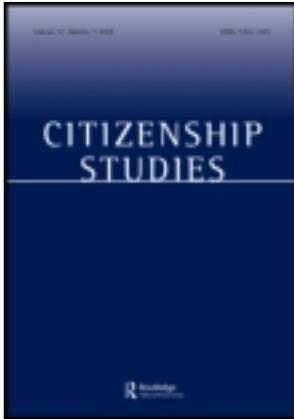


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### African states, global migration, and transformations in citizenship politics

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## African states, global migration, and transformations in citizenship politics

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Over the past three decades, relations between African emigrants and their home-states have been changing from antagonism to attempts to embrace and structure emigrant behaviors. This transformation in the conception of emigration and citizenship has hardly been interrogated by the growing scholarship on African and global migrations. Three of the most contentious strategies to extend the frontiers of loyalty of otherwise weak African states, namely dual citizenship or dual nationality, the right to vote from overseas, and the right to run for public office by emigrants from foreign locations are explored. Evidence from a wide range of African emigration states suggests that these strategies are neither an embrace of the global trend toward extra-territorialized states and shared citizenship between those at 'home' and others outside the state boundaries, nor are they about national development or diaspora welfare. Instead, they seem to be strategies to tap into emigrant resources to enhance weakened state power. The study interrogates the viability and advisability of emigrant voting and political participation from foreign locations, stressing their tendency to destabilize homeland political power structures, undermine the nurturing of effective diaspora mobilization platforms in both home and host states, and export homeland political practices to diaspora locations.

**Keywords:** citizenship; diaspora; Africa; voting; globalization

### Introduction

Over the past three decades, Africa has experienced more out-migration than at any other time in the continent's history (Konady-Agyemang *et al.* 2006). In the past, such emigrants, especially the skilled ones, were viewed negatively in the popular imagination and generally had antagonistic relations with the state. Historically, the African state also loathed population movements or migrations that challenged its desire to project power, extract resources, and/or assert its legitimacy or authority (Kopytoff 1987, Herbst 2000, Englebert *et al.* 2002).

These state–society relations have now been complicated by the forces of globalization which are facilitating massive global migrations that have inserted African migrants squarely into national development policy and national identity debates (Akokpari 2006). Gradually, the perception of African emigrants in their homeland has begun to change from 'traitors' to 'patriots', 'ambassadors,' and/or 'development partners' (Shaw 2007). Rather than stem or reverse this unprecedented emigration of their citizens, many governments have jumped onto the diaspora-development bandwagon of older emigration states (see Patterson 2006, Margheritis 2007, Bach and Solomon 2008) and adopted policies

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explicitly seeking to engineer or strategically construct and nurture intimate links between African diaspora or emigrant populations and their homelands. Thus, Akyeamong concludes that 'As African migrants enter this global arena, their governments have taken tentative steps after them. The boundaries of citizenship, political participation, and economies are all being negotiated' (Akyeampong 2000, p. 213).

This article outlines the efforts of African states to embrace these exiles through a wider conception of citizenship and explores the implications of the transformations in emigration and citizenship for national development.<sup>1</sup> I focus first on the adoption of dual citizenship or dual nationality in countries where such acts were until recently criminal offenses, if not treason. The second evidence of change involves statutory and constitutional changes permitting emigrants to participate in homeland politics and granting voting rights in homeland elections to emigrants from their foreign locations.

The transformation process is still evolving; hence, any judgment must necessarily be tentative. Yet, the experiences of Nigeria and Ghana and most of the top-10 African emigrant states suggest that these strategies are neither about national development or diaspora welfare, nor are they even being sincerely implemented. Instead, the policy changes seem to be strategic responses to the fiscal crisis of the African state and the apparent foreign aid fatigue among international financial institutions and aid donors who are pressuring these countries to redefine emigrants as 'development partners' or 'stakeholders'. Renegotiating their citizenship extra-territorially would not only reciprocate the emigrants' long-distance social welfare obligations at the micro-level, but it would also enable the home states to tap into their resources, especially remittances, currently reported to be second to official development assistance to Africa (see Debass and Ardovino 2009).<sup>2</sup> Consequently, rather than enhance the political power and influence of the diaspora, the transformations in the conception of emigration and citizenship have yet to enhance the rights of emigrants as citizens, even when these policies were fully implemented.

The remainder of this article attempts to map the outlines of this emerging quest for extra-territorial loyalty through changes in citizenship laws and emigrant political participation and voting rights. It first briefly reviews the demographic, economic, and political characteristics of the recent wave of African emigration. This is followed with a discussion of the changing conceptions of emigration and citizenship in Africa as part of a global trend of emigration states seeking to reconnect with their diasporas. The article then discusses the changes and practice of dual citizenship or dual nationality laws and statutory and constitutional changes permitting emigrants to participate in homeland politics and granting them voting rights in homeland elections. Finally, I explore the implications of the emerging transformations in homeland–emigrant relations for national development. Although Ghana and Nigeria constitute the case studies, the experiences of other African countries are used to illuminate the study.

### **Sizing up the recent wave of African emigration**

According to the World Bank, sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) stock of emigrants in 2005 was 15.9 million or 2.1% of the region's total population of at least 770 million (compared with 190.6 million or 3.0% for the world) (data in this paragraph are from The World Bank 2008). Majority of this recent wave of emigration occurred between the mid-1980s and 2000. Although no country in the region is immune to global flows any more, 10 countries (top 10 emigrant countries) account for the bulk of this new wave of flows, namely Mali, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Eritrea, Nigeria, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DR-C). For Africans choosing to migrate outside the

continent, the destinations no longer follow traditional colonial affinities of the past; instead, economics seems to be the chief determinant of the choice of host country. For instance, high-income Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries took in 25.2% of this category of emigrants in 2005, whereas high-income non-OECD countries took in only 2.9%.

According to the World Bank, the top 10 SSA countries in terms of the emigration rate of tertiary educated people in 2000 were Cape Verde (69.1%), Gambia (64.7%), Seychelles (58.6%), Somalia (58.6%), Mauritius (48.0%), Eritrea (45.8%), Ghana (42.9%), Mozambique (42.0%), Sierra Leone (41.0%), and Liberia (37.4%). In the health sector, SSA has continued to lose a disproportionate number of its skilled personnel to affluent countries in Europe, North America, and Asia. The emigration of nurses is estimated to be about 53,298 or 11% of nurses trained in the region.

Some estimates suggest that about 300,000 African skilled professionals are outside Africa; 20,000 university graduates are lost to emigration every year, whereas 30,000 Africans with PhDs currently live outside the continent. About 10,000 Nigerian academics reportedly teach in US universities; whereas Ghana lost 60% of its doctors in the 1980s. The end of apartheid and rising crime rates have led to an upsurge in white skilled emigration to the extent that the country reportedly lost over 205,000 of its skilled professionals between 1993 and 2000. Decades of wars and the rise of an Islamist regime in the Sudan also forced an estimated 17% of its doctors, 20% of professors, and 30% of engineers out of the country. It is a cruel irony that there are more Ethiopian medical doctors in Washington, DC area alone than in all of Ethiopia (for the cited data, see Tebeje 2004, Blanchet *et al.* 2006, Expert Forum 2006). Although this hemorrhaging of their skilled citizens was going on, African governments and their partner international development agencies reportedly hired over 150,000 non-African expatriates at a cost of \$4 billion to the region between 1985 and 2005.

The 'brain drain' syndrome (see Dodoo *et al.* 2006, Getahun 2006) is, however, counter-balanced by the economic development and financial remittances by African emigrants. Table 1 shows that the aggregate amount of annual inward flows of remittances into SSA grew from a mere US\$3.2 billion in 1995 to US\$10.8 billion in 2007, whereas outward flows rose from US\$2 billion to US\$2.9 billion during the same period.

The total inflows of about \$93 billion to Africa from 1995 to 2005 was second only to foreign direct investment (FDI) as a source of external financing. According to the World Bank, in over 9 years \$28 billion was sent through the Western Union to Nigeria alone, whereas the Bank of Ghana tracked \$1.3 billion between 2002 and 2003.

The top 10 recipients of these remittances (in raw dollar amounts) in 2007 were Nigeria (\$3.3 billion), Kenya (\$1.3 billion), Sudan (\$1.2 billion), Senegal (\$0.9 billion), Uganda (\$0.9 billion), South Africa (\$0.7 billion), Lesotho (\$0.4 billion), Mauritius (\$0.2 billion), Togo (\$0.2 billion), and Mali (\$0.2 billion). The attraction of diaspora remittances becomes much clearer when we consider remittances as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP). The top 10 remittance recipients in 2006, in this case, were Lesotho (24.5%), Gambia (12.5%), Cape Verde (12.0%), Guinea-Bissau (9.2%), Uganda (8.7%), Togo (8.7%), Senegal (7.1%), Kenya (5.3%), Swaziland (3.7%), and Benin (3.6%).

Specific country experiences amplify the significance of migrant remittances. According to the World Bank, the US\$1.3 billion remitted by Kenya's émigrés in 2007 put the country in the second position (after Nigeria with \$3.3 billion), and constituted about 5% of the share of the GDP (The World Bank 2008). Eritrea and Somalia critically depend on remittances, whereas Zimbabwe's economic collapse would have been far worse were

Table 1. Sub-Saharan Africa migrants' remittances (1995–2007).

(US\$ billion)	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007e
Inward flows	3.2	4.6	4.7	5.0	6.0	8.0	9.3	10.3 <sup>a</sup>	10.8
All developing countries	57.5	84.5	95.6	115.9	143.6	161.3	191.2	221.3	239.7
Outward flows	2.0	2.5	2.3	2.5	2.8	3.0	3.3	2.9 <sup>b</sup>	
All developing countries	12.4	11.5	13.6	20.4	23.8	30.9	36.0	44.2	

*Notes:*<sup>a</sup>1.6% of GDP in 2006.<sup>b</sup>0.4% of GDP in 2006. This table reports officially recorded remittances. The true size of remittances, including unrecorded flows through formal and informal channels, is believed to be larger.*Source:* The World Bank, 2008.

more than half of its population to lose their lifeline of remittances from émigrés (Savage and Harvey 2007). The Bank of Ghana (central bank) reports that the annual diaspora remittances of over US\$1.5 billion now surpasses annual earnings from either cocoa or gold (Duodu 2006). These amounts do not include undocumented funds brought in by returning emigrants who undertake a variety of albeit uncoordinated social and economic development projects across Africa. This makes the African diaspora Africa's biggest 'aid donor,' changing the debate from 'brain drain' to 'brain circulation' or 'brain gain' celebrating the development potential of the African diaspora via their remittances to the homeland (Saxenian 2002, pp. 28–31).

### **African emigrants and the homeland: from traitors to patriots**

At independence, African states adopted the Marshallian concept of citizenship as an instrument of closure with legal-constitutional and political-institutional realms of membership (Marshall 1964). From the 1960s to the 1980s, at both official and informal levels, many Africans on the continent considered migrants, especially the skilled ones emigrating to developed countries or those of them who failed to return after their studies, as deserters from this imagined community who had forsaken their impoverished homeland for the comforts of Western societies after receiving their education at the expense of tax-payers. According to a Kenyan newspaper editorial:

Since the early 1960s to around the turn of the century, the neo-Diasporans were openly accused of being disloyal and unpatriotic defectors. After all, their mother countries had educated them at great financial self-sacrifice but, on completion of their studies, they 'absconded' and availed themselves to the highest bidders worldwide. They then lived abroad in luxury, while their compatriots back home continued to languish in crushing poverty. From this viewpoint, the neo-Diasporans are truly a thankless lot. (EAS 2006)

In Nigeria, for example, 'Andrew', the principal character in a popular comedy show on state-owned national television in the 1980s and 1990s personified those 'checking out' of Nigeria (emigrants) portrayed as 'lost sons' or social deviants who would rather sell their souls to emigrate than tough it out in the country and 'contribute their own quota' in nation-building (Adesina 2007). In southern Africa, the former president of Zambia in 2004 attacked thousands of skilled Zambians who had fled the country to escape low wages, unemployment, and high taxes as 'coward failures' who did not deserve mercy (Geloo 2004). Although few would paint all African émigrés so broadly, the economic and political development consequences of a disproportionate number of the region's highly skilled people streaming out of the continent in search of 'greener pastures' mostly in Europe, North America, and the rich petro-states of the Arabian peninsula cannot be underestimated (Dodoo *et al.* 2006, Getahun 2006).

Yet, many African emigrants are the unsung heroes who are substituting for collapsed social welfare systems in Africa, albeit at the level of the individual and the family, since the early 1980s as structural adjustment programs and fiscal crisis of the state led to retrenchments in government social welfare infrastructural functions in almost every country (Mohan 2006). Most of them continue to retain homeland affinities as evidenced by the proliferation of homeland associations and the passion with which they engage in homeland issues or respond to extreme loyalty initiatives, such as 2% diaspora tax enthusiastically paid by the diaspora to the Eritrean state (Feshatzion 2005, Redeker-Hepner 2008).

As their economic and political profile began to change from temporary visitors to permanent residents and citizens of their adopted countries with attractive incomes and assets, African governments have moved variously to redefine the émigré as 'stakeholders'

and have begun to tap into their accumulating human capital and financial resources now seen as critical to homeland development (Faist 2008, Lavenex and Kunz 2008). Regionally, a revitalized African Union and the New Partnership for Africa (NEPAD) initiative, as well as UN agencies operating in Africa, such as the Economic Commission for Africa, UNESCO's International Organization for Migration, and the World Bank, have all pushed for redefinition of the diaspora as development partners and advocated the view that national identity and citizenship could be exercised extra-territorially. The diaspora is now exhorted to see their contribution to national development as a 'moral obligation' (see Mohan 2006); whereas donor nations and international financial institutions – and at times the diaspora itself – have also pushed African countries to adopt 'good governance' and 'poverty alleviation' programs to better accommodate the anticipated strategic partnerships in development (Riddle *et al.* 2007).

The African experience thus fits the global trend by which diasporas who may at one point be considered enemies of a (dictatorial) home regime and as a result suffer from 'blackmail, surveillance, threats and other intimidations abroad' (see Garvey 1980), may, over time, come to be considered by a new regime as the key population for domestic transformation (Shain 1989, pp. 145–162). As governments changed from antagonism to, at least, rhetorical embrace of the émigré, the expectation is that the diaspora would do for Africa what other diasporas have done for their homelands in the past 50 years (Shaw 2007, Debass and Ardovino 2009).

### **African states, changes in citizenship laws, and new loyalty frontiers**

Since colonial times, citizenship laws have played a central role in both exacerbating and managing conflict and development in Africa (Mamdani 1996, 2001, 2002, Herbst 1999, Nzongola-Ntalaja 2004, Geschiere and Jackson 2006, Dorman *et al.* 2007, Jackson 2007). Over the past two decades, globalization pressures have heightened the saliency of migrant flows within these multi-ethnic societies, forcing many governments to juggle the contradictions of their erstwhile citizenship and nationality laws. This is, especially, true for the idea of 'autochthony' which has become increasingly subject to constant redefinition against new 'others' and at ever-closer range (Lieres 1999, Ceuppens and Gershiere 2005) and the realities of a globalized world in which loyalty and citizenship are no longer territorially bound (Joppke 1999, Bosniak 2003, Sejersen 2008, Luongo 2009). The result is that many African states have now joined other emigration states in renegotiating citizenship through the adoption of dual citizenship laws.

For many African states, the acquisition of the citizenship or nationality of other states is now seen as a practical survival issue of émigrés trying to improve their economic and professional prospects, given limited opportunities back home. In fact, many governments see their emigrants or diaspora as citizens waiting to return, anyway. However, there are significant variations in the different citizenship postures adopted by African states, predicated on the ideological, political, and economic circumstances of each country. For instance, following the return to democratic government in 1992 and comparatively successful economic reforms, Ghana has experienced significant 'reverse diaspora', i.e. permanent or long-term return of emigrants (Black and Castaldo 2009). In 1995, the National Democratic Council (NDC) government of military-turned civilian President Jerry Rawlings responded by permitting dual citizenship rights for Ghanaian emigrants. The law was eventually enacted in 2002 (Act 259, Republic of Ghana 2006). Nigeria allowed dual citizenship in 1997 and since then over a dozen African states, such as Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Lesotho, Mali, Mozambique,

Niger, Senegal, and South Africa, have followed suit; or relaxed prohibitions against this practice (Shaw 2007, p. 28).

The patterns and implementation of these changes in citizenship laws, however, demonstrate the limits of extra-territorial citizenship rights in Africa. For example, Article 16(1) of Ghana's Dual Citizenship Act of 2002 lists about 12 categories of senior level positions in the public service and judicial branches of government which are legally off limits to the diaspora with dual citizenships. Since their dual citizenship is interpreted as 'dual nationality' and, therefore, 'dual allegiance,' these Ghanaians are also not eligible to run for parliamentary seats, or ministerial appointments, even though they are now eligible to vote (Boateng 2007, Accra Mail 2008).

In 2004, the Nigerian senate introduced a bill to abolish current law that strips Nigerians of their political rights once they become citizens of other countries (de Haas 2006, p. 9, Shaw 2007, p. 28). At the time of writing (January 2010), 'the Non-Residence Act' which was expected to grant 'permanent residence' status to Nigerians in diaspora with dual citizenships had still not been passed into law. The long delay is not only attributable to the end of the Olusegun Obasanjo administration (1999–2007) which showed at least symbolic interest in the diaspora unlike his successor, but also due to the ethnic, religious, and regional imbalance in the potential beneficiaries of the proposed amendment, as well as the complexities arising from the notoriously indeterminate nature of Nigerian citizenship even for those physically residing in the country (Idowu 1999, Kraxberger 2005, This Day 2007).

The specific circumstances of regimes or governments also explain why some African states still cling to the exclusionist concept of citizenship and nationality, despite pressure to 'neoliberalize' and even as they consciously woo the diaspora as 'development partners.' For instance, while the government of Mrs Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson in Liberia has persistently implored the country's émigrés to return and take part in the rebuilding process after almost two decades of war – and has indeed benefited from the cushioning effects of the diaspora's annual remittance of over US\$300 million compared with Liberia's annual GDP of US\$574 million (see Barnes and Yalartai 2007, p. 6) – the government has resisted diaspora demands to repeal the country's Alien and Nationality Law which strips its citizenship from Liberians who have obtained another citizenship (Gray 2005, Star Radio 2007).<sup>3</sup> However, the potentially destabilizing effect of granting citizenship rights to about 34% of the country's 2.3 million citizens living outside its borders is not lost on a government still dealing with problems created by previous regimes of Samuel Doe and Charles Taylor who politicized citizenship in favor of their Kran and Mandingo ethnic groups, respectively (Konneh 1996).

In Namibia, the fear that a white 'return migration' from South Africa could exacerbate the country's racially skewed wealth distribution in favor of the white minority largely accounts for the recent tightening of citizenship laws. The Namibian Citizenship Act of 1990 states, for instance, that 'Subject to the provisions of this Act or any other law, no Namibian citizen shall also be a citizen of a foreign country.' Yet, a Windhoek High Court affirmed in July 2008 that Namibian citizens by birth or descent can also hold the citizenship of another country without having to renounce their Namibian citizenship. The lead judge argued that 'Although the Constitution does not expressly allow dual citizenship, it follows naturally and logically from the implementation of its provisions and was expressly contemplated as a possibility' (Namibian 2008a). Following an out of court settlement of another suit against the government by a claimant to Namibian citizenship who had returned to Namibia after 32 years residency and citizenship in South Africa (Namibian 2008b), and fearful of an avalanche of similar

claims in the future, the government in February 2009 introduced a 'most radical proposal' requiring 10 years uninterrupted residence before applicants may be granted citizenship by marriage or permanent residency, respectively, to discourage eligible dual citizens from returning with their spouses and children. The previous residency requirements were 2 and 5 years, respectively (Namibian 2009).

Until 2010 Kenya's constitution automatically strips Kenyans of their citizenship – or requires them to renounce it – once they successfully apply for another citizenship. In response to rising emigrant assertiveness and political mobilization, a draft constitution submitted by the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission in 2005 allowed for a restricted dual citizenship. It provided that a Kenyan who becomes a citizen of another country can remain a Kenyan, but a foreigner who becomes a Kenyan cannot remain a citizen of his or her country of origin. The draft constitution also provided that only Kenyans by birth – and not registered or naturalized citizens – may keep their Kenyan citizenship if they take another nationality. Similarly, only a citizen by birth may apply to regain citizenship if that person had lost it in the process of applying for another citizenship (Munene 2007). Even so, the draft constitution was defeated in a referendum in November 2005, partly due to questions about the 'divided and uncertain loyalties' of white 'settler' and Indian communities and those African populations whose cross-border ethnic identities continue to make them morally suspect citizens in the eyes of other Kenyans (see Ndegwa 1997, Diepeveen 2010 for competing ethnic identities). A new version drafted with the assistance of the Kenyan diaspora was re-introduced in 2007 and approved in 2010 (Kelley 2007).<sup>4</sup>

In 2005, Uganda's parliament passed a constitutional amendment allowing dual citizenship which is yet to take effect because the government of President Yoweri Museveni considers the majority of Ugandans who have acquired citizenship of other countries to be hostile to the regime (Bariagaba 2007, Juuko 2007). Similarly, Zambia does not permit dual citizenship and, in fact, requires that any person entitled to Zambian citizenship and who has acquired the citizenship of another country automatically loses entitlement to claim Zambian citizenship.

Zimbabwe, with over 3.5 million of its nationals currently living outside its borders, is another notorious recent African example of failure to resolve citizenship crisis due to the domestic strategic political and economic calculations of the ruling regime (Raftopoulos 2003, Bloch 2006, Muzondidya 2007). Since the 1983 amendment of the Citizenship of Zimbabwe Act that eliminated dual citizenship guarantees in the 1980 independence constitution (and which clearly targeted the white minority), the government has repeatedly amended this legislation and used it to deny citizenship to African migrant farmers suspected of supporting the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC); or to withdraw the citizenship of opposition politicians or critics of the regime accused of being citizens of other Southern African Development Community countries from where one or both of their parents emigrated to Zimbabwe over a century ago.

The most controversial cases involved the current prime minister in the shaky Unity Government, Morgan Tsvangirai and Trevor Ncube, publisher of the *Zimbabwe Independent* and *The Standard* newspapers, as well as the *Mail & Guardian* in South Africa. The government had argued, unsuccessfully, that their failure to formally renounce their alleged dual citizenship was grounds to withdraw their Zimbabwean citizenship, but on two occasions, the courts ordered the government to re-instate the plaintiffs' citizenship and passports (Matikinye 2007). In targeting its perceived enemies, however, the regime often faced the embarrassment of disenfranchising many of its supporters in the rural areas. Beyond the regime's interests also is the cultural imagination of most Zimbabweans for whom minorities (who are still predominantly located on the farms, in the mines, and in

urban ghettos) continue to be a cultural aberration – ‘foreigners without a “proper”, rural place of belonging’ – because they lack a rural home in the colonially designated native reserves (Communal Lands), which is still the crucial site that defines one’s sense of belonging in Zimbabwe (Rutherford 2003, p. 200).

The DR-C is another country where failure to resolve its citizenship crisis has continued to frame contemporary debates about diaspora citizenship rights. The controversial nationality law of 2004 (*Loi No. 04/024 Relative à la Nationalité Congolaise*) which forbids dual citizenship actually dates back to 1972 when General Mobutu’s Presidential Decree granted Congolese citizenship to all immigrants from Rwanda and Burundi who had lived in the then Zaïre since 1950. This policy was reversed in 1981 with a law that conferred citizenship on ‘only those persons who could demonstrate an ancestral connection to the population residing in 1885 in the territory then demarcated as Congo.’ Since the enactment of this legislation, the citizenship of Kinyarwanda-speaking groups in the country has remained contentious, with the Congolese of Hutu and Tutsi descent often portrayed in both private and official discourses as ‘settlers’ whose real home is in Rwanda (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2004, p. 405).

Pursuant to the 2004 law, the government has been cracking down on violators of the long-standing constitutional insistence that Congolese nationality is ‘one and indivisible’ because the new law obliges those holding a second nationality to make a definitive declaration for one or the other. In January 2007, the Congolese National Assembly debated a motion calling for ‘proceedings, according to law, against all MPs and politico-administrative officials holding dual nationality.’ The motion was a response to the decision of the Independent Electoral Commission to disqualify two governorship candidates from an opposition party a day before the election for their alleged dual citizenship, following a complaint filed by the ruling party of President Joseph Kabila. National newspapers around the country have also reported cases of several members of Parliament, not just the small number of elected Kinyarwanda, who have acquired foreign nationality and had not yet renounced them in violation of the law (MONUC 2007). It is quite an irony then that the exclusive notions employed by Congolese governments against the Kinyarwanda have also been appropriated in the Hutu–Tutsi conflicts, with Hutu extremists portrayed as ‘settlers’ with an indigenous home elsewhere outside Rwanda (Mamdani 2001, pp. 13–14).

That some of the most restrictive citizenship laws and practice in Africa are found in the Great Lakes region is a reflection of the complications of colonially imposed boundaries that split ethnic groups into two or more countries (e.g. the Tutsis and Hutus), some of whom have been implicated in cross-border wars, insurgencies, and other conflicts as different states redefine citizenship rights that called into question individual and group identities (Mamdani 1996, 2002). The institutionalization of ethnic entitlements, rights, and privileges which create differentiated and unequal status of citizenship, and which bucks the global trend toward liberalized citizenship is certainly not unique to this sub-region (Open Society Justice Initiative 2004, Kraxberger 2005, Geschiere and Jackson 2006, Marshall-Fratani 2006). Nonetheless, its tendency to de-individualize citizenship and make it more of a group phenomenon, hence a major source of conflicts when empirical statehood fails, have had more tragic consequences in this part of Africa (Adejumobi 2001, Jackson 2006, 2007).

### **Emigrants’ participation in homeland politics**

Membership and participation in homeland political activities, as citizenship rights, epitomizes ‘migrant transnationalism,’ defined by Martiniello and Lafleur as:

any political activity undertaken by migrants who reside mainly outside their homeland and that is aimed at gaining political power or influence at the individual or collective level in the country of residence or in the state to which they consider they belong. Such power or influence may be achieved by interacting with all kinds of institutions (local, subnational, national or international) in the country of residence and/or the country of origin or by intervening in the country of origin's politics. (Martiniello and Lafleur 2008, p. 653)

Earlier conceptualizations, based mainly on the European and Mexican/Latin American experiences, tended to restrict this concept to migrant political activities in the host-state dealing exclusively with issues of interest to the home-state, activities to improve immigrants' social status in the host state, or initiatives of migrants or their communities to provide concrete support to specific localities in their homeland (Østergaard-Nelson 2003). In addition to these activities, recent African experiences of extra-territorial citizenship are essentially regime survival strategies, such as attempts to export aspects of prevailing patron–client systems of rule to diaspora locations. In this vein, the quest for state permanence largely explains why homeland politicians seek involvement in diaspora activities to dispense largesse to the diaspora in their foreign locations or in the homeland with a view to co-opting them into regime support or legitimating structures. Others may choose to deploy their control of access to the potential for individual or collective political and economic empowerment in the homeland as a strategy to blunt or emasculate emigrants (driven out in the first place by the failed policies of these very states) and their associations and prevent them from coalescing into competing centers of power in the homeland.

The clearest manifestation of these practices involves interactions between emigrants and homeland political parties and interest groups. From the Sierra Leone Peoples Party to the Cameroon Peoples Democratic Movement, Nigeria's People's Democratic Party (PDP), and Ghana's National Patriotic Party (NPP) and the NDC, government and opposition political parties have established vibrant branches in major world cities with large concentrations of their activists (Cameroon Tribune 2005a, Concord Times 2006, Iheduru 2009). Consequently, many African homeland politicians seeking office, or current occupants of high office, routinely jet off to woo or undertake Western-styled election campaigns among their emigrant populations and activists. Similarly, many politicians and traditional rulers frequently attend, bankroll, and/or control ethnic, religious, and other cultural events organized by diaspora groups abroad. For example, in major metropolitan areas abroad with large concentration of the Ashanti/Ghanaian diaspora, the Asantehene (King) from his palace in Kumasi, Ghana is able to deploy the award of traditional chieftaincy titles to enable the kingdom to replicate aspects of homeland social hierarchies and social control among the diaspora (Atta-Poku 1998, Manuh 1998, Bob-Miller 2009).

By the same token, many candidates for political office and their sponsoring political parties in many countries increasingly finance their domestic activities from diaspora sources, whereas others channel state funds to 'voluntary associations' that endorse political parties or oppose their rivals which are then laundered back into the country. This is more so in Ghana than in Nigeria where the mobilizational activities of some emigrant socio-cultural and political organizations are often bankrolled by politicians seeking to extend the influence of their patronage networks extra-territorially (Lampert 2009). Emigrants, at times, create and maintain their own clients in the homeland from their foreign locations, often leading to exacerbation of ethnic and communal conflicts (Shain 2002, Fair 2005, Mohamoud 2005, Lyons and Mandaville 2008). The Nigerian military and human rights groups, for instance, have accused emigrant individuals and

groups of providing logistic and strategic support to ethnic militant movements that fueled recent insurgencies in the Niger Delta (HRW 2003). In Cameroon, some political parties through their 'militants' in the diaspora surreptitiously solicit and receive funds from 'aliens and some dubious foreign lobbies in blatant violation of existing laws,' just as diaspora communities are routinely accused of sustaining the movement for self-determination in Southern Cameroon (Cameroon Tribune 2005b). On the other hand, some emigrant groups, such as the Acholi diaspora of northern Uganda (Spear n.d., p. 7) and some DR-C diaspora (Bekoe and Swyngedouwa 2009, Swyngedouwa and Swyngedouwa 2009) have contributed positively to peace processes. In the Cape Verde (where only about 475,947 of the country's 975,947 nationals still reside on the islands), the Cape Verdean diaspora not only supported the struggle against Portuguese brutal colonialism by backing the socialist African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC, later PAICV) during the struggle, they were also instrumental in ending the one-party state in 1991 through their support for the opposition Movement for Democracy (MPD) that won the multi-party elections that year (see Andrade 2002). In 2001, only 7558 (27%) of the 28,022 registered diaspora voted, overwhelmingly for the PAICV as punishment for the mismanagement and corruption that characterized the MPD government (Preer 2001, de Montcios 2007). Cape Verde may be Africa's 'most democratic nation',<sup>5</sup> but a series of 'undisciplined voting' by a small percentage of the diaspora has produced an unfriendly posture toward the electoral interests of local politicians, most of whom have few tools at their disposal to influence or contain such nonresident communities.<sup>6</sup>

Post-conflict Liberia, however, provides an interesting example of diaspora involvement in national political life, other than through elections or direct confrontation with the state from their foreign locations with little evidence of patronage politics. In 2007, the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided for the establishment of Statement-Taking Centers for the Liberian diaspora where *pro bono* immigration lawyers and mental health counselors, and Liberian community volunteers helped the TRC to gather testimonies from the diaspora. The Liberian TRC is the first of its kind to give members of a diaspora community a voice in promoting international justice and human rights as part of the TRC process for national healing, unity, and peace (The Analyst 2007, Steinberg 2011). In 2007, the diaspora also worked with the Johnson-Sirleaf government to prevail on former President George W. Bush to grant Liberians living in the USA 'Deferred Enforced Departure' status when their Temporary Protective Status (as refugees from the country's civil war from 1990–2003) was set to expire on 1 October 2007.

### **Diaspora voting rights in homeland elections**

The third and most contentious aspect of changes in African citizenship policies is the right of the diaspora to vote and/or be voted for in homeland elections. Most Francophone African countries, namely Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, and Togo, permit 'personal', 'proxy', or 'mixed' (personal or proxy) voting by emigrants in either presidential and legislative/sub-national elections or both, as well as in referendums.<sup>7</sup> All Lusophone countries (Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique) and Equatorial Guinea allow 'personal' voting for the diaspora in presidential elections (Cape Verde allows voting for both presidential and legislative elections). Of all former British colonies in Africa, only Botswana (presidential), Ghana (limited presidential and legislative), Lesotho (legislative by post), Mauritius (legislative/sub-national by proxy), Namibia (presidential and legislative), South Africa (limited presidential and legislative), and Zimbabwe

(limited presidential and legislative) allow any form of diaspora voting (see IDEA 2007, pp. 234–245).

Ghana and Nigeria, however, best illustrate the hopes and impediments associated with this dynamic relationship that bears the hallmark of regime maintenance, rather than elite embrace of cosmopolitan citizenship. On 26 February 2006, the Ghana National Parliament passed ‘the Representation of the People Amendment Act’ (ROPAA) that extended voting rights to Ghanaian emigrants, and suddenly led to a widening of the transnational scope of Ghanaian electoral campaigns (Republic of Ghana 2006, see also Boateng 2005a, 2005b, Bonna *et al.* 2005). Supporters of ROPAA praised it as ‘a simple case of correcting what is wrong and what came into being by decree promulgated by a non-elected government’ (Boateng 2005a, 2005b). Indeed, although Article 42 of the 1992 Constitution gives all Ghanaians ‘aged 18 and above and of sound mind’ the right to register for the purpose of voting in elections and referenda, the actual operation of this constitutional ‘guarantee’ is dependent on PNDC Law 284 ‘Representation of the People Law, 1992’. Section 7(1) (c) of the law states that a Ghanaian qualifies to vote if ‘he (sic) is a resident of the polling division,’ whereas section 7(4) states that ‘a person shall not be deemed to be a resident in a polling division if he (sic) has been absent from his (sic) place of abode for a continuous period of six months.’ As one ROPAA advocate puts it, ‘It means that for someone who generally lives in say Denmark to register at *Ghanakrom*, that poor fellow has to abandon work and come to live in *Ghanakrom* for six months’ (Boateng 2005a, 2005b).

An aspirant for the 2008 presidential election who himself was not resident in Ghana for a while defended the right of the diaspora to aspire for office at a gathering of Ghanaians in Toronto as follows:

when Ghana wanted to be counted as an elite soccer nation, they went everywhere in the world to pick the best players regardless of where they live and because this was done, today [2006] Ghana is attending world cup competition, for the first time in her history. (Anon 2006c)

ROPAA was, however, fiercely opposed by the NDC – the opposition party of former strongman Flt. Lt. Jerry Rawlings at the time, but which was elected back into office in December 2008. NDC members had walked out of the Parliament in 2006 in protest over the adoption of the bill which they claimed was intended to perfect the ruling NPP’s alleged ‘Golden Age of Election Rigging’ (Ghanaian Chronicle 2005, AFP 2006a). Statements by some Ghanaians abroad during and after the ROPAA debate perhaps lend credence to NDC’s fears, given that many Ghanaian diaspora were driven from the country by the Rawlings’ dictatorship (see Frimpong 1992, Peil 1995). According to one Florida, US-based Ghanaian, ‘February 23, 2006 will go down in the history books as a day when the friends of democracy defeated the *dictator babies*’ (Anon 2006d, original emphasis). Although the NDC questioned the ability of emigrants to make informed decisions about who best should govern, its real fear arose from the perception that Ghanains abroad would vote overwhelmingly for the NPP, partly because a large number of the beneficiaries from the law left the country during the Rawlings’ years of economic and political discontent. Ironically, it was the NDC government under Rawlings in 1992 that actually allowed Ghanaians overseas to register and vote in national elections for the first time, although section 8(1) of PNDC Law 284 limited the exemption to the residency requirement to employees of Ghana’s missions overseas and of international organizations, as well as of students on government scholarship.

Although Nigeria seems to have followed a different trajectory from Ghana, its experience of diaspora mobilization for extra-territorial franchise equally reflects the limits, if not emptiness, of the reification of ‘migration’ or ‘diasporic civil society’ as a

political force. For a long time following the country's adoption of dual citizenship rights, its emigrant citizens were content to 'agitate in silence' for the right to vote in Nigerian elections from their overseas locations, largely due to lack of organization and fractious leadership and political crisis bedeviling many Nigerian Diaspora Organizations (NIDO) (Anon 2006a). The creation of state-sponsored 'offshore' diaspora organizations, such as the NIDO, and the capturing of several other emigrant organizations by the Nigerian state and politicians equally undermined their credibility and ability to actualize this aspiration (Lampert 2009).

Following the adoption of ROPAA by Ghana in 2006, however, several Nigerian emigrant groups began to organize and openly demanded for a 'Bill on Diaspora Voting Rights,' with several umbrella emigrant groups, especially the ethnically based ones, presenting their demand for diaspora voting rights to President Obasanjo in December 2005 who promised to look into their request (Ujumadu 2006). The ruling PDP in the USA also organized a public hearing in Houston, the first of its kind outside the shores of Nigeria, to which thousands of the Nigerian emigrants attended and expressed support for diaspora voting rights. Although the diaspora voting bill was eventually introduced and passed the first reading in the National Assembly in 2005, it did not advance further until the retirement of the Obasanjo regime in May 2007 (Anon 2007b). In 2009, a bill seeking the establishment of a Nigerian Diaspora Commission charged with 'meticulous and accurate collation of data of the Diaspora and the fostering of economic cooperation with resourceful nationals working and living abroad' was introduced into the House of Representatives. The chairman of the committee charged with pushing the bill, however, noted that Nigerian diaspora could only vote if sections of the 1999 constitution prohibiting such extra-territorial exercise of the franchise were amended (Salem 2009).

### **The limits of expanded citizenship and loyalty frontiers projects**

Opening up the political system for Africa's estimated 30 million emigrants, many of whom left in the first place due to deep political and economic crises, should ideally be a celebratory indicator of the governments' willingness to pursue an inclusive citizenship agenda. Quite often, however, the extent and nature of migrant political participation and citizenship rights is constrained by the political calculations and the regime legitimating functions already carved out for the diaspora. Most of the transitions from authoritarian to democratic governments that created the political opportunity structures for externalization of loyalty boundaries have done little to democratize the authoritarian state and its institutions (Joseph 2003, Bratton *et al.* 2005). Consequently, the political agendas of the diaspora are often different from those of the state elite or recognized political parties (Zack-Williams 1995, Mohan and Zack-Williams 2002). In Nigeria, for instance, although most of the diaspora demanded for a 'Sovereign National Conference' in the late 1990s to once and for all give Nigerians the opportunity to debate the nature of their federal constitution, the government and many political and socio-cultural organizations in northern Nigeria resisted such demands, believing they would lead to the disintegration of the country (Anon 2006b).<sup>8</sup>

Even in Ghana, South Africa, Senegal, Mali, and other certified democratic countries in Africa and leaders in state-led migrant transnationalism, the political class has yet to create the requisite political space for genuine diaspora participation in the policy process beyond the prevailing patronage system. The widespread emigrant voting allowed by Francophone countries (most of which cannot boast credible elections in the homeland) has more to do with inherited colonial state tradition than conversion to cosmopolitan or

shared citizenship. Instead, the citizenship change initiatives in Africa have generally been structured to enhance the legitimacy of once-pariah states or to lift the burden of development off the shoulders of the state. No African emigration state has effectively tackled many of the 'push factors' that sent over 30 million Africans scrambling for the so-called greener pastures outside Africa over the past three decades.

In many cases, emigrant citizens who have returned to seek employment, elective or appointive positions in government, often confront official skepticisms about their loyalty to the government and the country. Prior to the passage of ROPAA in Ghana in 2006, for instance, the country's print and electronic media were saturated with heated debate about the loyalty and readiness of 'Diasporan Ghanaians' to lead the 'Stay-at-Home Ghanaians,' given that the latter stuck it out and saw Ghana regain its international credibility over the last two decades. In their defence, former president Kufuor reminded critics that the diaspora had remitted over \$8 billion to finance the recovery now being celebrated. One diaspora Ghanaian offended by this debate thus queried:

So it is ok for diasporans to pour their resources into Ghana but they have to be questioned if they want to lead? Is it ok to pour 8 billion dollars – that is if the president's figure is true – into Ghana but be denied leadership opportunities? This despicable notion that the diasporan is only primed for fleecing ought to be expunged from our national psyche. Diasporans are just as Ghanaian as our families and friends... Often help comes with conditions from folks [international financial institutions and donor countries] who have never set foot in Ghana. With a wry smile, we accept help without much consternation. The latter is ok by our brothers and sisters who live at home. So long as the bacon comes home, all is quiet. Why such a fuss if our own flesh and blood want to come home and lead? Is this effort not the same help? Oh, I see, there is no 10% [bribe money] to be gained here right? (Bannerman 2006)

The apparent about-face in African states' conception of emigration and attempts to extend their frontiers of citizen loyalty extra-territorially are similarly not about national development or diaspora welfare. Instead, it seems to be a reposition strategy to enable weak African emigration states (which happen to be the 'top 10 emigrant states') (The World Bank 2008) to exploit the benefits of a global migration regime to re-assert flagging state authority and strengthen the permanence of the African state.<sup>9</sup> Constitutional and statutory changes to ostensibly allow diaspora political participation and franchise from their foreign locations are often infused with symbolisms designed to manipulate the emigrants' nostalgia and existing long-distance social obligations to their home countries (Mohan 2006). Not surprisingly, although they are quickly catching up with traditional emigrant states in formulating reconnection strategies from which the diaspora could benefit (e.g. dual citizenship and diaspora voting rights), few African states were willing or capable of implementing such policies as diaspora voting rights beyond symbolic gestures and soothing rhetoric intended to facilitate access to diaspora welfare outside the physical boundaries of the state.

In many cases, there are no constitutional or legal prohibitions against diaspora voting; instead, the problem is the logistical requirements for the exercise of the franchise, as evidenced by recent court decisions. For instance, although the executive and the legislature continued to sit on the proposed diaspora voting bill, a Nigerian federal high court in Abuja in January 2009 granted the plea of a US-based diaspora group and ordered the Independent National Election Commission (INEC) to put in place relevant machinery to assist Nigerians to register and vote from abroad in any election in Nigeria 'without having to travel for that purpose.' The court, however, directed INEC to sponsor a bill at the National Assembly to implement its order (Iriekpen 2009). INEC at first agreed to implement the court order, but later reneged, arguing that the court only ruled that 'the right

to participate in the government of Nigeria and to register as voters (are) exercisable within the territorial boundaries of Nigeria' (Anon 2009c). The dream of diaspora vote advocates was finally shattered on 6 May 2009 when Nigeria's house of representatives voted down the bill seeking to implement the court decision on the grounds that its provisions contravened the 1999 constitution (Badmus 2009).

Zimbabwe once again demonstrates the unwillingness of African states to implement diaspora voting that could undermine regime stability, even as they go out of their way to cultivate the diaspora as 'development partners.' Given the government's stance on dual citizenship discussed earlier, it was no surprise when the country's Supreme Court ruled in 2005 that an application brought by the London-based Diaspora Vote Action Group (formed by seven British citizens) for the country's estimated 3.5 million exiles to be able to vote in the 2005 parliamentary elections 'is without merit and is hereby dismissed.' The ruling delivered President Mugabe from the prospect of defeat at the hands of the dominant bloc of the electorate of 5.6 million voters (Peta 2005, Raath 2005). In December 2009, Prime Minister Tsvangirai promised diaspora voting during an appeal to the diaspora to return to help rebuild the country. A week later, a ZANU-PF minister caused quite a stir by suggesting that the Zimbabwean diaspora may have to pay tax in exchange for voting rights and retention of their citizenship rights (Anon 2009a).

Even when governments acquiesced to court decisions, few of them have actually taken the necessary steps to implement those decisions. For instance, a Pretoria High Court in February 2009 directed that South Africans living abroad should be allowed to vote in the April 2009 elections, but the implementation of the order was limited to only previously registered voters. Hence, only about 16,000, instead of the estimated 1.2 million 'Global South Africans', were able to cast their vote (Battersby 2009). Similarly, despite the euphoria about ROPAA, former Ghanaian president Kufuor ruled out diaspora voting in the 2008 elections arguing that although his government had good intentions in enacting the law, it did not want to create the impression that it intended to rig the elections given its lack of the resources to implement the legislation (Anon 2007a).

The outcome of recent elections in Cape Verde, Ghana, Zimbabwe, and Rwanda largely explains the prevailing ambivalence toward diaspora vote in African elections, just as they raise questions about whether long-distance citizenship is indeed desirable, let alone sustainable. In some cases, diasporic political clout and money may be so critical in determining electoral results at home that candidates may be tempted to even run on platforms empowering diaspora members politically in ways that may compromise the very sovereignty of the home state. Official figures in the 2006 election in Cape Verde, for instance, showed that Carlos Veiga of the MPD who lost the elections actually gained throughout Cape Verde a total of 79,215 votes against 79,129 for Pedro Pires of the ruling PAICV. Pires' decisive victory, however, came from the diaspora who gave him 7268 votes against 3873 for Veiga, resulting in the losing candidate claiming fraud in an election with 370,000 registered voters (AFP 2006b, PANA 2006, Silva and Chantre 2007).

If current estimates are accurate, the more than 2 million Ghanaian diaspora could easily be larger than the population of most regions in this country of 23 million.<sup>10</sup> The country's 2008 presidential election which the NDC candidate, Atta Mills, eventually won by a margin of 42,000 votes (0.8% of the ballot) in a run-off and which was decided by a late vote in Tain constituency, one of the smallest in the Brong Ahafo Region, itself one of the smallest regions in the country, demonstrates that this is not an idle speculation. The Zimbabwean political impasse that followed the 2008 elections (in which neither Mugabe nor Tsvangirai won more than 50% of the vote) would certainly have been decided in favor of the opposition MDC had Zimbabwe's 3.5 million exiles/diasporans been

allowed to vote in that election. However, the political consequences of such an outcome can only be imagined, given the antecedents of the Mugabe regime and its supporters.

Diaspora vote significantly affected the outcome of the 2008 Rwandan elections. Of the 354 Rwandan diaspora who voted from their base in the UK, 350 (98.9%) voted for the ruling Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF). The Social Democratic Party (PSD) received just one vote, whereas the Liberal Party and an independent presidential candidate received no votes at all, and three votes were declared invalid (BBC 2008). Similarly, of the 1300 votes cast by the diaspora based in Uganda, RPF obtained 1266 votes (97%), Liberal Party 10 votes, and PSD 10, whereas the independent candidate got 14 votes (TNT 2008). Not surprisingly, more flexible or liberalized citizenship and migration policy changes in Africa have tended to occur in those countries where the ruling regime expects to win the diaspora vote; or where the diaspora can strengthen the regime's legitimacy. This contradicts the claim that incumbent regimes oppose diaspora voting rights because they are likely to lose, having inevitably alienated large segments of the electorate during their tenure (Spiro 2003, p. 140).

Another problematic outcome of transformations in the conception of emigration and citizenship is the tendency of African governments and politicians to formally and/or informally control segments of the diaspora which often discourages recent African emigrants from building institutions to effectively engage with either the home-states or the host-state (Lampert 2009). The failure, across the board, of African emigrant civic associations to create authentic leadership in their diaspora organizations, and the perennial factions and legal battles, is often traceable to this extra-territorial deployment of patron-client, state-society relations. For instance, NIDO-Worldwide, the Nigerian government-created apex diaspora organization, has since its inception in 2000 been plagued by problems of contested leadership legitimacy arising from accusations of manipulation by Nigeria's foreign missions, vote-rigging during elections, and abuse of office. Similar fractures have occurred among Ghanaian/Ashante diaspora (Manuh 1998), as well as among emigrants from other parts of Africa (Mohamoud 2005). These conflicts often replicate existing pathologies and anti-democratic tendencies in recent homeland politics, namely vote-rigging, intimidation of opposition, and the re-emergence of sit-tight leaders. There is, therefore, 'a kind of permeability between migrant communities and political crises in the homeland. Failed states export their problems abroad. In return, the political behavior of some migrants sometimes reflects shady businesses at home' (de Montcios 2007).

Finally, even as African emigration states try to appropriate the contemporary language of cosmopolitan and inclusive forms of citizenship, their citizen-reconnection strategies generally tend to incorporate elements of individual and group identities as forms of social reproduction for the state (Neocomos 2003). Consequently, their new 'frontiers of loyalty' tend to resemble the politics of exclusivity and incomplete citizenship back home. For example, emigrants are often encouraged to contribute to national development or participate in diaspora-reconnection programs via more particularistic affiliations based on hometown, religious, or ethnic origins which brings into light multiple and overlapping homelands and citizenships that are at the root of recent political and civil strife across the continent (Mohan 2008, pp. 465, 476).

### **Summary and conclusions**

This article has attempted to map the rising wave of out-migration from Africa and the various strategies adopted by African states to reconnect with these emigrants and extend

their citizen loyalty rather than their previous history of antagonism toward emigrants. Extant studies have emphasized that as part of a global 'transnational flow,' African emigrants have generally remained socially, politically, culturally, and often economically connected to the nation-state of their ancestors. However, a major transformation in the conception of emigration and citizenship has been occurring over the past three decades, but it has hardly been interrogated by the growing scholarship on African and global migrations.

The most politically contentious of these transformations that seem to be extending the frontiers of loyalty of otherwise weak African states include the extension of political rights in the form of dual citizenship or dual nationality and the right to vote from overseas, or to run for public office as emigrants or diaspora from foreign locations. Outwardly, the resulting constitutional and statutory changes guaranteeing these rights seem to suggest that Africa's emigration states have finally joined the global trend of renegotiating citizenships and territoriality. Essentially, the world has come to terms with the emergence of extra-territorialized states in which citizenship is shared between those at 'home' and others who live physically dispersed within the boundaries of many other states but remain intimately connected to the homeland.

Although the process is still evolving, evidence from across the African region suggests that these strategies are neither about national development or diaspora welfare, nor are they even being sincerely implemented. Instead, the policy changes seem to be strategic responses to the fiscal crisis of the African state and the apparent foreign aid fatigue among international financial institutions and aid donors who are pressuring these countries to redefine emigrants as 'development partners' or 'stakeholders' so as to tap into their resources, especially remittances, currently reported to have outstripped official development assistance to Africa. The article demonstrated with evidence drawn from a wide range of countries that the rhetoric of transformations in the conception of emigration and citizenship has yet to enhance the rights of emigrants as citizens or their political power in their homelands.

In the few countries where diaspora voting rights were faithfully implemented, the study pointed to actual and potential adverse electoral outcomes that question the viability and even advisability of diaspora voting and political participation from foreign locations. Moreover, the emergent extra-territorialization of bounds of loyalty has tended to undermine nurturing of effective diaspora mobilization platforms in both home and host states, just as it tends to export anti-democratic patronage political practices to diaspora locations to support the permanence of weak African emigration states. These findings suggest areas of further investigation.

## Notes

1. Other diaspora reconnection strategies range from consular reforms to investment policies which seek to attract or channel migrant remittances, extension of state protections or services to nationals living abroad that go beyond traditional consular services, and implementation of symbolic policies designed to reinforce emigrants' sense of enduring membership in their home countries. See Levitt and de la Dehesa (2003).
2. Diaspora as an alternative to FDI is not completely novel, nor is it unique to any country or region. Rather, it is rooted in the theoretical construct known as 'the New Economics of Migration (NEM).' See Bloom and Stark (1985).
3. Under section 22.1 of the 1973 law (amended 1974), Liberians who are naturalized in another state lose their Liberian citizenship. Critics contend that the large Liberian war-generated diaspora makes an affirmative provision allowing for dual nationality imperative to facilitate more beneficial diaspora-homeland interactions. See ABA (2009, p. 17).
4. Kenyan vice president assured a group of Kenyans in Germany in June 2009 that 'there was consensus to provide for dual citizenship in the new constitution and diaspora voting rights.'

- See Anon (2009b). Chapter 3 of the Kenyan Constitution approved by 68% of the population in a referendum on 4 August 2010 now allows for dual citizenship of another state and anyone to acquire Kenyan citizenship. Earlier on 22 January 2010, Justice L. Kimanu of the Kenyan High Court ruled that the old Constitution did not prohibit acquisition of dual citizenship and that one did not lose Kenyan citizenship by acquiring that of another country unless in so doing, he or she renounces Kenyan citizenship. See Muchene (2010).
5. Baker (2006) explores the claim that Cape Verde 'is the best country in Africa for political rights and civil liberties'.
  6. See Spiro (2003, p. 139) for the concept of diaspora and 'undisciplined voting', and Spiro (2006) for a global survey of the political rights of nonresident citizens. In Cape Verde, six delegates of the 72-member national assembly are elected by nonresident voters, some of whom have become arrogant and extremely difficult for local politicians to control (see Carling and Åkesson 2009, pp. 144–146).
  7. 'Personal voting' is a mechanism for voting in which electors attend at a polling station or polling site in person in order to cast their votes; whereas in 'proxy voting', qualified electors appoint another person to vote on their behalf. See IDEA (2007, pp. 249–250).
  8. See Sanusi (1999). Mallam Sanusi, the son of the late Emir of Kano, has been the Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria since June 2009.
  9. For an early formulation that attributed the continued survival of Africa's weak states to the legitimating role of external actors or assistance, especially the norm of territorial integrity of existing states, see Jackson and Rosberg (1982–1983). On the concept of 'state survival' or 'state permanence,' see Clapham (1996).
  10. See *Ghanaian Chronicle* (2006) for one of the scores of early warnings about the potential impact of diaspora vote on national politics, should ROPAA be implemented in 2008.

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