Rethinking the Migration-Conflict Nexus: Insights from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

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In his most recent book, Robert Bates begins with the following: "In late-century Africa, things fell apart" (Bates, 2008b: 3). Bates' attempt to explain state-failure in Africa reveals the contentiousness of the competing arguments on the root causes of violent conflict in the continent. While numerous factors arguably contribute to producing violent conflict in Africa, there is general agreement that the origins of political disorder are mostly internal to the nation-state and that the greatest source of insecurity in Africa is intra-state conflict, as observed by the prevalence of civil war throughout the continent in recent decades (Williams, 2007; Bates, 2008a; Collier et al., 2009). Attempts at theorizing civil war have tended to posit a dichotomy of greed and grievance, while some scholars have moved beyond this framework to explore other explanations such as opportunities (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004) and feasibility (Collier et al., 2009), while others have critiqued the rigidity of this dichotomy, calling for more nuanced approaches that recognize the interactions between these polarized perspectives (Kalyvas, 2003). Yet we must remember that as Brown reminds us, "... there are several distinct types of internal conflict. As a result, no single factor or set of factors can explain everything" (Brown, 2001: 24-25).

Central to many internal conflicts in Africa are the putative roles of inter-ethnic tensions and natural resources. The literature on ethnic conflict has explored multiple ways in which inter-ethnic tensions can lead to internal conflict, through the process of a security dilemma (Posen, 1993; Rose, 2000), through the psychology of group juxtapositions (Horowitz, 2002; Petersen, 2002) or by virtue of the instrumentalist roles of elites in provoking ethnic violence (Fearon and Laitin, 2000). However, many scholars have cautioned against over-emphasizing the role of ethnicity in contributing to violent conflict, noting the importance of alternative explanations (Fearon and Laitin, 2003) and warning against ethnic bias in framing that may result in overestimating incidences of ethnic violence (Brubaker and Laitin, 1998: 428). Recent scholarship has gone so far as to challenge the usefulness of the concept of 'ethnic conflict', taking aim at the misguided concept of 'ethnic warfare' (Mueller, 2000), the merits of the 'ethnic conflict framework' (Gilley, 2004) and the emphasis on 'ethnic groups' as a unit of analysis (Brubaker, 2004). The role of natural resources in contributing to internal conflict is equally as contentious as that of ethnicity. While armed conflicts and natural resources can be directly related in two main ways – "armed conflicts motivated by the control of resources, and resources integrated into the financing of armed conflicts" (Le Billon, 2001: 580) – there is no consensus on the actual dynamics involved in such a link, as demonstrated by the diverging literature on natural resources and conflict (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Ross, 2004; Fearon, 2005). While authors have noted the existence of a 'natural resource trap' (Collier, 2007) and the 'tragedy of endowment' (Aloa, 2007), there is as of yet no general theory on the relationship between natural resources and violent conflict. Though ethnicity and natural resources remain important variables in explaining internal conflict, they only tell part of a complex story. The question remains, then, what other variables might be important in contributing to the outbreak of internal conflict, notably in the African context?

Although many scholars have noted the salience of mobility throughout the African continent (Van Dijk et al., 2001; Bakewell and de Haas, 2007) there has been little systematic investigation into the link between *migration* and *security*. The literature on civil war has had very little to say on this relationship, largely ignoring the potential role of migration in contributing to internal conflict (Sambanis, 2002). When migration is examined, it is generally seen as a by-product of conflict and not as a security issue in its own right. However, recent works have explored migration as an independent variable, recognizing its potential role in contributing to the outbreak

of violent conflict in Africa (Lischer, 2005; Martin, 2005; Salehyan, 2008). Yet these works have focused on a narrow category of migrants – *involuntary* migrants – failing to capture the potential role of the millions of *voluntary* migrants in Africa that might also be part of the migration-conflict nexus. While some efforts have been made in recent years to examine the broader relationship between migration and security, these works tend to explore dynamics in *developed* countries that focus on *national* security and *international* migration, bearing little relevance to the African context in which *internal* security and *internal* migration are much more prominent issues. There is therefore little work that fleshes out the migration-conflict nexus in Africa, a potentially important phenomenon in producing internal conflict. This gap is alarming, especially when considering how connected migration processes are with inter-ethnic tensions and natural resource extraction, two demonstrably key variables in internal conflict.

This paper examines the migration-conflict nexus in Africa, exploring the dynamics and mechanisms associated with migration processes that might trigger internal conflict. It demonstrates the need to rethink the migration-conflict nexus, while shedding light on some of the key variables in this much-neglected relationship. These findings reveal the increasingly important role of migration as an independent variable in contributing to internal conflict, while deepening our understanding of how these processes are linked with other recognized contributors to internal conflict, notably ethnicity and natural resources. The paper begins by fleshing out a theoretical framework of the migration-conflict nexus, while highlighting those dynamics that have been particularly important in the African context. It then presents a comparative analysis of two similar West African countries – Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana – that have both been marked by migration into their natural resource sectors, with significantly different political outcomes: civil war in the former versus small-scale violence in the latter. The paper introduces these cases then compares their diverging outcomes in order to shed light on the key variables in the migration-conflict nexus, while highlighting the important implications that stem from these findings.

Rethinking the Migration-Conflict Nexus

Migration and Conflict

For most of the twentieth century, the literature in International Relations (IR) has had relatively little to say about population movements (Weiner, 1985). Only recently has the relationship between migration and security captured the attention of scholars in IR, as the field only began to explore the migration-conflict nexus in the mid-to late 1990s, and especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 (Hollifield, 2008: 200). However, there is growing recognition that demographic change may be directly linked to the outbreak of violent conflict (Goldstone, 2002). A burgeoning literature has recently emerged that explores the security implications of migration, demonstrating that migration is indeed a matter of *high politics* (Choucri, 2002; Rudolph, 2003a; Rudolph 2003b; Adamson, 2006). Yet most of these works tend to focus more broadly on 'security' without fleshing out the conditions that might lead to 'violent conflict'. They also focus on *international* migration and *national* security, without specifically exploring *internal* migration and *internal* security. Finally, the literature focuses on the relationship between security and migration in *developed* countries, while failing to examine the unique security agendas in *developing* countries that warrant separate in-depth analysis (Rudolph, 2003a: 606).

In his influential work on migration and security, Weiner outlines key instances in which migrants can contribute to producing violent conflict (Weiner, 1992/93). Although Weiner's analysis principally examines inter-state relations and international migration, the logic is nevertheless useful for analysing the impact of these dynamics on internal conflict. Those instances

most relevant for exploring internal conflict are when migrants are perceived as either a threat to the cultural identity of the group or as a social or economic burden (Weiner, 1992/93). In investigating the link between climate change-induced migration and violent conflict, Reuveny also highlights some important channels through which migration can produce conflict, particularly when two or more channels face auxiliary conditions such as underdeveloped economies, political instability and civil strife. The following are of particular importance to exploring the dynamics related to internal conflict: the role of competition over resources, with increased scarcity leading to increased conflict; ethnic tensions, especially when residents fear the threat of separatism stemming from in-migration; and the presence of fault lines between existing socioeconomic groups, such as migrant pastoralists and resident farmers (Reuveny, 2007: 659). Finally, in attempting to explain the dynamics behind the 'migration-conflict story,' Valeriano points out a number of factors that might link migration with outbreaks of internal conflict, through societal disruption as increased social cleavages threaten social cohesion (a particularly striking problem in failed/failing states); and via lateral pressure and territory associated with the need to expand territory due to land scarcity (Valeriano, 2009: 7-11).

Although the above examples provide some insightful accounts of key processes linking migration and internal conflict, they do not provide us with a clear theoretical model for the purposes of testing empirical evidence. It would seem then that much work needs to be done before we might arrive at a more generalizable theory of the migration-conflict nexus. The task at hand is to draw upon empirical observations in order to generate theory that will enable us to construct a more parsimonious model or framework of the migration-conflict nexus. While this paper serves to inform our understanding of potential mechanisms that warrant further attention in constructing a model, it also highlights one phenomenon that cannot be ignored. Recent migration-conflict dynamics in Africa highlight the increasingly important role of the powerful and destructive forces of autochthony in contributing to the outbreak of internal conflict – a phenomenon that we will now examine and that warrants serious attention in developing a model for understanding how migration contributes to violent outcomes.

Autochthony and the Perils of Migrating

According to Christopher Clapham, high levels of population movement that have continued into modern times has left "most African peoples with a folk memory of migration and helped to consolidate the idea of descent, rather than attachment to territory or political obedience, as the primary form of social solidarity" (Clapham, 2006: 99). While this has historically been the case, a recent transformation has occurred throughout much of Africa, signalling a growing attachment to territory and consequently ushering in a series of new and violent struggles. Geschiere and Jackson capture this shift in describing the recent upsurge of conflicts of autochthony throughout the continent. As the authors note, "Since the 1990s, Africa has seemed beset by ever more violent struggles over belonging and exclusion, many of them expressed through a resurgent language of 'autochthony'.... a term literally implying an origin 'of the soil itself' and meaning, by inference, a direct claim to territory" (Geschiere and Jackson, 2006: 3). While autochthony provides relative certainties for putative autochthons by deepening their supposedly primordial connections with the land, these autochthony discourses serve to undermine the rights and guarantees of those who are 'strangers' to the land, underscoring the extreme vulnerability of migrants who are prime targets of these discourses.

The recent upsurge in autochthony discourses is arguably part of the "new nationalism" that spread across much of Africa in the 1990s (Ake, 1996 in Kersting, 2009: 10); a nationalism that is no longer directed against colonial powers but instead against non citizens from the same state. This

new nationalism espouses an internal xenophobia against putative foreigners *within* the state, and in many instances has focused on the political cleavage of autochthony and origin. Fundamental questions emerge in this new context, questions related to citizenship like "who has citizenship but should not have it, and who should have it but does not have it" (Weber, 2008: 125 in Kersting, 2009: 11). These questions are of tremendous importance as although "citizenship does not entitle you to resources, it entitles you to enter the struggle for resources" (Mamdani, 2002: 505 in Boas, 2009: 21). As Bayart et al. have noted, the third wave of democratization throughout Africa has heightened the importance of these questions, and helped nourish the myth of autochthony. In this new environment, key questions related to the democratic process such as 'Who can vote where? Who can run for office? And where can they run?' demonstrate how autochthony discourses can be harnessed for excluding political competitors and hostile electorates by virtue of mobilizing these discourses (Bayart et al., 2001: 182).

Given the deteriorating socio-economic climate and increasing land scarcity throughout much of the African context (Berry, 2002), establishing a primordial attachment to the land becomes increasingly important as 'belonging' not only guarantees the rights of present generations, but also those of the future (Boas, 2009: 21). However, belonging becomes increasingly precarious for migrants, as autochthony discourses take aim at migrants − rather unsurprisingly − as autochthony and migration are virtually antithetical. Autochthony, on the one hand, suggests origin from the soil itself, and thus the absence of migration; migration, on the other hand, highlights the disconnect between land and autochthon. In other words, the migrant is always a visitor to the land as his or her claim to autochthony must be traced back to where he or she emerged from the land. The migrant remains forever a stranger, and eternally vulnerable − economically and politically − as their struggle for accessing resources is always susceptible to autochthony discourses that undermine their precarious claims to both land and other basic rights. Consequently, while Peter Geschiere's (2009) recent work highlights the 'perils of belonging' it is abundantly clear that as a corollary we must also recognize the 'perils of migrating' in this new exclusionary context in which the migrant remains vulnerable to the powerful and mobilizing discourses of autochthony.

As autochthony has been a central feature of many recent migration-related conflicts in Africa, often referred to as 'sons of the soil' conflicts, we must explore the dynamics of these conflicts in order to inform our understanding of the migration-conflict nexus. These conflicts involve complex processes and multiple variables. Though not exhaustive, these conflicts underline the centrality of land, citizenship, exogenous shocks and competition for natural resources as crucial intervening variables that might increase the likelihood of migration producing conflict. It is obviously foolish to argue that 'migration' and 'autochthony discourses' alone lead to violent conflict as this is clearly not the case in the majority of instances. However, in considering the above intervening variables − land, citizenship, exogenous shocks and competition for natural resources – across similar cases, we can begin to flesh out a rough model that might inform our understanding of the migration-conflict nexus in Africa, and perhaps even beyond. In the following sections, we will explore the cases of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana to illustrate how these intervening variables can combine with distinct migration processes to trigger autochthony discourses that can contribute to producing violent conflict.

Côte d'Ivoire: Migration, Cocoa and Conflict

The migration-conflict nexus in Côte d'Ivoire is deeply embedded in the rise and fall of the country's cocoa sector. During the colonial period, French colonial officers strongly encouraged

large-scale migration from the poorer parts of its colony and northern regions in order to develop the cocoa sector in the sparsely populated Ivoirian south (Boone, 1995). While this labour migration facilitated the rapid development of the cocoa sector, it also became the principal source of conflict between Africans and colonial authorities (Woods, 2003: 644-45). In overriding the local rights of indigenous customs, indigenous populations were unable to enforce any landholding customs in their favour, thus providing the French authorities with the means to continue to exploit any land if there was an "economic justification" to do so (Crook, 2001: 39-40). In response to these perceived injustices, Félix Houphouët-Boigny spearheaded the creation of the *Syndicat Agricole Africain* as a means to further the interests and opportunities of Ivoirian coffee and cocoa growers against the French colonial authorities. Under the leadership of Houphouët-Boigny, the organization became the base for the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI), the country's first governing party (Widner, 1993: 41). However, once in power in newly independent Côte d'Ivoire, Houphouët-Boigny adopted French colonial strategies by taking advantage of a "fragmented and atomised" southern peasantry in order to accelerate labour migration into the cocoa growing regions and further the expansion of this sector (Boone, 1998: 22). This policy was eventually institutionalised via Houphouët-Boigny's famous slogan in 1963: 'the land belongs to those who cultivate it'. While this laissez-faire policy facilitated the 'Ivoirian miracle' as cocoa production grew thirteen-fold between 1960 and 1989 from 67 000 tonnes to 880 000 tonnes, making Côte d'Ivoire the world's leading producer of cocoa, it also led to the politicisation and clientalisation of land relations at the local level, creating an increasingly hostile environment between host and migrant populations (Crook, 2001: 36-37).

With the collapse of commodity prices and the overwhelming debt from commercial public borrowings during the boom years and from structural adjustment debts of the 1980s, Côte d'Ivoire's miracle had officially ended (Crook, 1990). Confronted with a crumbling economy, growing unrest amongst disgruntled Ivoirians, and international pressure to democratize, Houphouët-Boigny agreed to multi-party elections in 1990. The main opposition party – the *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI) under Laurent Gbagbo − used this opening to reinvigorate an otherwise largely ignored debate about Ivoirian citizenship rights, attempting to build a campaign by "arousing an Ivorian xenophobic nationalism" that took aim at PDCI favouritism of foreigners (Crook, 1997: 222-23). Though unsuccessful, The FPI's campaign ushered in a new era of electoral politics placing Ivoirian identity at the center of future debates in both political and economic arenas while also vilifying foreign migrants.

Given the increasingly precarious economic and political situation in the country, many Ivoirians sought refuge in attempting to regain control over land – a "potential source of future security if not immediate income" (Berry, 2002: 651). As much of the land in the southern regions had been appropriated by migrant cocoa farmers through a complex system of land exchange, many people turned to the past, basing their claims over land on narratives of origin or ancestry as a means to justify their rightful ownership over the land (Berry, 2009). Adopting the language of autochthony, many autochthons used this political ideology to reappropriate the land from migrant cocoa workers who were seen as putative illegitimate occupiers of the land, even though many of these workers had roots in these regions dating back decades before independence. Autochthony served here, as it has in other instances throughout the continent, as a powerful discourse for asserting a primordial form of belonging to the land, threatening the rights of migrants and contributing to outbreaks of violent conflict (Boas, 2009; Dunn, 2009; Geschiere, 2009). Although debate and violence related to autochthony had existed in colonial and early postcolonial years (Yéré, 2007), the introduction of the concept of 'ivoirité' would heighten tensions between hosts

and migrants, resulting in large-scale violence that would eventually contribute to the outbreak of civil war in 2002.

Following the death and succession of Houphouët-Boigny in 1993, the succeeding president, Henri Konan Bédié, introduced ivoirité as an inflammatory political concept that attempted to define Ivoirian nationality, distinguishing 'true Ivoirians' from foreigners. The concept became deeply politicized with the passing of the new electoral code in 1994 that institutionalised ivoirité. This new electoral law stipulated that candidates for the Presidency and for Deputy in the National Assembly must be Ivoirians by birth, with Ivoirian parentage, having neither renounced Ivoirian citizenship nor taken the nationality of any other state (Crook, 1997: 228). The law was perceived as a deliberate attempt to exclude Bédié's chief competition − Alassane Ouattara, a northern Muslim with supposed Burkinabé origins and political support from northerners − in the upcoming elections. In excluding Ouattara from participating in the elections, northerners of Muslim origin perceived his exclusion as systematic discrimination against the north. Furthermore, as a result of the passing of the new law, nearly two million Burkinabé (and other migrants) now residing in Côte d'Ivoire found themselves disenfranchised. In linking Ouattara to Burkinabé identity, "Bédié 'created a tidal wave of xenophobia throughout the forest zone against foreigners in general and Ouattara in particular" (Toungara, 2001: 68). As foreigners (many of Burkinabé origin) and northerners were associated with migrant labour in the cocoa growing regions, Islam and the Voltaic language, the two groups came to be conflated in political discourse (Collett, 2006: 620). Tragically, these discourses were mobilized by political entrepreneurs at both national and local levels, as not only were these groups excluded politically, they were also violently targeted leading to the exodus of thousands of migrant cocoa workers in 1999 (Chauveau, 2000; Bossard, 2003).

Although the 1999 bloodless coup led by retired general Robert Gueï provided a glimmer of hope for improving north-south relations as Gueï promised to hold free and fair elections and reintegrate northerners into the political system, he too would invoke ivoirité in his bid for the Presidency in the 2000 elections, resulting once more in the exclusion of Ouattara. The systematic discrimination against northerners in the electoral arena and their purging from the army, the police and the civil service, coupled with the ethnic killings targeting them following the 2000 elections, all served to further entrench the cleavages between northerners and the FPI government under Gbagbo (Woods, 2003; Chirot, 2006). This exclusion would lead to a failed coup on September 19, 2002 and culminate in the outbreak of a nation-wide civil war. While northern forces battled the national army, fighting was most acute in the Western cocoa zones, as tensions between ethnic groups over land-ownership, control of property, and ivoirité exploded, resulting in the deaths of countless numbers and the exodus of many more (Chirot, 2006: 72). In the ensuing years, the civil war would engulf the entire country and threaten the sub-region, and require the increased involvement of the international community. Although migration alone does not explain the collapse of Côte d'Ivoire in recent years, it has nevertheless been a source of instability, and played an underlying role in contributing to the outbreak of violent conflict and eventually civil war. However, as the following case of Ghana reveals, migration need not lead to violent outcomes as outlined in the Ivoirian case, as Ghana's relatively similar migration dynamics have resulted in fundamentally different political outcomes.

Ghana: Migration, Cocoa and Peace?

As in the case of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana's history has been marked by both migration and transformations in its cocoa sector. As early as the late nineteenth century, Akwapim farmers in the southern forest belt established experimental coffee and cocoa plots, which soon led to larger-scale

growing operations in neighbouring regions (Hill, 1961: 211). As land became scarcer in the original growing areas, cocoa farmers migrated to neighbouring regions, often purchasing land under the control of chiefs who, according to Hill, "... were only too willing to dispose of their southern lands outright to strangers" as these lands were relatively uninhabited (Hill, 1961: 211). Although the early years of cocoa development involved short-distance migrations, the rapid growth in this sector and ensuing labour shortages necessitated large-scale in-migration from both neighbouring countries – such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Upper Volta (now Burkina Faso), Togo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Benin and Nigeria – as well as Ghana's northern regions (Anarfi et al., 2003: 10-11). The need for large-scale migration would be heightened by the cocoa booms of the 1930s, resulting in increased migration into the cocoa growing regions as well as into the mining and urban areas. As Anarfi et al. note, Ghana would continue to attract migrants up until the early years of post-independence, given the relative affluence of the country and the prevailing pan-Africanism that reigned during this period. A half-century of labour migration would leave a lasting legacy, as by 1960 non Ghanaians accounted for nearly 12 per cent of the enumerated population (Anarfi et al., 2003: 13). However, while migration had rarely been conflictual throughout the colonial period, the introduction of a series of new laws in the late 1960s targeting migrants coupled with a deteriorating economic and political environment would usher in a new era in Ghanaian attitudes and policies towards migration (Peil, 1971).

At the outset of independence in 1957, Ghana was by most standards much better endowed than most Third World countries and the most promising country in Africa. As the world's leading producer of cocoa, a key exporter of gold and blessed with solid infrastructure and a relatively educated and skilled workforce, Ghana was seen as Africa's beacon of hope (Konadu-Agyemang, 2000). However, it would not be long before Ghana's economy fell upon hard times, as the country's status was quickly transformed from a middle-income to a low-income country in the post-colonial period (Aryeetey and Fosu, 2005: 2). While Ghana's cocoa sector played a seminal role in contributing to its impressive growth throughout the first half of the twentieth century, accounting for more than 70 percent of the country's export earnings during this period, such overdependence on a single export crop proved calamitous during later years (Konadu-Agyemang and Adanu, 2003: 516). In fact, as early as 1919, then-Governor of Gold Coast, Gordon Guggisberg, lamented the mono-crop based economy, pointing to the dangers in 'putting all our eggs in the cocoa basket' (Konadu-Agyemang and Adanu, 2003: 519). Within a few short years of independence, internal political interference along with external shocks to the sector revealed how right Guggisberg had been half a century before.

In his quest to modernize the country, Ghana's founding father, Kwame Nkrumah, saw in cocoa a means to promote rapid development. However, in adopting a predatory strategy to monopolise the cocoa rent, so as to channel the financial resources into projects aimed at rapid industrialisation, Nkrumah affected the two crucial factors of production in cocoa – land and labour. Woods' quote reveals Nkrumah's fatal blunder:

> By trying to gain a monopoly over the cocoa rent, the regime created disincentives to any further expansion of pioneer fronts in Ghana. Cocoa farmers in Ghana did not attempt to overcome their declining share in cocoa by migrating to new areas in the forest belt nor did they allow migrants to gain access to land. Since there was no rise in investment in fertilisers and other inputs to increase output on ageing farms, Ghanaian cocoa production started to stagnate and then decline by the 1970s (Woods, 2004: 234).

Nkrumah's politicisation of cocoa exacerbated local ethnic and regional cleavages and along with the sharp drop in prices in cocoa in 1964-65, contributed to his downfall in 1966. Yet Ghana's cocoa sector would increasingly become politicised in the coming years, as facing a structural crisis

that involved shortages in land and labour as well as ageing cocoa plants, President Kofia passed the 'Aliens Compliance Order' that led to the forceful removal of foreigners from the country in 1969. While this act was an attempt to use outsiders as scapegoats for Ghana's economic woes, it only worsened the economic conditions in the country. This act dealt a severe blow to Ghana's cocoa sector, as the expulsion of foreigners only further deprived an already labour-starved sector (Woods, 2004: 234).

The political mismanagement of the country's cocoa sector, along with the emergence of a particularly virulent disease affecting Ghanaian cocoa trees, increasingly stiff competition from Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa sector, stagnating international cocoa prices, and the overvalued exchange rate and heavy taxation of cocoa in the 1970s and mid-80s combined to severely damage the cocoa sector (Woods, 2004: 235; Teal and Vigneri, 2004: 1). The significant decline in the cocoa sector, alongside worsening economic and political conditions in the 1970s and 80s also helped shift Ghana's longstanding migration trend, resulting in a migration 'turnaround' whereby Ghana went from a country of immigration to becoming one of emigration (Black et al., 2004: 21-22). Furthermore, this decline also resulted in a dramatic change in patterns of seasonal migration, as a sharp drop in demand for seasonal labour on cocoa farms shifted seasonal migrants to informal sectors in urban centres or neighbouring plantations in Côte d'Ivoire and Togo (Anarfi et al., 2003: 14).

As the above descriptions reveal, the first few decades of Ghana's post-independence period were the "politically unstable and economically unviable opposite of the political continuity and economic prosperity of Côte d'Ivoire" (Tsikata and Seini, 2004: 3). And yet although Ghana's economy collapsed during this period and the country witnessed nine changes of government between 1957 and 1983, including four military coups, it has largely escaped the violence witnessed in most other African countries, including Côte d'Ivoire (Jeong, 1998: 218). Furthermore, although economic and political crises contributed to the implementation of anti-immigration laws in the late 1960s, migration does not appear to have contributed to producing violent conflict in the cocoa growing regions, nor have political parties mobilized against migrants along ethnic lines at the national level (Jönsson, 2009). Finally, while autochthony played a central role in the Ivoirian conflict, conflicts of autochthony have not emerged in the cocoa growing regions. While Geschiere (2009) and others have noted the important roles of the introduction of both decentralization and democratization in contributing to the emergence of autochthony discourses, these same processes have had a much different impact on host-migrant relations in Ghana's cocoa sector. To be sure, Ghana has not been immune to violent conflict. Yet these conflicts are fundamentally different from those in Côte d'Ivoire, as Tsikata and Seini highlight: "Chieftaincy in Ghana is at the centre of several types of communal conflicts, particularly those related to ethnicity, succession to traditional political office and the struggle over land" (Tsikata and Seini, 2004: 4). Furthermore, these conflicts have for the most part been limited to the Northern regions, the most notable occurring in 1994 (Jönsson, 2009). While these conflicts gravitate around host-migrant tensions and struggles over land, they have failed to generate the same intensity of violence as in Côte d'Ivoire, and have not as of yet materialized in the cocoa growing regions (Tsikata and Seini, 2004). In the final section, we will attempt to determine why outcomes have differed so much across such similar cases.

Examining the Migration-Conflict Nexus: Insights from Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana

The cases of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana reveal striking similarities in both countries' migration-cocoa complexes while clearly demonstrating distinctly different political outcomes.

These countries are excellent candidates for comparative analysis given their shared histories and different outcomes. Both have a great deal in common in terms of their natural resources, cultures and relations to the world market, as well as the commercialisation and marketisation of land as a consequence of the development of their cocoa sectors and ensuing massive labour and land-acquisition migrations from both neighbouring regions and internally (Crook, 2001: 36). In her recent examination of the dynamics of social division in West Africa, Sara Berry carefully describes the similar migration trajectories into the cocoa growing regions of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, outlining how immigrants were originally embraced in these regions and rapidly developed uncultivated land before moving on to undeveloped portions of the forest zone (Berry, 2009: 27). Berry notes that "As long as there were new areas to develop, land shortages and declining yields in older cocoa growing areas were offset by the opening up of new ones, resulting in patterns of aggregate growth that masked cyclical downturns in output from ageing trees" (Berry, 2009: 27). And yet while increasing land scarcity and falling world prices eventually contributed to producing violent conflict between hosts and migrants in Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa growing regions, often mobilized by autochthony discourses, these underlying structural problems did not result in the outbreak of similar violence in Ghana. How, then, can we account for such different outcomes in similar cases, and how might these findings inform our understanding of the migration-conflict nexus? In the following paragraphs, we will examine fundamental differences across these cases that help to explain these different outcomes.

State-Society Relations

The most important difference between Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana's migration-cocoa complexes is arguably their longstanding differences in *state-society relations*. The origins of these differences lie in the colonial period and relate to the unique relations between colonial and local authorities across these cases. As earlier mentioned the French colonial state in Côte d'Ivoire had not been interested in legalising indigenous customs and, in the case of land, overrode local rights by claiming to 'own' all unoccupied land. As Crook notes, this "later extended to include the right to allocate any land if there was an 'economic justification'" (Crook, 2001: 39). This resulted in the politicisation in accessing land and led to indigenous populations becoming increasingly impotent to enforce any landholding customs in their favour. The Ivoirian state thus had the upper hand over local authorities in determining land use and access. Relations between state and local authorities differed significantly in the Ghanaian context as the legalisation of the customary rights of local groups in Ghana meant that the state was unable to control land access as local authorities had the upper hand in determining landholding policies. As Crook argues, this difference in legalisation of customary land rights has had important implications on migration patterns and host-migrant relations, as "the influx of foreign migrants was generally absorbed within the context of land use and production relationships set by the indigenous communities" in the Ghanaian case, avoiding the "the worst aspects of a land 'free-for-all' as experienced in Côte d'Ivoire" and its disastrous outcomes (Crook, 2001: 41). These differences 'on the ground' would translate into different state-led strategies in the post-colonial period. As civil society was much weaker in the Ivoirian south than in Ghana, Houphouët-Boigny was able to capitalize on the "fragmented and atomised social structures" and impose a radical land property rights regime in which the land was said to 'belong to those who cultivate it' (Boone, 1998). The existence of a strong rural elite in Ghana prevented a similar state-led strategy, and as Boone points out, attempting to impose such a strategy "would have been political suicide for Nkrumah in Ghana" (Boone, 1998: 23). Thus while the "indigenous populations of the cocoa growing regions felt increasingly unprotected and aggrieved" in Côte d'Ivoire, migrations were "absorbed relatively peacefully within the context of control by host

communities" in Ghana (Crook, 2001: 37-38). Although the Ivoirian state-led approach contributed to the 'Ivoirian miracle' by guaranteeing the requisite factors of production for expanding the cocoa sector – land and labour – while the Ghanaian state's failure to control land policy stunted economic growth in the short term, the long term effects of different relations between state and local authorities have favoured Ghana, as deteriorating host-migrant relations in Côte d'Ivoire became a focal point in contributing to the outbreak of civil war, whereas conflict was averted in the Ghanaian context.

Land Tenure Regimes

Flowing from the above explanation, the different *land tenure regimes* in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana also shed light on explaining the diverging outcomes across these cases. As the French colonial authorities asserted themselves as the 'proprietor of vacant and ownerless land' in Côte d'Ivoire, they would become the ultimate arbiter when disputes arose concerning the clearing of virgin forest. This contrasts with the land tenure arrangements in Ghana, where the "British colonial authorities recognised and supported customary law over land and resultant disputes" (Woods, 2004: 228). As a result, traditional chiefs played a seminal role in land allocation in Ghana whereas in Côte d'Ivoire the absence of chieftaincy control over land allocation provided the state further control over the cocoa rent, enabling it to largely control land and labour associated with the cocoa sector. The differences in land tenure contributed to shaping markedly different relations between hosts and migrants in the cocoa growing regions. As Berry observes, the balance of power between hosts and migrants favoured the latter in the Ivoirian case. As immigrant farmers obtained permission to farm from individual residents in return for 'gifts of gratitude' as part of the 'tutorat' system, these farmers eventually appropriated the land that they cultivated. As conditions worsened in the cocoa growing regions and immigrant farmers came to outnumber and out-produce their hosts, relations soured. Local farmers came to feel exploited by the immigrant farmers who had effectively come to control much of the land (Berry, 2009: 28). Meanwhile, the balance of power in Ghana tipped the other way as migrant farmers were instead exploited by local authorities. As migrants obtained their farming rights from local chiefs, they were subject to the extraction of substantial amounts of rent that was to be paid to these chiefs. When conditions worsened and virgin forest land dwindled, these chiefs increased their demands and, as Berry notes, "expanded the category of 'stranger' to include descendants of 'immigrants' who had settled in the southwestern forests long before the process of cocoa expansion began" (Berry, 2009: 27-28). Unable to challenge customary authorities, and rarely considered to be 'owners of the land' (Woods, 2004) migrants were not perceived as exploiting land that did not rightfully belong to them. Thus different land tenure regimes contributed to shaping different perceptions about migrants in the respective countries' cocoa growing regions. Ultimately, these different perceptions would make migrants a more expedient scapegoat and target in the Ivoirian cocoa growing regions than in the Ghanaian.

State Capacity/Exogenous Shocks

Although Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana's experiences in migration and cocoa development are strikingly similar, the differences in magnitude of *exogenous shocks* affecting the respective countries' *state capacity* go a long way in revealing different migration-conflict nexuses in these cases. While host-migrant relations had not always been peaceful in Côte d'Ivoire, they rarely resulted in large-scale conflict. Large-scale violence between these groups was triggered by a perfect storm of conditions, including the collapse of the cocoa sector and the country's economy, the death of the longstanding President, and the introduction of multiparty elections that served to deeply ethnicize politics and provoke deeper cleavages between hosts and migrants in the cocoa

growing regions, while reinvigorating explosive questions about Ivoirian identity. The combined impact of these factors heightened the contentiousness of migration as a political issue and provided the spark for igniting violent conflict. As the state's capacity to meet the needs of all groups in Ivoirian society faltered in this precarious political and economic climate, migrants became an expedient scapegoat, vilified for their putative role in the recent crises. In the case of Ghana, however, the 'perfect storm' of conditions culminated in the 1969 expulsion of foreigners, even though this law was not directly targeting migrants in the cocoa sector. As Ghana's cocoa boom had occurred much earlier than Côte d'Ivoire's, its collapse also preceded that in Côte d'Ivoire, as outlined in the section on Ghana. As many of the migrants working in the cocoa sector had already been expelled, they could not exactly be targeted during this period of collapse. Furthermore, the downfall of the country's cocoa sector did not occur at the height of an unsettling period of democratization, as Ghana remained under a full-blown military government for most of this period.

It is also important to note that while Côte d'Ivoire's economy has depended heavily on cocoa since independence, Ghana has increasingly diversified its economy in recent decades, and thus has become less vulnerable to a cocoa collapse as Côte d'Ivoire has been over this same period (Konadu-Agyemang and Adanu, 2003). On the same note, Crook highlights another key difference between the Ivoirian and Ghanaian contexts. Although migration into both countries' cocoa sectors has been significant, the "scale and extent of the migratory phenomenon in Côte d'Ivoire was of a totally different order from that of Ghana" (Crook, 2001: 36). Côte d'Ivoire's open door immigration policy, combined with Ghana's Aliens Compliance Order, and the collapse of the Ghanaian currency against a much stronger CFA franc all contributed to making Côte d'Ivoire a much more desirable destination for migrants during the post-colonial period (Crook, 2001: 42). These factors illustrate that since independence in both countries, there has been much more migration into the Ivoirian cocoa growing regions than in the Ghanaian. Once again, this pattern highlights the greater degree of vulnerability in Côte d'Ivoire to exogenous shocks in the cocoa sector, as migration has been a much more salient phenomenon in recent decades in the country. It would seem then, that while both countries have historically witnessed similar migration trajectories into their cocoa sectors, the exogenous shocks have been greater in the Ivoirian case and the state's capacity to manage relations between all groups undermined much more than has been the case in Ghana.

Autochthony Discourses

As previously stated in the paper, the upsurge in autochthony discourses and subsequent conflicts of autochthony in Africa reveal themselves to be an important element in the migration-conflict nexus in the continent. Autochthony has been an underlying source of the Ivoirian conflict, at both national and local levels, and is intimately tied to the violent conflict in the country's cocoa growing regions. Ghana, on the other hand, has been spared the violence in its cocoa growing regions associated with the emergence of autochthony discourses. Fortunately, as Crook notes, "Conflict over access to and use of land has not led to ethnically-based, electoral political mobilisation at the level of political parties" (Crook, 2001: 38). While the above mentioned factors have all created fertile conditions for the emergence of autochthony discourses – hostile state-society relations, open land tenure regimes, and exogenous shocks to the state's capacity – in the Ivoirian case more so than in the Ghanaian, it seems that the role of the government, and political elites in particular, is a determining factor as to whether or not these discourses enter the national political arena. In Côte d'Ivoire, the government's policy of ivoirité and subsequent electoral and land laws all served to mobilize 'true Ivoirians' against foreigners, turning migration into a deeply

politicised issue. In using autochthony as a political strategy in the struggle for national power, the power of autochthony was harnessed by political entrepreneurs and became a central component in the Ivorian conflict. Ghana's experience in managing ethnic diversity, immigration questions and identity politics has greatly differed in comparison. When one considers the nation-building efforts in Ghana that aim to check ethnic and north-south polarization, and the governance reforms, electoral rules and public policies that aim to promote national integration, it is not surprising that autochthony has not reared its ugly head at the national level. As Nordas points out, these measures, alongside the creation of the 1992 constitution which "requires the state to actively promote national integration by prohibiting discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of such factors as place of birth, origin, ethnicity, and religion" highlight key institutional differences that prevent would-be political entrepreneurs from mobilizing groups around autochthony discourses in Ghana (Nordas, 2007: 15). Thus while historical and structural forces can create fertile conditions for autochthony discourses, institutional differences at the state level also highlight how political elites are able to mobilize these discourses more easily in some political contexts than in others.

Conclusion

Migration is arguably a defining issue of the twenty-first century. The explosion of literature on migration and security in recent years is a testament to the importance of migration as an independent variable in the migration-conflict nexus. However, as this paper has argued, this literature has tended to focus on dynamics that are largely irrelevant to the African context, as much of this research has analysed *international* migration and *national* security, and focused on cases in the developed world. The insights from the Ivorian case study demonstrate that *internal* migration has been equally as potent a force in the migration-conflict nexus as has been *international* migration. Furthermore, it would seem that *internal* security is of greater importance in this context than is *national* security. This is of no surprise, when we remember that it is ultimately intra-state conflict that poses the greatest threat to security in Africa as opposed to inter-state dynamics. Given the increasing role of autochthony as a powerful phenomenon in producing internal conflict, it is even clearer as to why internal dynamics are increasingly important, as conflicts of autochthony are highly localized conflicts that exacerbate those tensions within the state far more than those between states. And yet the literature on internal conflict has largely ignored the role of migration, focusing instead on the putative roles of inter-ethnic tensions and natural resources as central components in recent conflicts. While these variables are indeed important, they alone cannot account for explaining all instances of internal conflict. As this paper has shown, we must give greater attention to examining the important role of migration in producing internal conflict, especially when considering how historically interconnected migration processes are with inter-ethnic tensions and natural resource development.

Yet in lamenting the failure to take migration more seriously as a security issue in its own right, we must not over-exaggerate the causal role of migration as an independent variable. Migration does not 'cause' conflict. Rather, migration acts with a series of intervening variables to heighten the possibility of creating fertile conditions for the outbreak of violent conflict. As the comparative analysis of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana reveals, migration need not result in contributing to the outbreak of internal conflict. The cases in this paper highlighted the important roles of a number of factors that served to politicize migration and vilify migrants, setting the stage for the emergence of violent conflict that is rooted in underlying problems deeply connected with migration. Although these factors help to explain the different outcomes across the cases under review, there are arguably innumerable other factors that might equally be as important in different

contexts. The challenge, then, is to bridge empirical observations with theoretical knowledge to develop more robust frameworks or models for exploring the migration-conflict nexus. While it is indeed important that we *rethink* the migration-conflict nexus in taking migration more seriously as a matter of *high politics*, there is much more *thinking* about this relationship that needs to be done. Migration shows no sign of abating, in Africa and elsewhere. If migration is indeed a defining issue of the twenty-first century, how migration contributes to producing violent conflict remains a question of utmost importance and urgency.

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