TO STAY OR TO GO BACK: THE CORNELIAN DILEMMA OF THE BURKINABE DIASPORA IN GHANA

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Introduction

Ghana is a major destination for Burkina Faso migrants. Immigration towards Ghana emerged and flourished as a result of the combination of structural and cyclical causes. Political, economic and psycho-social reasons have various levels, governed the initiation and maintenance of migration from Burkina Faso to Ghana[3]. As a result, there is a large number of Burkinabe diaspora living in Ghana. According to official sources in Burkina Faso, there are between 1.5 and 3 million of them. In recent years, Burkina Faso has adopted a national migration policy (known as the national migration strategy) and has created a ministry responsible for Burkinabe living abroad within its government structure, with the aim of protecting its diaspora, involving it more closely in the development of the country and encouraging voluntary returns.

In Ghana, this policy towards the diaspora was confronted with the effects of the expulsions of foreigners without residence permits between

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3 These include, for example, the differences in economic development between the two territories, labour shortages and Ghana's quest for migrant workers, the motivation of young people or the incentive for young people to undertake temporary, seasonal or multi-annual migration.

https://doi.org/10.22456/2448-3923.138077

1969 and 1971. While the Burkinabe diaspora in Ghana thought they were well integrated, the expulsions came as a shock to the migrants' families. Having escaped to these expulsions for various reasons, even several decades later, migrants' families are still living with a dilemma: to stay in Ghana or to go back to Burkina Faso? Psychological and sociological factors play a decisive role in the aspects of migration that we want to study. We understand the family in the sense of a household, in other words a group formed by a man and/or his wife (wives) and their children. In this context, members of the same family "recognise the ties of kinship and marriage between them. But these ties also define economic relations (consumption, production, management of the family budget), legal relations (for example, inheritance) and hierarchical relations (authority of the head of the family)" (Gruenais 1981, 3).

We are therefore focusing on ties based on marital-type and parental-type relationships within a group of individuals. In migrants' families, the aspirations and decisions to "stay, return or move" come under both collective and individual levels. Surveys and observations show that in the families of Burkinabe migrants in Ghana, the tendency is generally towards the diptych "stay or go back". Distinct patterns lead to these two antinomic ambitions in interdependent individual or collective logics within the families. Several studies have been carried out on migration and the Burkinabe diaspora in Ghana. They describe the paths taken and the migratory networks exploited (Rouch 1956, 33-196), life in immigrant neighbourhoods in Accra (Schildkrout 1978, 303). Some authors have analysed the relatively good socio-cultural (Tonah 2005, 331), economic (Skinner 1965, 60-84) and legal (Ouedraogo 2019, 77-97) integration of migrants and their descendants. This paved the way to changes in their identity (Schildkrout 1975, 167-179) and more or less important looseness of their relationship with Burkina Faso, their country of origin (Koudougou 2011, 77-112). The question of the chieftaincy of ethno-diasporic communities has also been studied (Schildkrout 2006, 587-601; Koudougou 2019, 77-112). However, the coming back migration and the arrival in Burkina Faso of descendants of migrants born in Ghana have attracted little attention from researchers.

Information was gathered through individual interviews and focus groups. These primary sources were obtained from resource persons of several generations and socio-professional strata, taking gender into account. These included immigrants, returning migrants and diasporic community leaders, in fourteen localities in Ghana and six in Burkina Faso. We focused on older heads of household, descendants of migrants, diasporic community leaders and consular officials at the Burkina Faso embassy in Accra and the consulate general in Kumasi to gain a better understanding of aspirations

to stay, return or continue. To this end, we used interview guides containing direct and/or semi-directive questions. Intentions to return or stay were measured in mainly qualitative surveys. We also drew on a bibliography of books and scientific articles on migration, integration and identity.

Based on this observation, this study aims at taking a closer look at how migrants' families are torn between the host country and the country of origin. Basically, we are asking ourselves this question: Why and how do families within the Burkina Faso diaspora in Ghana express wishes and resolutions aiming at staying in Ghana or coming back to Burkina Faso?

From this main research question flow the following secondary questions: How is returning a legitimate aspiration and family decision among first-generation Burkinabe migrants? How is staying an aspiration and a decision motivated by the weight of the family and the identity reconstruction of the new generations of migrants?

For this study, which is at the confluence of theoretical and fundamental research and fieldwork, we are planning first to paint a picture of Burkinabe immigration to Ghana and their families' aspects. We will then examine the aspirations and decisions to return of the first generations of migrants. Finally, we will analyse the weight of the family and identity reconstruction on the intentions and resolutions to stay among the new generations of migrants and the descendants of migrants.

Burkinabe immigration to Ghana and its family issues

The migrations of Burkina Faso nationals to Ghana have a family dimension. This can be seen both in the decision to emigrate in the country of departure and in the organisation of the immigrant life in the host country.

The context of immigration from Burkina Faso to Ghana

European colonisation, from the end of the 19th century to the second half of the 20th century, gave a particular dimension to this immigration through migration to escape the constraints of French colonisation and labour migration. In addition to these political and economic reasons, there are also psychosocial ones.

Migration towards Ghana predates the one towards Cote d'Ivoire. They subsequently increased before being supplanted by the latter in terms of the size of the flows thanks to the Ivorian "economic miracle" in the mid-

1940s. Other major migratory flows have taken some Burkinabe to Senegal, to French Sudan (current Mali), to Gabon, etc. Since the independence of Ghana (former Gold Coast) in 1957 and Burkina Faso (former Upper Volta) in 1960, migration flows have continued for essentially economic reasons. Depending on the period, migratory flows towards Ghana oscillate between reversibility and irreversibility. The reversibility of flows is reflected in seasonal and multi-annual circular migrations. Irreversibility is at the root of the formation and growth of the Burkinabe diaspora in Ghana and/or of the Ghanaian community of Burkinabe origin. Gradually, then, during both the colonial and post-colonial periods, Ghana became home to a strong Burkinabe diaspora.

The migration phenomenon studied takes place between the territories of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta)[4] and Ghana (formerly Gold Coast)[5]. It was accentuated during the French colonisation of Upper Volta and the English colonisation of the Gold Coast, in a context of demand and supply of labour on both sides under the effect of repulsion-attraction. Located south of Burkina Faso, Ghana has a more developed economy, with primary and secondary sectors centred on plantation agriculture (mainly cocoa and coffee), logging and mining (Ouedraogo 2017, 31). Tropical agriculture during the rainy season and the relative idleness of rural populations during the long dry season have motivated temporary labour migration (Ouedraogo 2017, 140-146) from Burkina Faso to Ghana. Multi-annual or quasi-permanent migration has led to a strong diaspora[6].

Families often influence decisions to migrate, as young people migrate partly in order to acquire the cash needed to pay their parents' capitation taxes, or to relieve their parents of their material and financial worries. This is how parents encourage them to emigrate temporarily in order to bring back resources.

4 The territory of present-day Burkina Faso was called Upper Volta during French colonial rule from March 1, 1919 to August 5, 1960. On August 2, 1984, Upper Volta became Burkina Faso.

5 Ghana, formerly known as the Gold Coast, was a British colony from 1874 to March 6, 1957.

6 According to Ghana's 2010 general census of population and housing, it comprises 30,664 individuals, and according to Burkinabè sources, 9,609 registered with consular services. Over time, thanks to integration, there are more Ghanaians of Burkinabè origin than Burkinabè in Ghana.

Major family characteristics of the Burkinabe diaspora in Ghana

Several features characterise immigrants' families within the Burkinabe diaspora in Ghana. These characteristics are essentially perceptible through three aspects: religion, matrimonial regime and the form of organisation of ethno-diaspora communities. The Burkinabe diaspora in Ghana is highly Islamised. Whether migrants and their descendants are long-standing Muslims or recent converts, membership of the Muslim community ("ummah") fosters their socio-cultural integration, particularly in the Zongo neighbourhoods[7]. Conversion to Islam is also part of an integration strategy rather than a deep-seated conviction: "The Christians Mossi, rather than putting up with the mocking bullying of the Muslims on the coast, prefer, when they are in the Gold Coast, to side with the Muslims and outwardly follow Islamic rites" (Rouch 1956, 167).

Within the Burkinabe diaspora, Islamised families are often polygamous. Husbands enter into several matrimonial unions, often diversifying the origins of their wives. As a result, there are families of immigrants from Burkina Faso who are the product of intra- or inter-community marriages. Some immigrants who arrive in Ghana young and single use matrimonial unions with nationals as part of their integration strategy. Within the diaspora community, there are families made up of Burkinabe immigrants and Ghanaian nationals, while others were formed by immigrants of Burkinabe origin exclusively.

The main form of structuring the diaspora is the formation of ethno-diasporic communities. Under this form of organisation, while belonging to the Burkinabe diaspora, individuals and families are first and foremost members of their ethnic groups of origin, notably Mossi, Bissa, Fulbe, Bobo, etc. Within the ethno-diasporic communities, led by chiefs, individuals of different status, gender and age contribute to peaceful cohabitation both within the communities and with other communities. Under the influence of their families, migrants aspire to and decide either to stay in Ghana or to go back to Burkina Faso and, more rarely, to move towards other horizons.

7 The Hausa term zongo originally referred to places on the outskirts of towns or villages where trans-Saharan traders rested their camels and conducted their trade. Later, it came to refer to the areas where foreign communities made up of migrants from the Sahel countries and the north of the country settled, in other words, the foreigners' neighbourhoods located in urban areas.

Returning: A "legitimate" aspiration and decision for the first generations of migrants

For the first generations of migrants, returning to their country of origin is a profound aspiration. The decision to return is premeditated, from the outset of migration, and sometimes maintained at the cost of a great deal of effort and consequently implemented.

Returning: the essence of temporary migration

Labour migration is most often part of reversible migratory flows. This includes seasonal migrations and, above all, multi-annual migrations. They are organised, if not endorsed, by the social body itself, which allocates a part of its human resources to migration, while the sedentary part of the population maintains and cultivates the region of origin (Domenach and Picouet 1987, 475-476). In this context, the desire to go back and the decision to do so seem obvious. Migrants before the expulsions of 1969-1971, attached to their country of origin and to their relatives living there, have a nostalgia for Burkina Faso. What's more, they dread the painful expulsions from which they escaped. Evoking the popular wisdom, "a tree trunk may have been in water, but it will never become a crocodile", they assert that they are Burkinabe and that for life, since they can never be expelled from there. So, they are planning to go back one day and they are active with this intention.

Attitudes do not allow a male head of household to return unaccompanied after spending a certain amount of time outside the country. His aspiration and his decision to return home cannot be solitary. His probable return to the country can only be concomitant with the return of his spouse(s) and the arrival of his children, particularly those who are minors. The adult children and sometimes minors for whom their parents have found a guardian, may stay in Ghana for some time or for good. So, the aspirations and decisions of the head of the family are more or less those, intrinsic or conditioned, of virtually the whole family.

While women, more or less evoke their will to go back, they recognise that the decisions of the head of the family are theirs. Our efforts to ensure that they evoke their sovereign decisions were in vain and sometimes irritating. The widowhood of some women accentuates their desire to return. This desire is even greater when their financial and material situation, and that of their children, is bad. Salimata[8] wanted to go back home right up until

8 Interview conducted on 13 August 2011 in Alaba/Kumasi.

her recent death. The decision to return involves consultations between the migrants and the members of their families. The hardest people to convince are not the migrants' wives, but rather their children. Binta believes that "women have no choice, they live where their husbands want them to live"[9]. The head of the family's desire to return is likely to influence collective decisions to return or cascading returns.

In the life-long pattern, i.e. the absence of migrants from their places of origin throughout their working life, generally between the ages of 20 and 60 (Chatelain 1963, 2), they express their aspirations to return by making savings or investments in their country of origin. In some particular cases, the return of the father and mother of the family, because of their reluctance, is negotiated at length by their children living in Burkina Faso with the intervention of resource people. This confirms the idea that "it is with dignity that we manage to leave, but it is thanks to courage that we go back home" (Camara 2018, 13). Other reasons motivate aspirations and decisions to go back.

Return to not get lost

The aspiration and decision to return in order 'not to get lost' raise questions about the psycho-social causes of migration. They therefore concern both the individual and the social group to which he or she belongs. However, it is more about the migrants' community of origin than of their ethno-diasporic groups.

Many, but not necessarily all, Burkina Faso migrants living in Ghana dream of returning one day. They are nostalgic for their ancestral lands. Having a strong emotional bond with their country of origin, migrants use to say: "(...) Even if I was obliged to leave due to the bad conditions of life, I still have my country of origin in my heart" (Peressini 1993, 44). For many migrants, one must never forget one's origin. These nostalgic migrants see Burkina Faso as their "ba-yiri" or "faso"[10]. Ghana is referred to by the terms "weoogo" or "tunga", meaning a bush or foreign land. As far back in 1965, the Upper Volta ambassador in Ghana noted that: "(...) Many of them [voltaic immigrants] claim their original nationality and never give up hope of going home one day"[11].

9 Interview conducted on 31 July 2014 in Ho zongo.

10 Terms from the Moore and Dioula national languages meaning homeland.

11 D.A.D. M.A.E.C.R., 2A2 MAE78: Report n° 9/AG/HV/CONF from the ambassador of Upper Volta to Ghana to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Upper Volta of 2 March 1965.

With the project of coming home one day, men find it good getting married before migrating. They also choose to come back in order to get married with wives in their homeland. Respecting this view of coming back one day, they prefer also to marry descendants of Burkinabe migrants living in Ghana. These matrimonial strategies, which aim at avoiding marrying Ghanaian women, contribute to the desire to return one day. In families where both the head of the family and the wife or wives are migrants, there is often nostalgia for the country of origin. Inter-community marriages, i.e. those between immigrants and natives or between Burkinabe immigrants and other immigrants, were often avoided in the past in order not to "get lost". In other words, so as not to run the risk of dragging on. Thus, the ways in which households are constituted influence aspirations to return.

The aspirations and decisions to return of some migrants are sometimes shaped by their responsibilities within the clan or extended family. Having become patriarchs, they cannot shirk their obligations as clan elders and must return to take up their rightful positions. The needs of the land chieftaincy and the associated cult of the land in traditional African religions are a requirement that justifies the obligation of some migrants to return. A sense of duty or fear of the consequences of shirking one's duty motivates aspirations and decisions. Some migrants were living alternatively in both the host country and the source one[12]. In Africa, and particularly in rural communities where traditions still hold sway, the responsibility of patriarch of a lineage or legitimate chief of a canton or village cannot be transferred to any other person. The weight of custom, of the 'never seen before', of the likely wrath of the ancestors, discourages any 'usurpation' of status, especially of seniority. As a result, even when migrating, within or outside the country, the probable legitimate holder of the position is obliged to assume it. They must then, without further ado, return to their families[13].

Failing to consider their return, some migrants try to influence the intentions and resolutions of their offspring. Doomed to live definitively in Ghana due to his age, Amadu repeats to his two sons: "Go back home so that we are not all lost"[14]. When well thought out, aspirations and decisions to return lead to "a well-planned return, i.e. a return that is considered to carry out at the appropriate moment" (Gubry *et al*. 1996, 133). When the aspiration

12This is the case of Salifu who, during the year, sometimes lives in Effiduasi in central Ghana, sometimes in his home village in southern Burkina Faso.

13 Shared views of migrants and returnees in Ghana and Burkina Faso respectively, gathered during discussion groups.

14 Remarks made during an interview on 31 July 2014 in Ho zongo.

and the decision to return are individual, they either end up being blunted, or they must have a family dimension before they are implemented, or they involve all or part of the family later on. As a result, the idea of returning is more akin to wishful thinking than a real intention. Socio-cultural constraints relegate wives to an almost insignificant level of decision-making. While the older generations of Burkinabe migrants aspire and decide to return, the new generations and especially the descendants of migrants are more committed to the prospect of staying.

Staying: The weight of the family and rebuilding identity

For most migrants and descendants of migrants from Burkina Faso in Ghana, staying or leaving is the only alternative. A host of factors relating to individuals, their families, social groups and the socio-economic and political contexts in both Ghana and Burkina Faso motivate the desire and decision of migrants and their descendants to stay.

Staying or the thwarted "search for shoes" among the older generations

"Looking for shoes" is an expression used in several national languages in Burkina Faso to literally illustrate the desire to say goodbye to one's interlocutors. In the specific context of migration, this expression refers to the desire to return one day to the country of departure. In some cases, the "search for shoes" expresses a pious wish rather than a real desire.

Families sometimes directly or indirectly thwart the aspirations and decisions to return of many migrants formerly settled in Ghana who, despite their nostalgia for Burkina Faso, cannot go back. Inusa[15], who spent his entire working life in Ghana by maintaining links with his home country, has repeatedly expressed the desire to come back. His project to come back has been thwarted by his children. He says that it is against his will that he is still living in Ghana: "My body is in Ghana but my mind is not there, it's back home".

Initially taken as a temporary migration, some migrations endure despite the aspirations to come back. Many of the migrants were intending to have a few months or years stay: "I'm leaving tomorrow, the day after

15 Interview conducted on 22 August 2014 in Sukuumu (Brong Ahafo Region).

tomorrow, next month, but alas, here I am again"[16]. Wahabu[17], who says he came to Ghana to stay for three months to buy a bicycle, is still living in Kumasi 60 years later. Reluctantly, most of the migrants say they are still in the bush (weoogo), i.e. abroad. One of them fatalistically said: "God has not given me the road back yet" or "I'm looking for my shoes"[18].

When the migrant's spouse is indigenous, in other words Ghanaian, the desire to stay is much more obvious than the one to go back. Indeed, spouses are rarely involved in visits to Burkina Faso. As a result, they are more or less conditioned to aspire to stay in Ghana with their husbands and children, and even more so after the death of the migrant heads of household.

With the flow of time and the increase in family size through the birth of children, migrants' families see their aspirations to return gradually reduced. Families are finding their bearings in the host country, while at the same time their ties with Burkina Faso are weakening. As a result, they feel less able to go back. Therefore, migrants' families develop a feeling of being less foreign in Ghana than in Burkina Faso. As a long-term migrant puts it: "After fifty years here, I'm not a foreigner in Ghana, it's perhaps in Burkina Faso that I can be a foreigner"[19].

So, for the people surveyed, the decision to stay seems easier to take than the decision to go back. The desire to make migration reversible expressed by the idea of "looking for shoes", seems to be betrayed by the fact that nothing is being done to implement it. This gives the impression of a feigned will rather than a real desire.

Staying: between identity reconstruction of migrants and the obvious choice of "tabuuse"

Life in the multi-ethnic microcosm in the Zongo neighbourhoods in the southern half of Ghana leads to identity changes. As the Zongo areas are home to a major intermingling of migrant populations from a variety of backgrounds, several identities coexist, overlap and influence one another. The socio-cultural features of the Haoussa people, who are the majority immigrant group, imposed their influence on other immigrants, especially the descendants of migrants. In addition to conversion to Islam, the Hausa

16 Hamidou, interview conducted on 18 August 2011 in Alaba / Kumasi.

17 Interview conducted on 15 August 2011 in Moshizongo/Kumasi.

18 Remarks by Salifu during an interview on 22 August 2011 in New Zongo (Saabu Zongo)/ Kumasi.

19 Remarks by Mahamudu in Moshie Zongo (Kumasi) on 22 August 2011.

language and the patronymic system, characterised by the use of the father's first name in place of the original surname, are helping to rebuild the identity of migrants and their descendants. They are now more inclined to stay in Ghana than to return to Burkina Faso, so far away, so different and so little known. This is reflected in the words of a migrant: "In Ghana, I am something. So, why should I go where I am nothing"[20] (Schildkrout 1978, 45).

Post 1969-1971 migrants, i.e. those who had not experienced the expulsions of foreigners, were less and less inclined to return. They consider that these expulsions are further events that cannot happen again. To all intents and purposes, they opt for their identity rebuilding. This reconstruction of identity, particularly for the younger generations, involves combining the need to assert an identity with the request of full integration. Migrants adopt the African wisdom that "an individual's true country is where he feels at ease".

The *tabuuse*[21], in other words the descendants of migrants of both sexes, whether single or married, consider Ghana to be their home. This country is their "homeland" where they aspire to live. This is justified by the fact that they feel socially, economically, culturally and legally well integrated. They see Burkina Faso as their "fathers' land". In this sense, their fathers' country of origin is not theirs, and they have no desire to go and live there, except in the specific context of visiting or working there. This feeling can be observed in almost all the descendants of migrants. The migrants' parents understand it. It is justified by the virtual absence of relations between many descendants of migrants and Burkina Faso. Very few of them have already stayed there. They consider themselves entirely Ghanaians: "Burkina Faso is my father's land. But I know nothing about it. I'm Ghanaian" (Koudougou 2011, 95). The descendant of migrants, Hamid, proclaims: "Ghana first"[22]. This brings to mind Amin Maalouf's idea that: "I do not have several identities, I have only one, made up of all the elements that have shaped it, according to a particular 'dosage' that is never the same from one person to the next" (Maalouf 1998, 10).

Many migrants and descendants of migrants are reinforced in their decision to stay in Ghana by experiences of stigmatisation. Depreciated nicknames such as "Master" or "Ghana boy", made them feel like foreigners in their own country, if not second-rate citizens. They then propagated the idea

20 "In Ghana, I count. So why should I go where I am nothing." Remarks made by Mahamudu on 22 August 2011 in Moshizongo/Kumasi.

21A term derived from moore (Burkina Faso's main national language) which literally means uprooted.

22 Interview conducted on 16 August 2016 in Nima/Accra.

that Burkina Faso was an unwelcoming country for Burkinabe living Ghana. Some of their compatriots living in Burkina Faso use to make comments that could be perceived as stigmatising comments towards their compatriots living in Ghana[23]. However, they temper this by saying that the intention is not to offend sensitivities but to point out obvious differences, such as the particular accent[24] of their compatriots from Ghana.

In the minds of some migrants who fled to the Gold Coast during the difficult times of French colonisation or during periods of food crisis, Burkina Faso remains "a country of constraints, hunger and misery" (Ouedraogo 2017, 147). There is thus a fixation on the context in which these migrants left, which inhibits any desire to return. Some migrations are the result of unspeakable social acts, such as banishments, kidnapping of women and cattle rustling. This type of migrant has no intention of coming back. The migrant then chooses to "burn his vessels" behind him and no longer aspires to return (Medam 1993, 61).

According to a common mentality in Burkina Faso, the failure of a migratory project and a fruitless return is a disgrace. But "death is better than shame". Thus, many failed migrants aspire and decide to stay in Ghana, even in great poverty, rather than return home empty-handed. Amadu realises that coming to Ghana was a mistake, but ashamed to turn back empty-handed, he can only contemplate staying in this land of pitfalls for him[25]. This idea is shared by Abdulai[26] who dissuades would-be immigrants towards Ghana when he says: "I'm not going back because I'll be ashamed. If one of my brothers wants to leave Bilayanga like me to come here, I'll prevent him from coming". Abdul Salam[27], a migrant who has been living in Ghana since 1969, is divorced and destitute in the Ho zongo, and categorically refuses to return home, even if someone were to meet all the conditions and come and get him. So, despite being in a situation of failure, some migrants think that their life is now in Ghana. Such a conception of migration calls to consider the African wisdom according to which, "when you take one leap into the fire, it means that you still have another leap to take". Disillusioned migrants like Amadu feel trapped and unable to make the "second leap". Nor do they resolve to circulate, in accordance with Lobi wisdom, which states that: "It

23 Augustin, interview conducted on 7 April 2018 in Ouagadougou.

24 The stigma stems from the fact that these descendants of migrants speak the national languages with an accent that shows they have lived in Ghana.

25 Interview conducted on 22 August 2014 in Moshizongo/Kumasi.

26 Interview conducted on 1 August 2014 in Agbo Kofe (Volta Region).

27 Interview conducted on 31 July 2014 in Ho zongo.

would be foolish for a Lobi to stay or even to linger in a place that only generates incidents, evils or misfortunes" (Fieloux 1980, 111). Amadu makes a point of raising the awareness of would-be emigrants: "I would advise those who want to come here for adventure to stay and fight in Burkina Faso. If life could be turned back, I would have stayed at home"[28].

Conclusion

The motivations that lead to the intentions and the decisions to return or to stay are diverse and vary according to the generations of migrants and their descendants. The memory of the expulsions of foreigners in 1969-1971 and the level of legal integration of migrants and their descendants influence aspirations and decisions to return or to stay in Ghana.

The first generations of Burkinabe migrants, particularly those who witnessed the expulsions of foreigners in 1969, aspire more to go back to the country, even at the twilight of their lives they do not wish to die abroad. They are in line with the logic of lifetime migration. With the agreement of their families, some migrants who have doubts about a peaceful stay in Ghana decide to go back to their country of origin. The weight of families leads some migrants from the first generations, and almost all migrants from the new generations, to consider their host country as theirs. The relatively good level of socio-cultural, economic and legal integration of these migrants' families encourages them to aspire to remain in Ghana, their host country and even, in some cases, their country of adoption in the circumstances where their members are naturalised Ghanaian.

While the first generations of migrants have relatively strong aspirations to return, the new generations, particularly the descendants of migrants, generally aspire to stay in Ghana. The first generations, beyond their aspirations, more or less take the decision to go back, while the new generations decide to stay. They plan to bring themselves up to date by acquiring a residence permit. These are the most determined hopes to achieve legal integration by becoming Ghanaians. As the generations go by, the links between migrants and their descendants on one hand and with Burkina Faso on the other hand crumble (physical, written and telephone links with their relatives living at home are getting weak due to the distance or to the death of the first migrant, unfortunate experiences of stigmatisation, lack of interest in Burkina Faso nationality) and aspirations and decisions to stay

28 Remarks made during an interview on 31 July 2014 in Ho zongo.

predominate over those to go back. The successful integration of migrants and their descendants encourages aspirations and decisions to stay.

This study did not take into account the communities in which migrants' families live and their communities of origin in Burkina Faso. The opinions and attitudes of these communities are likely to influence on the intentions and decisions of migrant families. The study of intentions and decisions to go back or to stay provides an idea, even a vague one, of the actions or inactions of Burkina Faso migrants and their descendants in going back to Ghana or settling there definitively.

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ABSTRACT

"Stay, return or move" is the dilemma facing migrants from Burkina Faso living in Ghana. In contrast to the return flows of both migrants and descendants of Burkina Faso migrants living in Côte d'Ivoire, there are few reverse migration flows between Ghana and Burkina Faso. This is somewhat puzzling. This article therefore sets out to analyze why, among the Burkinabe diaspora living in Ghana during both the colonial and post-colonial periods, the tendency is to "stay" rather than "return". On the face of it, this could be justified by the gradual loosening of migrants' ties with their relatives back in Burkina Faso, and their successful socio-economic and legal integration. The language barrier between the English spoken in Ghana and the French spoken in Burkina Faso could explain the strong propensity of descendants of migrants to stay. To identify the aspirations and decisions of migrants and their descendants, this study draws on bibliographical resources and empirical data. Mainly qualitative surveys were carried out with resource persons in Ghana and Burkina Faso. Whether or not they are married to Burkinabè women, whether or not they have children, migrants of both old and new generations, and less so their descendants, are faced with a painful dilemma. Families and the reconstruction of identity are the reasons why migrants stay. In general, the more integrated migrants are, the more they wish and decide to stay. As a result, the desire and the decision to return become rarer.

KEYWORDS

Migrants. Return. Stay.

Received on January 19, 2024
Accepted on June 28, 2024[29]

29 How to cite: Ouedraogo, Serge Noel and Boubacar Sambare. 2024. "To stay or to go back: the cornelian dilemma of the burkinabe diaspora in Ghana". *Brazilian Journal of African Studies* 9 (17), 153-168. https://doi.org/10.22456/2448-3923.138077.