they display characteristically very homogenous political, social and cultural characteristics that are supposed to cushion rather than exacerbate tensions resulting from cross-border movements and contacts between their peoples. On the contrary, Cameroonian migrants in Nigeria seem to live at greater ease with Nigerians in spite of the fact that Nigeria belongs to an entirely different economic social and fiscal dispensation (ECOWAS). Conversely, Nigerians have enjoyed relatively peaceful existence within Cameroon although there are incidents that tend to project their status as non-nationals (harassment by corrupt government officials, threats of expulsion and mass repatriation). Nigeria itself has also been the host of nationals from countries in the Gulf of Guinea as well as the larger west African region but it appears to be more a starting point for migrations to smaller countries (Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, São Tomé and Príncipe).

This paper attempts to investigate the crises of identity which have often occurred with the contact of different peoples moving across recognised borders within the states of the Gulf of Guinea in the contemporary context. The question is: can African countries lay claims to transnational projects and still insist on practices that exclude non-nationals in their own countries? How can this apparently be overcome in practical terms? The chapter sets out to achieve the following objectives:

- identify, characterise and classify the various cross-border movements in the Gulf of Guinea;
- examine the nature and outcomes of contacts in areas of destination of migrants;
- identify and examine the causes of crises arising from cross-border migrations especially as related to the identity question in the countries of destination. In this regard, a small survey was made of the experience of non-nationals from the Gulf of Guinea living in Cameroon;
- examine the prospects for alternative models of regional integration in the Gulf of Guinea.

### **Pattern and Character of Movements**

The economic potentials of this region have meant the dynamics of migration date back many centuries in time, to the caravan traders from north Africa who came in search of spices and other commodities; the attraction of the strong Soninke Ghana empire that collapsed in the fifteenth century; the slave trading kingdoms; and to the Muslim wars of conquest and colonial invasion orchestrated frequent movements across the territory (Metogo 2006). Whereas in the past, people moved to escape conquest by muslim jihadists, slave raiders, or to resist colonisation, movements in the post-colonial era are almost entirely dominated by economic

motives. Movements due to economic incentives are strong and have dynamic patterns determined by changes in the economic fortunes of various countries in the region. For example, from the 1990s, Equatorial Guinea emerged from decades of misery to become the new *El Dorado* of the GG through 'black gold' (oil), taking over from Gabon and Nigeria which had been prominent migrant destinations in the preceding two decades. Presently, Angola is fast becoming a prized destination for migrants following the end of twenty-five years civil war in 2002. For a long time, Chadian refugees sought protection in north Cameroon and many have settled there permanently.

## **Internal Movements**

### ***North-South Movements***

These are movements from the dry Sahelian belt to the humid forest zones of the GG. The Sahelian belt of West Africa extends from Senegal to Cameroon. Examples of such movements abound and include: informal migrants from Burkina Faso and Mali who seasonally move to work on the cocoa farms of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, and Malian migrants working in the groundnut producing regions of Senegal. Besides the people heading for agricultural destinations are also a host of informal migrants whose primary destinations are the towns and cities along the coast of the GG. In these towns, they faithfully accept and execute the menial jobs which the nationals often disdain. These include petty trading, garbage collection, gardening and ambulatory shoe mending.

### ***Movements to Oil Producing Countries (Resource Frontiers)***

Another type of movement in the GG involves job-seeking migrants, originating in countries with low economic growth rates ravaged by high levels of unemployment, to countries with high growth rates providing greater avenues for employment and prospects of a better life. The countries sustaining high growth rates in this region are basically those producing oil with the exception of Nigeria. Nevertheless, the Nigerian oil boom of the 1970s was a veritable magnet for the entire region drawing migrants from almost all countries but notably Ghana, Benin, Togo and Cameroon. Today the current wave of migration is towards Gabon and Equatorial Guinea. Between 1997 and 2002, for example, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth for Equatorial Guinea stood at over 50.1 per cent per annum. The growth rate for Gabon has not been very outstanding but the small population implies high GDP growth rates per capita (Table 9.1). Police estimates today show that migrants constitute over a third of the population of Equatorial Guinea (300,000). Most of these immigrants are illegal and notably originate in Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal and Mali. In Gabon, a large segment of the population is also made up of people who have escaped the difficult climate

of the West African Sahel. The sahelian countries mostly fall into the low income category and generate huge numbers of migrants. The countries labelled fragile have potential for growth in real GDP but have been weakened by internal conflict and civil wars which have besieged their economies from taking off.

Other oil producing countries like the Republic of Congo and Angola have not witnessed waves of immigration that are particularly striking because of domestic political instability. They are still recovering from such strife and may soon have to face their own waves of immigrants. As Table 9.1 below shows, many countries in the GG are in the low income bracket.

**Table 9.1:** Growth in real gross domestic product (GDP) for selected countries of the GG

Country	1997–2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Oil exporting countries</i>								
Angola	4.9	3.3	11.2	20.6	18.6	21.1	16.0	12.8
Cameroon	4.5	4.0	3.7	2.3	3.2	3.5	3.8	4.6
Congo	2.7	0.8	3.5	7.8	6.2	-1.6	9.1	12.1
Equatorial Guinea	50.1	14.0	38.0	9.7	1.3	21.4	7.4	4.6
Gabon	0.0	2.4	1.1	3.0	1.2	5.6	3.9	7.0
Nigeria	6.8	10.3	10.6	5.4	6.2	5.9	6.2	8.1
<i>Low income countries</i>								
Benin	5.1	3.9	3.1	2.9	3.8	4.6	5.1	5.7
Burkina Faso	5.7	7.3	4.6	7.1	5.5	3.6	4.5	5.6
Ghana	4.3	5.2	5.6	5.9	6.4	6.3	6.5	5.8
Mali	5.0	7.2	2.4	6.1	5.3	3.1	4.8	5.2
Niger	4.1	7.7	-0.8	7.4	5.2	3.2	4.4	4.5
<i>Fragile countries</i>								
Sierra Leone	3.8	9.5	7.4	7.3	7.4	6.8	5.5	5.9
Togo	0.0	5.2	2.4	1.3	4.1	2.1	2.5	3.5
Guinea	4.2	1.2	2.3	3.0	2.4	1.8	4.5	4.7
Guinea Bissau	-2.1	-0.6	2.2	3.2	1.8	2.5	3.2	3.1
Liberia	-	-31.3	2.6	5.3	7.8	9.5	8.6	14.3
Côte d'Ivoire	1.0	-1.7	1.6	1.9	0.7	1.6	2.9	4.7

Source: *International Monetary Fund (2008:55)*.

Though migration appeals to many, because of the economic benefits of remittances, life has not always been comfortable for these migrants. They are often accused of being responsible for crime, political and economic problems. Nigeria for example, in 1983, had to expel illegal migrants whose presence had become pugnacious to the nationals. Similar expulsions have occurred from Gabon and Equatorial Guinea.

### ***Refugee Movements***

Africa has the highest number of refugees in the world. A refugee is defined by UNHCR as any person who cannot return to his or her own country because of a well founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political association or social grouping. Refugeeism develops because of two main factors: internal conflict or civil war, and famine. Refugee movements due to internal conflict in the GG include the following: Chadian refugees to Cameroon; Liberian refugees to Ghana; and Sierra Leonean refugees to Côte d'Ivoire. In addition to refugees, there are thousands of internally displaced persons in the region. These types of movements are recurrent in Nigeria due to ethnic and religious conflicts, and in Côte d'Ivoire due to political instability.

### ***Deportations***

Movements under the stress of deportation have become common originating mainly from the economically more attractive economies in the GG. As indicated earlier, migrants are resented in most of these countries and are easily associated with criminal conduct, civil and political disobedience. Providing a representation of how locals view migrants in Equatorial Guinea, Engonga, a local sociologist, has explained that the influx of immigrants into Equatorial Guinea has increased locals' wariness because the immigrants out-compete the locals for jobs and have an immense spirit of entrepreneurship to which locals are not accustomed. It is reported that migrants have virtually taken over the oil villages around the capital, Malabo. In Gabon, migrants are looked upon in the same way even though the more objective nationals affirm that immigrant workers are more loyal, obedient, inventive and courageous than nationals. For example, in Gabon, Cameroonians, Senegalese and others accept living and working in places that the Gabonese disdain.

### ***Movements for Education***

Movements for education are equally important in the GG. Nigeria exerts a major pull on students within the ECOWAS zone of the GG. In the CEMAC zone, Cameroon attracts students from virtually all the other members of the economic and monetary community. There is a large colony of students from Equatorial Guinea in the University of Buea, Cameroon for example. Similarly there is an impressive number of students from Chad and the Central African Republic studying in the predominantly francophone universities of Cameroon.

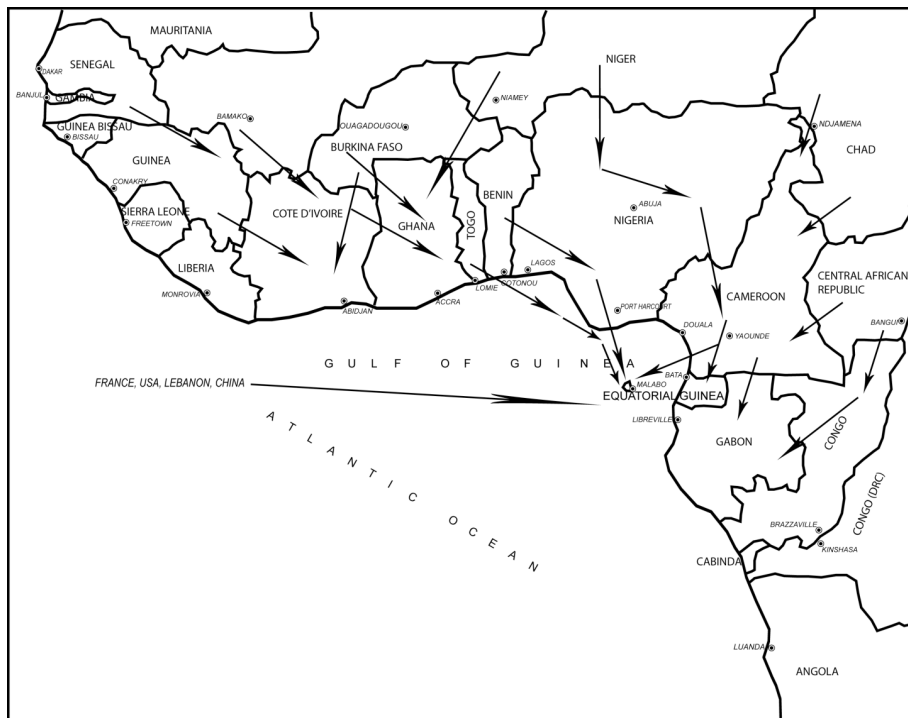
### ***External Movements***

There is a small but strategically important number of European, Asian and American migrants in the GG. A majority of them are involved in oil exploration

along the coastal sedimentary lowlands of the region, notably in the Niger delta, off the coast of Kribi and in Rio del Rey. Many are also involved in prospecting for minerals, exploiting forests, and in engineering and construction.

Chinese migrants have become very significant in the countries of the Gulf of Guinea. They are involved in commerce, engineering and oil prospecting. Figure 9.1 below shows a generalised directional pattern of the migratory movements in the Gulf of Guinea.

**Figure 9.1:** Pattern of Labour Migration in the Gulf of Guinea



**Nature and Outcome of Contacts in Areas of Destination**

A variety of trends can be ascertained when it comes to the nature and outcome of contacts in areas of destination. The attitudes of the nationals fluctuate depending on a number of factors.

***Occupation of Migrants***

There is a difference in attitude towards migrants between occupations and professions where competition is high and those in which there is little or no competition. Migrants in menial jobs or in liberal professions (teaching, accounting

and banking) are less the focus of resentment or hostility from nationals than are skilled blue-collar workers such as construction workers. This has also been a function of the fluctuations in economic trends between boom, stagnation and recession; or between poles of prosperity and poverty.

### ***Political Implications of Alien Presence***

This links internal politics of identity to migrant presence, where there is fear of the 'alien' who can pass for a 'national'. This is the situation of border peoples such as the Burkinabes in Côte d'Ivoire (who may pass for Dioula) and Nigerians in Cameroon (for reason of history and who are unfortunately placed where some anglophones are openly clamouring for secession). In fact, cross-border peoples in general play on an undeclared and unofficial dual nationality and can actually live peacefully across borders. They may also tend to claim a singular status in times of border disputes such as the armed movements claiming to fight for the independence of Bakassi separately from Nigeria and Cameroon at the time when the two countries were striking deals over the disputed area. In fact the area at the interface between CEMAC and ECOWAS in the Gulf became a haven of armed groups of mixed nationalities.

### ***Varying Political Climates and the Nature of Diplomatic Relations***

Political climate has often dictated the way migrants are treated within the regions. The lax management of borders during the colonial period under a labour imperative led to mass free movement of work-seeking migrants within the two regions irrespective of colonial rule; labour needs were the over-riding factor. Plantations and public work of all sorts (railway, road and building construction projects in urban centres) were principal poles of attraction. In this period, distinctions between nationals and non-nationals either did not exist or were minimal since citizenship did not exist.

It is the political management of statehood through emphasising boundaries that created the category of nationals when the new status of statehood was equated with nationhood, or elites sought to define or create nationhood at independence:

The new governments, anxious to identify their own national territories as sovereign and independent states exacted immigration laws and regulations governing conditions of entry, residence and employment of non-nationals, the aim being to reduce the flow of immigrants as a whole and limit entry to authorised immigrants who were admitted on their special skills (Adepoju 2005b:3).

In this dispensation, migrants from the colonial era – the lingering presence of Nigerians in Cameroon and vice versa; many West Africans in Côte d'Ivoire – became an embarrassing and complex legacy to manage in many countries.



Internal conflicts further led to new cross-border movements or reinforced the continuing presence of those 'non-nationals'. For instance, the civil war in Nigeria, which mostly affected the east from which most migrants in Cameroon originated stabilised their presence in Cameroon, despite stereotyping (e.g. the use of the term 'Biafranis' to refer to Ibos).

When the press reported a massive repatriation of Nigerians from Cameroon in 2005 immediately became the source of a diplomatic incident, with the Nigerian government worried about the plight of nationals seemingly driven out of a neighbouring country. Cameroon, apparently caught off guard by the events, denied being behind the incident and indicated that if Nigerian nationals left then it was voluntary. Top-level meetings between Cameroonian and Nigerian officials ensued. As was to be expected all else was diplomacy as usual as the press reported their pledges to good neighbourliness, protection of each other's nationals and eventual search for solutions. One point remained clear: a large number of Nigerians had opted to leave and take residence in their home country. Secondly, if one goes by press reports, conditions of residence had become more difficult for the majority and especially the less wealthy. The third fact is that the event, not being forced or organised repatriation, was not linked to the complicated border conflict that had strained diplomatic relations between the two countries. This is all the more plausible because, despite official diplomatic differences over the settlement of the boundary dispute characterised by the ruling of the International Court of Justice in The Hague and bilateral discussions, the residency question of nationals on either side had never been the issue. Even when raised by Nigerian authorities, under pressure from interest groups, in relation to the residents of the disputed Bakassi area, Cameroon did not hesitate to accept that Nigerians could continue to live in that territory in the same way as other Nigerian nationals lived in Cameroon. Prior to the massive return of Nigerians there had been an estimated two million Nigerians in Cameroon. These figures are polemical and differ according to the political issues with which they are connected. When it comes to portraying the people as the source of some trouble, they are represented as being in excessive numbers. When it does not befit such a cause the numbers are less gigantic. By and large Nigerians live peacefully within Cameroonian territory and indeed enjoy near-nationality status. The only clear difference is that they have to obtain residence permits. It is not clear how many of them have naturalised. The incident referred to above is the first ever reported case of Nigerians returning to their homeland since the detachment of Southern Cameroons from Nigeria in 1961 following the plebiscite on independence on 11 February of that year. It should be noted that the reverse is also true.

Following independence and reunification of Southern Cameroons with the French speaking Republic of Cameroon, many English-speaking Cameroonians either moved to Nigeria in search of jobs, especially with the oil boom, or for

university education where the dominant French university of Yaoundé was an important obstacle to higher education for many anglophone youngsters. Cameroonians were not the only foreigners who were attracted by the opportunities offered by the oil boom and the derived economic and social development. When these prospects faded non-nationals in Nigeria were requested to leave, and many did, or were constrained to, with the crunch of deteriorating economic conditions. The category of Cameroonians who continued to live in Nigeria were university students, either self-sponsored or on Cameroon government scholarships. Movement to Nigeria on academic grounds became more restricted with the creation of a university in Buea along the lines of an English-speaking tradition. These developments have kept the number of Cameroon nationals living in Nigeria at a very low level proportionately, in relation to the number of Nigerian nationals living in Cameroon. The question that arises is: how was this possible? The question appears to be banal since everybody can point to the period of British colonial rule in Southern Cameroons. What is forgotten in this case however is that the presence of Nigerians in Cameroon extends beyond the former territory of southern Cameroons, and that the ethnic origins are more diverse than the predominantly Ibo population of the colonial days. The other dimension of the question that cannot be answered in very clear terms is why Nigerian nationals did not immediately return after independence but rather continued to expand their presence in Cameroon to the point of integration. One needs to explore how they have been able to integrate whereas southern Cameroonians were not able to integrate in Nigeria but rather preferred to associate with French speaking Cameroonians and eventually have been integrating into the Cameroonian social fabric, as distinct from the polity, which is still problematic. This is all the more striking as literature on southern Cameroons colonial history has continued to highlight the Ibo episode as the ultimate reason for the political choice to dissociate from Nigeria in preference for southern Cameroons.

We posit that the presence of Nigerians in Cameroon was possible because of the absence of a real threat that Nigeria could pose to the new state of Cameroon. Secondly, accommodation between nationals and non-nationals has been more or less harmonious and did not pose any problem of any significant proportion at the level of the citizens. Thirdly the argument holds that the return of Nigerian nationals is symptomatic of the degeneration of economic conditions and the austerity of the packet of measures put in place under successive Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP). The crisis in Côte d'Ivoire is also testimony of how integration or partial integration of non-nationals can lead to the most obnoxious political developments in the current contexts where the contours of the polities are just being shaped. Occasional problems of conviviality between Cameroonians and nationals of Gabon and Equatorial Guinea fall into this category.

## Experiences of Non-Nationals of GG Countries in Cameroon

### *Identity of Non-Nationals*

Respondents to the survey were drawn from four of Cameroon's neighbours: Nigeria, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Central African Republic (CAR) and Congo. From the 101 persons interviewed, 50 were from Nigeria (which has the largest number of foreigners living within Cameroon), 37 from Equatorial Guinea, 8 from Chad, and 3 each from CAR and Congo Brazzaville. This sample was selected through a combination of quota, purposive and snow ball sampling' methods. The first two groups were targeted according to the proportion of their residents in Cameroon given that these are the most important communities of foreigners within the national territory, Nigeria out-distancing Equatorial Guinea in this regard. These were countries with the most active trans-frontier population movements in the southern part of Cameroon with the highest concentrations being in the cosmopolitan regions of the littoral and south west where the study took place. The mean age of the respondents was 34.5 (standard deviation: 12.9) with range 56 (lowest age 19, highest 77). This points to the wide range of persons that we interviewed representative of different age groups. Two-thirds of the sample was male (66.3 %) while the rest was female. The disproportion in favour of men within the sample results from the fact that there are more male immigrants than female ones and from their availability in public places where the interviews were conducted. While sixty-four respondents declared their religious affiliation as Christian and five said they were Muslims, as many as thirty-two did not respond to the question. Around two-fifths (39.6 %) of the sample were married as opposed to 56.4 per cent who were unmarried, and 4 per cent who were widowed. Eight of the married respondents had got married to Cameroonians.

Most respondents (71.3 %) had moved into the country for the first time only within the past ten years (2001–10) although movements date as far back as the 1970s. Figures about other movements into the country confirm the idea of regular movements into Cameroon and into different urban centres. The motives of these movements are given in decreasing order as: studying (38.6 per cent from Equatorial Guinea in the main, although not exclusively), business (26.7 %; Nigerian traders in the majority), employment (16.8 %), marriage (9.9 %), visits (5 %), acquisition of nationality (1 %), and evangelism and unspecified others (1 %). These motives tie in closely with the occupations of the respondents.

The statistics point to the wide gamut of activities these immigrants are involved in. It is interesting to note that there are even unemployed persons looking for jobs in the sample. In terms of actual employment only 50.5 per cent of the sample declared they were employed as against 47.5 per cent and two non-responses. Nigerians are the most employed being self-employment as traders

(majority), mechanics, hair dressers, farmers, christian missionaries, teachers and dressmakers. Dates of first employment correlate closely with date of first entry into the country.

The respondents from Nigeria possess certificates at all levels just as they are involved in a wide variety of occupations or professions. The respondents from Equatorial Guinea are mainly secondary school leavers as they pursue their studies in Cameroon. We should note those with little education from the three other countries (Chad, CAR, Congo) as well as the well-educated from Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea. There are also uneducated people from four of the five countries under study.

Nearly half of the sample population (45.5 %) do not visit their home countries regularly while 18.8 per cent do so less than once a year, 23.8 per cent once a year, and 4 per cent twice a year. Only two persons said they visited their home countries four or more times a year. Respondents from Nigeria (26) are among those least likely to return to their home countries although some of them say they do so less than once a year (16). It is significant to note that only 22 persons from Equatorial Guinea visited once a year and that some do not return at all. The Chadian, Central Africans Republic nationals and Congolese do not return at all.

### ***Employment Situation***

Only half of the sample (50.5 %) was employed. This employment follows the type of occupations indicated above. The unemployment figures are augmented by the students from Equatorial Guinea. If these are discounted then only 14 per cent of the respondents are really unemployed. It is important to note that 12 per cent of the respondents are applicants from four of the five countries, which points to the fact that Cameroon also attracts people looking for jobs. Nigerians are the most employed and mostly as traders although they are to be found in a variety of other occupations. A third of this sample (34.7 %) is self-employed. Most respondents have been employed between one and ten years (34 out of 55), while 6 persons were employed between 11 and 20 years, 4 between 21 and 30 years, and 2 between 31 and 40 years. It is interesting to note that some of the respondents have worked for as many as 40 years. The employment situation correlates with date of first movement into the country.

### ***Relations with Nationals***

We set out to measure relations between the non-nationals and the nationals in neighbourhoods, work places, worship sites and associations as well as between children and among the public. We also wanted to understand their experiences in cross-country marriages and friendships with Cameroonians as well as likely

domains of conflict. Relations within the neighbourhoods were rated by the majority (96 %) as friendly, cordial or welcoming as against only 4 per cent who assessed them as unfriendly. Almost in the same way, 90.1 per cent of the sample thought that relations at work were good as against only one person who declared that they were negative. Only two thirds (67.3 %) of the sample opted to give an opinion about relations at religious worship sites, this being positive. The rest did not give any opinion. The trend of positive relations was confirmed with 94.1 per cent reporting good relations in public with only 4 per cent thinking that they were discriminatory or hostile. Relations within associations were considered to be good by 39.6 per cent with another 10.9 per cent speaking positively about the freedom of association accorded to foreigners. Relations between children are considered to be good by the 35.6 per cent who opted to address that issue (representing those who came into contact with this group, similarly for those judging relations at sites of worship).

Only 14 respondents indicated that there were marriages between members of their families and people of the host country. These relations were generally rated positively: six persons reported happily married couples while 8 persons reported love and respect between in-laws. Almost half of the sample (45.5 % as against 52.5 %) reported friendships between their families and people of the host country. These relations were positively rated: they were said to be marked by love and respect (33) or by partnership in development (13). Only one person reported a conflict, and this was in business, related to exploitation in a business deal.

The values highlighted in coping within the host country are hard work (14.9 %), loyalty to job site (2 %), cordial relations with neighbours (41.1 %), respect for the law and citizens (36.6 %), good management of financial resources (2 %) and support for spouses (2 %). A third of the respondents (33.7 %) have a positive view of Cameroonians in the domain of interpersonal relations and ethos. However, 14.9 per cent identify certain vices (drunkenness, flirting, maltreatment of tenants by landlords, vindictiveness) in their host country. The other lessons were more personal to the respondents.

### *Relations with Officials*

Only 7 of the 23 respondents who came into contact with council officials thought that the relations with its officials were good as against 9 who thought that they were the object of victimisation when they were known to be illegal immigrants. Six others reported embarrassment. This trend is reported with taxation officials where only 6 respondents say the relations are friendly whereas 15 reported exploitation or embarrassment. On the other hand, it is significant to note that immigration officials are judged to be good and duty-conscious by almost a third, 31, as against the 22 who hold a contrary view. Views are divided about utility provision officials and national police officials. Relations with school

officials are rated as friendly by 14 respondents while 4 thought that the former exploited foreigners. Car park officials are assessed by two-fifths of the sample as good while another fifth hold a contrary view.

### ***Perception of Relations between Home and Host Countries***

Relations between the home countries of respondents and Cameroon are unanimously rated on a positive note as very good (71.3 %) and good (28.7 %). The treatment of foreigners by nationals is described as very good (59.4 %), good (37.6 %), bad (2 %) and very bad (1 %). We can deduce therefore a very positive relationship that ties in with the assessment of the relations reported above.

### ***Problems, Solutions and Lessons Learnt***

Problems encountered by the incomers are the same as those observed by the nationals. These are essentially social problems that have little to do with their status as immigrants. This points to the normality of their situations, to the extent that they can be described as feeling at home. The proposed solutions are also commonplace and consistent with the problems identified. The lessons learnt by half of the sample (51.6 %) are personal or moral ones with no direct bearing on relations with nationals. Almost two-fifths (38.3 %) speak well of Cameroonians when they refer to their own lessons. The latter are referred to as kind, understanding, peaceful, undiscriminating, hardworking, well-educated and blessed with bilingualism. This contrasts with only 18.9 per cent who attribute negative characteristics to their hosts: vindictiveness (11.8 %), exploitative as tenants (1 %), drunks and flirts (1 %), or not 'business conscious' (5 %).

### ***Perspectives for the Future***

The majority of the respondents (82.2 %) saw the future in largely positive terms as very bright (5 %), bright (75.2 %), or normal, as against only nine persons who think it is not promising and eight who are uncertain. Close to three-fifths of the respondents plan to stay in Cameroon.

One might be tempted to conclude that Cameroon and Cameroonians have good attitudes towards non-nationals within the Gulf of Guinea to the extent that it could be a model. This contrasts with other countries (Gabon, Equatorial Guinea) where non-nationals are occasionally harassed. This is due to Cameroon's central position as a junction point between countries in Central, West and North Africa. We may wonder at this level of tolerance towards non-nationals in a country where non-natives in some metropolitan areas are labelled and treated as 'strangers' according to an autochthony ideology that has unfortunately found its way into the constitution (Yenshu Vubo 1998; 2003; 2005; 2011). This apparent hospitality is also at variance with the rather irregular delays in the

naturalisation process observed of late as well as a law prohibiting dual nationality for Cameroonians dating back to the post-independence days characterised by repression. The study also reflects a period in which non-nationals are not being harassed as in earlier times.

### **Explaining the Situation**

Two factors account for the nature of relationships that develop between nationals and non-national within the Gulf of Guinea, namely badly defined national boundaries that automatically determine nationality and problematic regional integration schemes.

#### ***Badly Defined, Blurred and Problematic Frontiers***

National boundaries that were arbitrarily demarcated by colonial powers were totally oblivious to the realities of trans-ethnic or expansive universal ethnic spaces. This had the effect of balkanising and containing groups that stand astride the modern states in the region, controlling with them the movement of people. This had been compounded by the post-colonial state's resort to dogmatic principles of the blurred concept of statehood such as the OAU's principle of maintaining boundaries inherited from colonialism, backtracking from or questioning colonial policy of condoning labour movement across boundaries under a labour imperative, and the definition of citizenship in essentialist terms as related to 'roots' or ethnic ancestry, this being close to an ethnic vision of the 'nation state'. The paradox is that this new form of ethnicity was often grafted to ethnic preoccupations (unresolved differences) that the new countries were grappling with, pulled as they were between national cohesion and competition between elites that turned back to their groups of origin for some form of legitimacy. Such trends in political attitudes tended to place itinerant peoples without a sense of 'homeland' and people whose homelands were either not in any single country or stood astride two countries in a rather awkward, marginal, problematic or advantageous positions. In the case of the Hausa and Fulbe they have taken up residence in almost every country of west and west central Africa and can take advantage of their trans-territoriality and status as a people of all countries but they may either fit into local politics defined in term of locality or autochthony or be excluded or marginalised.

For instance, the Fulbe in Cameroon succeeded in achieving a comfortable position in the Ahidjo era as a dominant ethnic category both in the north and the whole country. But this position was revised and challenged by both the Biya successor regime and local peoples (both in the north and elsewhere) who cast them as aliens. The Mbororos faction of this group is particularly the focus of conflict for people who consider themselves to be indigenous peoples or 'first arrivals'.

Consequently, the Mbororos have tried to reverse this situation by defining themselves as indigenous minorities, a category borrowed from transnational jargon but entirely misconstrued by political elites at state and local levels. Even when accepted within the political game, these peoples can only marginally fit in because the locals are or should be given priority as the real actors.

In some cases, border peoples can enjoy the privilege of near dual citizenship without the defining legal qualifications. In this case, they can only be at best active participants in one state or maintain and be obscurely defined within the two. Such an ambiguous status can also be observed with border peoples who move to areas across the border and feel at home to the extent that their consciousness equates a sense of homeland with being within the state or totally ignores the existence of the state. This has been observed over the years with the Efik and their neighbours who have inhabited the Cameroonian peninsular of Bakassi to the extent that this was used as an argument by Nigeria to assert its sovereignty over the area. Even when the dispute over the area was resolved in favour of Cameroon, the status of these 'Nigerians' was one of the lingering contentious issues.

The same is true of movement of border peoples (Dioula, Senoufo) between Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, whose ancient kingdoms and territorial limits extended astride the current borders of the two countries. Movements of peoples of Burkinabé origin and settlement within the north of Côte d'Ivoire or in the reverse direction in both the colonial or post-colonial eras were at times in a spirit of total ignorance of the partitions into different states. These free cross-border movements, overlooked and even encouraged by the Houphouët-Boigny regime, have actually been a source of suspicion from politicians whose definition of citizenship in ethnic terms tends to attribute the northerners (Dioula, Senoufo) to the Burkinabés.

This triggered the ill-defined concept of *ivoirité* that became a strong political tool: there were no documents to define the concept although it was used extensively to imply 'aliens' in the broad sense. But more specifically (and paradoxically) nationals were suspected of or assimilated by ethnic identity with citizens of Burkina Faso. Moreover this was inscribed exclusively within the politics of exclusion and did not extend to actions such as mass expulsion. Politicians from the south (Bedié who invented the term, even to some extent Gbagbo) increasingly tended to restrict the real identity of Ivoirians to those with origins from the south albeit imprecisely. This development accounts for a long period of political confrontation where the dominant question was who was an Ivoirian and by extension who could become the country's president. Successive presidents from the south tended to be comfortable with the view that *ivoirité* might not accommodate all northerners, some of whom were suspected of being foreigners, showing or sharing ethnic characteristics with Burkinabés, although



this fell short of openly excluding northerners. The increasing resort to this veiled argument led to an attempt to topple the Gbagbo government by an essentially northern group and to the protracted civil war. The stress on the identification of citizenship as a prelude to elections and the eligibility of Ouattara (a northerner) for the presidency, a matter that touched on his 'questioned' citizenship or nationality, validates the point.

Closely related to the definition of the status of cross border peoples is the management of these borders. In fact, no policies exist other than the fixation of territorial limits and sovereignty on either side of territorial divides. This leaves the ordinary people with no choice other than to ignore the arbitrary colonial creations and violate the boundaries, deeply connected as they have been over time with peoples across the new structures.

### ***Problematic Regional Integration Schemes***

One way beyond this impasse seemed to have been the regional integration schemes starting with the Economic Community of West African States (ECCAS), which was a veritable precursor in the design of policies to manage mass cross-border migration (Adepoju 2005a:4–7; 2005b:5–13) and then more recently the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Although ECOWAS has achieved relatively greater success than ECCAS in term of achieving a 'borderless' policy where citizens can move freely across state boundaries or where restrictions are reduced to the minimum, both schemes have faced circular crises connected with relations between national and non-nationals where the same factors are at play.

A common labour policy, which would cover all categories of workers, migrants and nationals, has not been adopted. Economic prosperity in some countries has attracted workers from countries with less opportunities but consequent recession has also led to the expulsion of non-nationals by the states as well as xenophobic attitudes towards them from nationals (either fuelled or appropriated by governments). This was the case with Nigeria's expulsion of citizens from certain ECOWAS countries at a time when this regional organisation was designing policies to cope with cross-border migrations (Adepoju 2005b:6). In fact, the organisation has had a chequered history in the implementation of its own measures towards a border-free zone. Some countries have been complacent about non-nationals in periods of peace, economic prosperity and political stability but resorted to hostility towards non-nationals in periods of recession, with the justification that aliens aggravate a 'host country's economic conditions (ibid.) while disregarding their contributions to the countries themselves including in areas of labour, skills in the professions, training in the educational sector and business amongst others. The illusion, as with some ideologies of identity politics, is to explain social crises – in this case working economic conditions

(unemployment, fall in real wages) – by resorting to the vilification of the ‘other’, presented as the scapegoat. In some cases this scapegoat can be political as in the case of certain ethnic groups suspected of collusion with the nationals to tilt the balance of the vote. This is the effect of ethnically defined conceptions of the nation state in terms of space and citizenship.

In either case, both elites and local peoples are active, the first as flag bearers (in the name of serving as protectors of peoples or the national interest) and the second as principal victims. Either way, the observed effect is the diversion of attention from the real causes of the problems to some imaginary aliens who should be held responsible, as well as the development of a short-lived nationalist feeling which serves no other purpose than to rally nationals around the leadership (whatever their performance might be) and thus serve as a political tool. To suggest that there may be manipulation would be far-fetched. What is at work is a twofold process where disenchanted locals may attack non-nationals who are perceived as the source of misfortune for nationals, as well as being criminals, as against the good nationals or even the good category – by dint of either some sort of purity (*ivoirité or congolité*) – while the leadership is resorting to the expulsion of non-nationals, blamed for some unfortunate incidents with nationals, or as alleged irregular migrants. This is the case of Cameroonians who have been regularly attacked and whose homes have been vandalised in Equatorial Guinea by nationals both as a result of personal conflicts with nationals, and because the Cameroonians are seen to be taking advantage of the oil boom much more than the nationals. Such incidents are followed by expulsion by the government of Equatorial Guinea whose action seems to complement that of the governed. In this case, Equatorial Guinean students, living and studying in Buea, Cameroon were also brutalised in retaliation by youngsters who believed they were acting in a ‘patriotic’ spirit.

#### *Absence of a Citizenship Policy within Regional Schemes*

It is not clear whether clear-cut policies exist in the common management of citizens within single regional schemes as the focus is on facilitating movement of people while the issues of residence and the protection of non-nationals are overlooked. People may move but the binary distinction between nationals and non-nationals is a serious operational obstacle to the enjoyment of integrated spaces.

#### *Contrasting Pulls between two Political Drives that Generate Contradictory Demands and Expectations on Individual State Spaces*

This is the contradiction between ‘nationalist drives’ and regional integration schemes. Protecting ‘national’ space has become an instinctive mode of governance

for leaders to which regional schemes emerge only in contradiction. As Nyamnjoh (2007) has remarked about globalisation, one illusion of regional schemes is that people are invited to feel at home everywhere within the scheme but are reminded that the bounds of the state have not yet disappeared. The fate of the migrant is the extreme dimension of the dilemma of the person in the South torn between the unfulfilled dreams of both a nation state in the making and the increasing promises of a universal existence that transcends the bounds of the nation state. In the words of Serge Latouche:

What is suggested to people of the Third World is an absurd national identity and the false belief of belonging to a global community. The former is both theoretically and practically absurd: theoretically because the concept of nation loses meaning within a global community and practically since nations created by the West have not fully matured from within. The latter is an illusion because the person (ironically transformed into an abstraction) is emptied of any substance by the fact that differences in access to available wealth have been maintained, created and exacerbated. The “westernized” person of the Third World is a destitute, neither fully a citizen of the world since suffrage is tied to tax-based voting rights...nor a national of any viable state since nationhood policy derived from the colonial experience is nothing else but mimicry.<sup>1</sup>

This has been aggravated by the fact that ‘the popular rhetoric around globalisation is all about free flows of factors of production (including labour) and consumer goods, regardless of attempts by states to control or confine them’ (Nyamnjoh 2007:76). Vidal Villa (1996) argued that one of the main obstacles standing in the way of globalisation is the nationalism of nation states. As a result, the growing tendency towards internationalism or transnational fashions, as found in regional continental or sub-continental regional blocks, meets with difficulties of application because of recourse to prevailing and perennial state-building logics of the inter-state system and the near ethnic appeal of nationalisation. Serge Latouche ([1989]2005) has captured the logic of state building in the following words:

This nation-state order will in time and at the same time be an international statist order: the nation-state is subject to international law ; it is sovereign because it has no legitimate authority below and above it while societies that have not yet adopted it as a model lack a legal existence and, as such, have to be discovered, conquered and civilized; the totality of sovereign powers that rule the planet constitute a society of nations or a contractual association of member states.<sup>2</sup>

This explains the tendency to continue to inscribe economies within the confines of the nation-state, which is the principal obstacle related to labour mobility. Global level arrangements of a political nature (common passports, common currency) have thus often been oblivious to local level issues (residency within the region) that should constitute some of the building blocks of viable integration.

In the final analysis, the elites some states within regional integration schemes tend to adopt the same posture as ethnic groups within states as they perceive regional integration as nothing more than a patchwork of entities with no strong ties between them. In fact, the reality is not far from this as the CEMAC region has been identified as the least integrated of such projects in Africa.

### *Factors Related to Level of Economic Growth and Political History of the Regions*

The relative underdevelopment of the region characterised by substantial differences in prosperity between countries provokes the movement of people to periodic poles of attraction providing jobs across borders. Identity issues related to nationality become central in the competition for scarce jobs, firstly between persons with the same level of skill, and then between persons of different skills levels. In the final analysis, the natural expectation is that nationals have a priority over non-nationals. Non-nationals who end up clinching jobs are often the object of resentment and even hatred. When recession sets in, elites would tend to primarily target non-nationals as failures are even attributed to the non-nationals, particularly when austerity measures have been put in place. Such discriminatory attitudes, perceptions and practices derive from an implied and assumed regular function of states to provide jobs for nationals either as a matter of responsibility that goes with sovereignty or as social policy palliatives to ward off unrest and contestation from discontented groups. In either case, the state presents itself as not yet ready for the reality of regional integration that appears as an alien structure either imposed externally or as a fashion in which no one believes, the reality – of power, economy, international responsibility – being with the state.

This situation renders these sub-regional schemes largely as incomplete or dwarfed projects, this being a function of political history. It is evident that although ECCAS has extended its influence to the lusophone and Hispanic countries (São Tomé and Príncipe and Equatorial Guinea), which are demographically insignificant anyway, its elementary origins and primary territorial limits coincide with the former French colonial sphere of the Afrique Equatoriale Française (AEF) where the political motive can be imputed to the lingering neo-colonial influence of France. This argument is buttressed by France's continual involvement in the activities of this organisation ever since the birth of UDEAC (Union Douanière et Economique de l'Afrique Centrale) through the subsequent transformations in status and configuration to ECCAS in its present form, added to the former colonial power's paternalistic posture in the control of key issues especially monetary policy (through the franc) and political leadership. Such a situation abstracts issues of control from member states and transfers them to the former colonial power, the presence of the two non-francophone states making no difference. The regional integration scheme thus appears to be an affair of heads

of states who have reluctantly entered into a contractual relationship over which they have no real control. It can be said to hang above states that are themselves also hanging above their own societies or constitute 'un Etat sans nation' (a state without a constituent nation) in the way Alain Touraine (2000: 83) pondered about the European Union. In this regard, such a scheme is doubly removed from society and social concerns such as labour and relations between citizens of all countries. Moreover, the involvement of the former colonial power in settling matters of hegemony (Cameroon vs. Gabon) alienates countries and strengthens nationalist feelings rather than the cooperation necessary for collective policies. There have been reports about animosity towards Cameroonians in Gabon, this not being unrelated to the competition for ascendancy in the region. Such competition is fuelled by France's preference for Gabon. The abstraction of the scheme from the societies of the states concerned explains the low level of integration within the region: in fact, it is the lowest in the African region.

The problems of a political nature in the ECOWAS region are slightly different although there are common dimensions with what can be observed in the ECCAS region. Instead of one dominant colonial history, the sub-region came under the control of three colonial powers, Britain, France and Portugal. As such, some states belong to different unions with ideologies and programmes that may entirely cohere, or else conflict with, those of the regional union. ECOWAS' 'bold attempt to stimulate the kind of homogeneous society which once existed in the sub-region' (Adepoju 2005) has achieved little success at an institutional level with the society left out of its programme. The concern is with easing free movement of people and maintaining the reality of boundaries inherited from the colonial period.

### **Prospects for Alternative Models of Regional Integration in the GG**

A problematic status for migrant non-nationals has emerged and with it a crisis of conviviality within some countries in specific periods at both official and societal levels. We have explained this situation in relation to the rather dogmatic and idealised definition of the nation state as absolutely coinciding with colonial territorial boundaries within which bounds citizenship and nationality are framed with respect to ethnic origins and to the exclusion of others. Such a restricted and narrow definition is facing difficulties of an operational and ideological nature. Operationally, it is oblivious to the colonial antecedents that moved peoples across territorial boundaries under a labour imperative, the trans-territorial character of some border peoples, and the emerging reality of internationalism/transnationalism, triggered by the end of economic nationalism and the globalisation that goes with it. In ideological terms, the current form of the nation that Benedict Anderson (1983:15) defined as an 'imagined community – and both imagined as limited and sovereign' and, which is the key contextual idea on which

modernity was premised (Llobera 1996; Touraine 2005), is coming under serious challenge (Latouche [1989] 2005:110). In fact, a major and decisive crisis of the order of the nation state that is likely to lead to the transformation of the world system is constituted around nations ('la fin de la société des nations' Latouche [1989] 2005:136), and is characterised by a trans-nationalisation of economies, a 'de-territorialisation' of societies, and globalisation of culture (Warnier [1999] 2007; Appadurai 1996), rendering the stress on the nation state anachronistic.

This trend is compounded by challenges from forces from below which are weakening the idea of the nation in favour of ethnic communities<sup>3</sup> in the name of cultural rights (Touraine 2005:267). 'In sum, the nation-state is much less than before a general frame for collective existence',<sup>4</sup> concludes Alain Touraine (2005:65). Edgar Morin, for his part, feels that the nation state has simply lost its mobilising utopia: 'The historic vitality of the nation-state is worn out today'.<sup>5</sup>

Paradoxically, African elites had adopted a totally different option – that of the old form of the nation-state – at a time when these developments set in, precisely at the end of the 1960s (Wallerstein 1991:72–3; Wiewiorka 2004:283):

Taking Fanon as prophet, they adopted the ethnic vision of the nation as opposed to the elective one. They preferred cultural identity – a modern form of Volkgeist – the "every plebiscite" or the idea of a secular association. If liberation movements without exception gave birth to repressive regime, it is because, like political romanticism, they tooled interpersonal relations on the mystical model of fusion rather the legal option of contract. They also imagined liberty as collectively wielded rather than an individual entitlement.<sup>6</sup>

This explains the fashions nation-building sought to achieve: the dream of uniting heterogeneous people through a certain mystique of fusion, the international dimension being a resort to protecting boundaries and restricting citizenship to ethnic nationals (to the exclusion of earlier migrants) as well as cross-border migrations, with the attendant difficulties we have demonstrated.

These limitations argue in favour of a rethinking of the current practices and the search for solutions consistent with the spirit of the times. Above everything else, this must start with the leaders abandoning the anachronistic vision of the nation-state, the rethinking of citizenship within regional integration schemes, the possibility of common labour policies and a redefinition of residency conditions (requirements, responsibilities, entitlements and rights). These go beyond the classical inter-state management of movements of persons and expectations of neutrality, alluding to issues of participation in local political life (eligibility for certain offices and the right to vote at certain levels) as in other spheres (economy and culture). This rethinking process can gain inspiration either from experiences from other regions that have experienced relatively more success (the European Union) or from local experiences of tolerance and accommodation of migrants taken over from the colonial era (Nigeria and Cameroon; Côte d'Ivoire during

the Houphouët-Boigny era), the hosting of refugees from neighbouring countries and reciprocity in border-free attitudes. Beyond these piecemeal national policies, there needs to be critical assessment of the regional integration projects themselves. There is a definite need to move beyond the current style of regionalism. Edgar Morin has argued in favour of confederate forms as a way out:

The world has to be told that the ideal is no more the independence of nations but the confederation of nations that will ensure autonomy in independence.<sup>7</sup>

This is all the more urgent in an area where countries share a common destiny within the same geographical space with identical demographic, historical, cultural and economic realities. This may not be the forum for the proposals for a Gulf of Guinea Union or Entente with a confederate status but it is an idea worth exploring out of the current configuration of the regional schemes.

## Notes

1. 'Ce qui est proposé aux populations du tiers monde ... consiste en une identité nationale absurde et une appartenance fallacieuse à une communauté universelle. La première est absurde théoriquement et pratiquement. Théoriquement, car la nation n'a pas de sens dans une communauté universelle, pratiquement, car les nations créées par l'Occident ne correspondent pas à aucune maturation locale. La seconde est fallacieuse car le statut de l'homme, ironiquement réduit à une abstraction, est vidé de tout contenu par la seule différenciation maintenue, créée et exacerbée, celle de la quantité des richesses disponibles. Ni citoyens du monde à part entière, car le suffrage est censitaire... ni national d'un Etat authentique, car la politique « nationale », née artificiellement de la colonisation, n'a d'autre racine à affirmer qu'un mimétisme généralisé, « l'occidentalisé » du tiers monde est un clochard' (Latouche [1989] 2005: 113). (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).
2. 'Cet ordre national-étatique sera dans le temps, et du même moment, un ordre international-étatique. L'État-nation est le sujet du droit international, il est souverain. Nulle puissance légitime au-dessus, nulle dessous. Les sociétés qui n'ont pas adopté la forme nationale-étatique n'ont pas d'existence juridique, elles sont à découvrir, à conquérir et à civiliser. L'ensemble des souverains qui dominent la planète forme une société des nations, ou une association contractuelle des États membres.' (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).
3. 'affaiblissement des communautés nationales et le renforcement des communautés ethniques'. (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).
4. 'Au total, l'État national est beaucoup moins qu'avant un cadre général d'identification collective'. (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).
5. 'La fécondité historique de l'État-nation est aujourd'hui épuisée'. (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).
6. 'Avec Fanon pour prophète, ils choisirent la théorie ethnique de la nation au dépens de la théorie élective, ils ont préféré l'identité culturelle – traduction moderne du

Volkgeist – au « plébiscite de tous les jours » ou à l'idée d'« association séculaire ». Si, avec une régularité sans faille, ces mouvements de libération ont secrété des régimes d'oppression, c'est parce qu'à l'exemple du romantisme politique, ils ont fondé les relations interhumaines sur le modèle mystique de fusion, plutôt que celui juridique – du contrat, et qu'ils ont pensé la liberté comme un attribut collectif, jamais comme une propriété individuelle' (Finkielkraut 1989: 99). (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).

7. 'L'idéal à annoncer au monde n'est plus l'indépendance des nations, c'est la confédération des nations, qui leur assure l'autonomie dans l'interdépendance'. (Translation from French to English by Yenshu Vubo).

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