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# Citizenship Rights in West Africa

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## INTRODUCTION

Since its independence in the 1950s and 1960s, West Africa has been marred by civil wars and political violence. This trend has increased since the 1990s, leading scholars to investigate the causes of conflict in the region.<sup>1</sup> Scholars believe that poverty, human rights violations, bad governance and corruption, ethnic marginalization, and small arms proliferation have played a role in the conflicts.<sup>2</sup> Many of these causes are interrelated, but one important cause has been largely overlooked: citizenship has been central to multiple conflicts in West Africa, most notably conflicts in Mauritania and Cote d'Ivoire. Though not all conflicts in the region can be linked to contestation of citizenship rights, its centrality in two notable conflicts makes the role of citizenship worth researching.

In this paper, I explore the importance of citizenship rights in two conflicts in West Africa: Cote d'Ivoire from 1990 to 2002 and Mauritania in 1989. In the case of Cote d'Ivoire, the loss of citizenship rights for those living in the north of the country (traditionally ethnic groups with a history of migration and those that did not belong to the same ethnic group as those holding political office since independence) inspired a failed coup, and plunged the country into a civil war in 2002. In Mauritania, a border dispute with Senegal led the government to expel Senegalese nationals from the country and in the process, allowed for the government to expel black Mauritians from 1989 to 1990. By assessing the role of colonialism, cross-border ethnic communities, and incentives for political and economic gain, a deeper understanding of the complexities of citizenship rights in these West African conflicts may be possible.

## CITIZENSHIP IN ITS MANY FORMS

### Theoretical Citizenship

Citizenship is a central component of the nation-state, but remains difficult to define. Citizenship fundamentally identifies who belongs to the state and who does not. Citizenship is a reciprocal relationship between the government and its citizens. According to Charles Tilly, “[citizenship] refers to a relation between 1) governmental agents acting uniquely as such and 2) whole categories of persons identified uniquely by their connection with the government in question.”<sup>3</sup> This relationship suggests there is a responsibility both on the part of the government and the citizen. Tilly concedes that the conception of citizenship varies across cases. In this paper, citizenship is defined as the right to vote, the right to identification, and the right to residency.

Due to colonial legacies, conceptions of citizenship in Africa are unique and therefore widely studied. Scholars such as Mahmood Mamdani, Said Adejumobi, and Pal Ahluwalia have all contributed to the literature on this topic. Though these scholars differ, they generally agree that colonialism created pluralism. Peter Ekeh, in his seminal work, “Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement,” outlines the duality of citizenship in Africa, which includes a

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<sup>1</sup> Nancy Annan, “Violent Conflicts and Civil Strife in West Africa: Causes, Challenges and Prospects,” *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 3.1, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Tilly, “A Primer of Citizenship,” *Theory and Society*, 26.4 (Aug. 1997): 599.

legally binding relationship between the individual and the state, and the individual and their community. This dual-citizenship remained after the departure of colonialism and continues today.<sup>4</sup>

Among these scholars, two things are clear: 1) African nations are prone to struggle with multiple and complex conceptions of citizenship and belonging, and 2) colonialism is central to many of these competing conceptions of citizenship.

### **Citizenship in Colonial French West Africa**

From 1895 to the 1960s, West Africa was primarily colonized by the French. West African colonies experienced a unique relationship with the French state, characterized by a changing definition of citizenship rights between 1946 and 1960. After World War II, France was greatly weakened, allowing its African colonies to demand more rights. In the ensuing period, African colonies continually negotiated, protested and bargained to shift, change, and redefine African citizenship within French colonialism. In 1946, France created the French Union, a system that divided West Africa into four territories (French West Africa or AOF, French Equatorial Africa or AEF, Algeria, and Senegal), and gave the territories legislative representation.<sup>5</sup> After continued debates between French and African politicians, the Loi-Cadre law was passed in 1956.<sup>6</sup> The law created universal suffrage for all subjects in French West African colonies, thereby creating both subjects and citizens.<sup>7</sup> This was soon followed by the referendum on the newly proposed 1958 constitution, which all subjects of the French empire could vote on. Each territory could choose between remaining a part of the French Union, or become an autonomous republic within the context of a French community.<sup>8</sup> With the latter option, France would still hold authority over the territories' foreign affairs and defense, but each republic would have a right to make decisions that impacted domestic affairs.<sup>9</sup> All the colonies, except for Guinea, voted to become a republic, and paved the way for complete independence in 1960 for most French West African colonies.<sup>10</sup>

The changing definitions of citizenship under colonialism created mixed perceptions of citizenship in West Africa and influenced both the creation and understanding of citizenship laws in these countries after their independence.

## **CASE STUDIES**

### **Cote d'Ivoire: Historical Background and Context**

Cote d'Ivoire gained independence in 1960 with the help of Felix Houphouet-Boigny, who immediately after became president.<sup>11</sup> Under Houphouet-Boigny, the country prospered economically, largely due to a pro-immigration policy that encouraged workers from Burkina Faso to cultivate the land.<sup>12</sup> The economic prosperity ended in the 1980s with a drop in cocoa prices, causing wages to plummet, and those affected to demand democratization.<sup>13</sup> In 1990, Houphouet-Boigny allowed the first multi-party elections to take place, but Houphouet-Boigny and the PDCI

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<sup>4</sup> Peter Ekeh, "Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 17.1 (Jan. 1975): 91-112.

<sup>5</sup> Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nations: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 21-22.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 214.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Henri-Michel Yéré, "'Double Nationalite' and Its Discontents in Ivory Coast, 1963-66," *Citizenship, Belonging, and Political Community in Africa* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2016), 128.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire," *African Affairs*, 109.437 (Oct. 2010), 601.

<sup>12</sup> "Cote d'Ivoire," *A Survey of Migration Policies in West Africa*, UN DESA, accessed 12 December 2016, [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2015/docs/Workshop2015\\_CotedIvoire\\_Migration\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2015/docs/Workshop2015_CotedIvoire_Migration_Fact_Sheet.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> Edmond Keller, "Cote d'Ivoire: Ivorité and Citizenship," *Identity, Citizenship and Political Conflict in Africa* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), 93; Wilene A. Johnson, "Cote d'Ivoire: The Role of the Private Sector in Building a Peace Economy," *From Civil Strife to Peacebuilding* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 57.

continued to dominate elections until his death in 1993.<sup>14</sup> His successor, Henri Konan Bedie used citizenship as a political tool in Cote d'Ivoire, creating instability that resulted in violence.

Bedie altered citizenship conceptions by passing a series of laws, known as the Ivoirité, which attempted to define who was a 'true' Ivoirian and who was not, by tracing and individual's family lineage. Those whose relatives were once migrants were not considered 'true' Ivoirians. Under Houphouët-Boigny, non-Ivoirians were allowed to vote but those rights were revoked under Bedie.<sup>15</sup> Though the laws were intended to take away voting rights from those who were not Ivoirian citizens (mostly migrant farmers from Burkina Faso), the stringent citizenship laws also effectively revoked rights from many who were previously recognized as Ivoirian citizens.<sup>16</sup> In rural areas, documentation was difficult to come by, and though many were eligible for citizenship and even possessed identification cards, their cards were confiscated.<sup>17</sup> Without identification cards, these Ivoirian citizens were unable to claim many citizenship rights.<sup>18</sup>

Another aspect of the Ivoirité stated that those running for high-level political, public office must have two Ivoirian parents. Scholars, like Abu Bakar Bah, argue that this was an attack against longtime political rival Alassane Ouattara, who was believed to be of Burkinabe heritage.<sup>19</sup> According to Bakarr Bah, "Ivoirité was institutionalized through electoral reforms and national identification policies that tacitly disqualified many Ivoirians from the north from seeking the presidency and denied them citizenship rights."<sup>20</sup>

In 1999, General Guei led a *coup d'état* to depose President Bedie, and placed himself in power. After a disputed election, however, Laurent Gbagbo was elected president in 2000. Gbagbo continued to support the Ivoirité laws, and in 2002, Cote d'Ivoire fell into civil war after another failed *coup d'état*. The civil war divided the country between the north and the south, and though many claimed that it was simply a matter of ethnic tension, the "...sense of wrongful denial of citizenship became the bedrock of the political protests and the civil war."<sup>21</sup> This became clearest in a statement by the leader of the insurgency group (Forces Nouvelles), Guillaume Soro. When speaking about the term Ivoirité, Soro stated, it "...is no more and no less than a xenophobic concept...according to those who originated from the south, northerners are considered foreigners in their own country."<sup>22</sup>

In Cote d'Ivoire, citizenship rights were used by multiple politicians and were directly related to the ensuing violence in 2002. Though ethnic tensions were present, they were linked to the larger issue of citizenship rights for those perceived as foreigners.

### **Mauritania: Historical Background and Context**

Mauritania gained independence in 1960 under the leadership of President Moktar Ould Daddah.<sup>23</sup> The government was dominated by the Beydanes, an ethnic group identifying as Arab, while farming, teaching, and mid-level administration jobs were largely occupied by black Mauritians of the Haalpulaaren, Soonike, and Wolof communities.<sup>24</sup> The Beydanes believed that

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<sup>14</sup> Jennifer Widner, "The 1990 Elections in Cote d'Ivoire," *Issue: A Journal of Opinion*, 20.1 (Winter 1991), 31; Edmond Keller, "Cote d'Ivoire: Ivoirité and Citizenship," *Identity, Citizenship and Political Conflict in Africa* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), 97.

<sup>15</sup> Brownen Manby, *Struggles for Citizenship in Africa*, (London: Zed Books Inc., 2009), 83.

<sup>16</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire," *African Affairs*, 109.437 (Oct. 2010), 602.

<sup>17</sup> Edmond Keller, "Cote d'Ivoire: Ivoirité and Citizenship," *Identity, Citizenship and Political Conflict in Africa* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), 96.

<sup>18</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire," *African Affairs*, 109.437 (Oct. 2010), 602.

<sup>19</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire," *African Affairs*, 109.437 (Oct. 2010), 602.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 603.

<sup>22</sup> "n'est ni plus ni moins qu'un concept xénophobe...a ceux qui sont originaires du Sud, les Nordistes étant considérés comme étrangers dans leur propre pays." Guillaume Soro, *Pourquoi je suis devenu un rebelle: La Cote d'Ivoire au bord du gouffre ; entretiens avec Serge Daniel* (Paris : Hachette Littératures , 2005), 20.

<sup>23</sup> "Mauritania Country File," *BBC News*, accessed 16 April 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13881985>.

<sup>24</sup> "Black Africans," *Minority Rights Group International*, accessed 30 November 2016,

<https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/eoir/legacy/2014/10/14/Black%20Africans.pdf>; Cedric Jourde, "Ethnicity, Democratization and Political Dramas: Insights into Ethnic Politics in Mauritania," *African Issues*, 29.1/2 (2001), 26.

the black Mauritians were favored by the French during colonialism.<sup>25</sup> This was because France invaded Mauritania from the South through Senegal and had already been dealing with black Africans there. In turn, France used black Mauritians in the civil administration to gain political legitimacy in both Mauritania and Senegal.<sup>26</sup> After independence, the Beydanes-dominated government initiated a policy of Arabization, which limited black Mauritians access to citizenship rights. In 1966, one of the more controversial policies was a policy that made speaking Arabic mandatory in secondary schools.<sup>27</sup> The Beydanes spoke a version of Arabic, while black Africans spoke French. This resulted in black students performing poorly during examinations.<sup>28</sup> Daddah also reduced the proportion of black Mauritians working in the administration to 30 percent.<sup>29</sup> The tension came to a head in 1986 when, "...Black African intellectuals denounced the Bidhan (Bedyane) president and his regime for their campaign of discrimination against Black Africans in the civil service, in the school, and in terms of access to land..." with the publication of the "Oppressed Black Minorities" manifesto.<sup>30</sup> A failed coup attempt in 1987 by the *Forces de Liberation Africaine de Mauritanienne* (FLAM) only served to inflame an already tense situation.<sup>31</sup> In 1989, violence over a border dispute broke out in the Senegal River valley region bordering neighboring Senegal, and the government expelled Senegalese nationals for security reasons. Of the 70,000 to 80,000 expelled, it is estimated that 25,000 were black Mauritians who had their citizenship revoked and were expelled from the country under the claim that they were Senegalese nationals.<sup>32</sup>

A loss of state citizenship rights in Mauritania took place only after violence broke out, whereas in Cote d'Ivoire, the loss of citizenship rights instigated the violence. But if we analyze the Mauritanian case not under the narrow lens of the right to citizenship and residency, but in the more general definition of a reciprocal relationship between the state and the citizens, we see that the Mauritanian government attempted to redefine who belonged to the state post-independence. The state initiated policies that attempted to limit black Mauritians' rights, defining them as second class citizens. These policies culminated in the decision to expel black Africans from the country. Though the Mauritanian case involves ethnic marginalization, it is also a case of tensions over citizenship rights and the government's attempt to redefine its citizenry.

## CROSS-BORDER COMMUNITIES

In Mauritania and of Cote d'Ivoire, varying concepts of citizenship underpinned the respective conflicts, and both states' French colonial heritage contributed to this contestation. The changing definitions of citizenship continued post-independence in both cases, diluting the relationships between communitarian citizenship and state citizenship. Cross-border ethnic ties and communitarian identity were present in the groups whose citizenship rights were revoked. When cross-border ties were present, the distinction between those who belonged to the state and who did not blurred.

### Cote d'Ivoire's Cross-Border Communities

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<sup>25</sup> Ron Parker, "The Senegal-Mauritania Conflict of 1989: A Fragile Equilibrium," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29.1 (Mar. 1991), 156.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> "Black Africans," *Minority Rights Group International*, accessed 30 November 2016, <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/eoir/legacy/2014/10/14/Black%20Africans.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ron Parker, "The Senegal-Mauritania Conflict of 1989: A Fragile Equilibrium," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29.1 (Mar. 1991), 157.

<sup>30</sup> Cedric Jourde, "Ethnicity, Democratization and Political Dramas: Insights into Ethnic Politics in Mauritania," *African Issues*, 29.1/2 (2001), 26; "Black Africans," *Minority Rights Group International*, accessed 30 November 2016, <https://www.justice.gov/sites/default/files/eoir/legacy/2014/10/14/Black%20Africans.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> "Mauritania," *Citizenship Rights in Africa Initiative*, accessed 1 December 2016, <http://citizenshiprightsafrika.org/region/mauritania/>.

In the case of Cote d'Ivoire, President Houphouet-Boigny instituted pro-immigration policies, thereby strengthening cross-border ties between citizens of Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. Houphouet-Boigny encouraged migrants from Burkina Faso to enter Cote d'Ivoire to cultivate the land in the north of the country. This was an enticing option for migrants from Burkina Faso due to limited resources available in their home country.<sup>33</sup> This policy created ethnic and communitarian ties between citizens of Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire, further complicating citizenship in the area. These specific ties were the result of the post-independence policy, although pro-immigration policies were also common during the age of French colonialism. According to Frederick Cooper, prior to independence, the lines of French West Africa were more porous, and movement was not as strict as it is today.<sup>34</sup> In that way, Houphouet-Boigny was not instituting a new law but instead supporting a practice that was common place under the French rule.

### **Mauritania's Cross-Border Communities**

In Mauritania, the correlation between cross-border ethnic ties and colonial legacies from the French state, is stronger. Historically, black Africans belonging to the Haalpulaaren, Soonike and Wolof communities lived in the Senegal River basin area as farmers. When France created the delineation between Senegal and Mauritania in 1946, the ethnic ties between the communities in the Senegal River basin were not taken into consideration.<sup>35</sup> This lack of acknowledgement created issues after independence for both the Senegalese and Mauritanian governments. Because these groups were interlinked and shared the area historically, individuals would cross the newly formed border freely. Often families would live in one country while the land they cultivated would be in another.<sup>36</sup> The border was extremely porous due to these interlinkages, making it difficult to distinguish between Senegalese or Mauritanian citizenry. The deaths of Senegalese and Mauritians during the border conflict of 1989 and the ensuing expulsions were met with mixed reactions. Those living in the area had to decide between loyalty to their ethnic group and their given country. This confusion allowed the government to expel black Mauritians. Because of strong community ties, the government was able to claim that they were expelling Senegalese nationals, even if those being expelled were actually Mauritanian nationals with ties to diverse communities that also had Senegalese nationals.

## **ACCESS TO POLITICAL POWER AND LAND RIGHTS**

As seen in both the cases of Cote d'Ivoire and Mauritania, citizenship was used as a political tool by the Ivorian and Mauritanian government to redefine who belonged and who did not. These policies were created to benefit the state. Since citizenship defines who is eligible to enter a reciprocal relationship with the state and, therefore, who has access to public resources that the state offers. In both Mauritania and Cote D'Ivoire, the government used citizenship to redefine who had access to land rights and political power.

### **Cote d'Ivoire and Access to Political Power and Land Rights**

In Cote d'Ivoire, President Bedie sought to retain political power through the Ivoirité laws. The PDCI (the political party of both Houphouet-Boigny and Bedie) had ruled since 1960, but faced considerable opposition with the advent of a multi-party system. A splinter group of Bedie's political party (PDCI) called the *Rassemblement de Républicains* (RDR) nominated Alassane Ouattara as its

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<sup>33</sup> "Cote d'Ivoire," *A Survey of Migration Policies in West Africa*, UN DESA, accessed 12 December 2016, [http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2015/docs/Workshop2015\\_CotedIvoire\\_Migration\\_Fact\\_Sheet.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/events/other/workshop/2015/docs/Workshop2015_CotedIvoire_Migration_Fact_Sheet.pdf).

<sup>34</sup> Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nations: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 16.

<sup>35</sup> Ron Parker, "The Senegal-Mauritania Conflict of 1989: A Fragile Equilibrium," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29.1 (Mar. 1991), 156.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

presidential candidate.<sup>37</sup> Ouattara was very popular and posed a strong threat to Bedie's reelection. By disenfranchising many of those not considered truly Ivorian, as well as by barring Ouattara from running, Bedie was able to consolidate his power. General Guei, who deposed Bedie, claimed that he would oversee free and fair elections, but continued the laws of Ivoirité, which caused many to boycott the elections.<sup>38</sup> The next president, Laurent Gbagbo, who was elected in 2000, also continued the practice, and access to voting rights became a serious point of contention in the peace process during the ensuing civil war of 2002.<sup>39</sup> All these politicians saw the benefit of maintaining political power by limiting citizenship rights to an entire group of people.

The other resource at stake was the land itself. The immigration policies of Houphouët-Boigny designated land to those who worked it. For many, there was no documentation of this land ownership, but instead the land was passed down from parent to child. With the installation of Ivoirité policies, many who were no longer perceived as citizens had their lands confiscated.<sup>40</sup> This was beneficial to the government and groups that the government supported because the land in the North was fertile and largely agricultural. Crops, such as cotton and cocoa, were produced in this area and were highly lucrative; In the 1970s, Cote d'Ivoire was ranked the number one producer of cocoa in the world.<sup>41</sup> With regards to cotton, the government retained a large portion of those lands through the Ivoirité laws and continued to make money off the crops throughout the civil war.<sup>42</sup>

### **Mauritania and Access to Political Power and Land Rights**

In Mauritania, citizenship rights were also redefined to gain access to political power and land. "Mauritania... used the crisis as an excuse to expel black Africans who were considered potential political opponents, including those with citizenship..."<sup>43</sup> Black Mauritians had long resisted the efforts of the government's Arabization efforts, as evident by their creation of the FLAM. One year after the initial purge, "...about 500 black African officers and soldiers who served in the different branches of the Mauritanian military were executed, and many others were tortured and dismissed from the military."<sup>44</sup> The government attempted to squash opposition to the government in any way possible. Their focus on the military was closely linked to fears that the FLAM had infiltrated the military.

Access to land was also an important incentive in redefining citizenship rights. The Senegal River basin is a fertile area, traditionally cultivated by black Africans from both Mauritania and Senegal. North of the basin, nomadic Arab herders traditionally populated the area. But desertification in the 1980s pushed the Arab herders south, in search of water.<sup>45</sup> This migration caused conflict over access to water and land, with not only Mauritanian black Africans, but also Senegalese in the area, which caused outbreaks of violence.<sup>46</sup> After the expulsion, it became clear that the Beydanes (the Arab ethnic group) were interested in the area as those expelled (black Mauritians) ranged "...from senior civil servants to farmers, and entire villages were subsequently resettled by Beydanes."<sup>47</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

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<sup>37</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire," *African Affairs*, 109.437 (Oct. 2010), 603-604.

<sup>38</sup> Chrysantus Ayangafac, "The Politics of Post-Conflict Elections in Cote d'Ivoire," *From Civil Strife to Peace Building* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 35.

<sup>39</sup> Abu Bakarr Bah, "Democracy and Civil War: Citizenship and Peacemaking in Cote d'Ivoire," *African Affairs*, 109.437 (Oct. 2010), 611.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 602.

<sup>41</sup> Edmond Keller, "Cote d'Ivoire: Ivorité and Citizenship" *Identity, Citizenship and Political Conflict in Africa*, (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), 93.

<sup>42</sup> Lydie Boka-Mene and Oren E. Whynche-Shaw, "Foreign Investors and International Donor Contributions to Cote d'Ivoire's State-Building Efforts," *From Civil Strife to Peace Building* (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2009), 79.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 164.

<sup>44</sup> Cedric Jourde, "Ethnicity, Democratization and Political Dramas: Insights into Ethnic Politics in Mauritania," *African Issues*, 29.1/2 (2001), 26.

<sup>45</sup> Ron Parker, "The Senegal-Mauritania Conflict of 1989: A Fragile Equilibrium," *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 29.1 (Mar. 1991), 158.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 159.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, 165.

In both Cote d'Ivoire and Mauritania since independence in 1960, contestations over citizenship contributed heavily to the outbreak political violence and a denial of rights. The legacies of colonialism, the influence of cross-border ethnic ties, and the competition for political power and land rights, has made defining the citizens of each country difficult and fluid.

In West Africa, scholars identified many different causes of political violence and exclusionary policies, but citizenship is not often cited. Cote d'Ivoire and Mauritania are examples of conflicts with citizenship at their centers, and through further scholarship, it is possible that citizenship is a factor in other conflicts in the Western Africa as well.