FRENCH INFLUENCE ON FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND ITS EFFECT ON ECOWAS

BY

ABUBAKAR. A. ABDULLAHI

A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL,
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTERS
IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND DIPLOMACY
(M. I. A. D) DEGREE.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE,
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MAY, 2000.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is written by me and that it is a record of my own research work. All sources of information and other writers view where applicable, have been dully acknowledged in form of references.

ABUBAKAR A. ABDULLAHI

24/05/2000

DATE

CERTIFICATION

This thesis titled: **FRENCH INFLUNCE ON FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN COUNTRIES AND ITS EFFECT ON ECOWAS,** by Abubakar A. Abdullah meets the regulation governing the award of the degree of Masters in International Affairs and Diplomacy of the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Dedication

This reasearch is dedicated to My wife - Binta, and the children

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ABSTRACT

In the research, effort is made towards assessing the role of France in the regional integration of West African countries.

On Assessment, it was discovered that the long time linkages of the Francophone countries due their colonial experiences with France amongst other factors, has seriously hindered the process of integrating the West African sub-region.

An attempt towards this integration process was champoned by Nigeria via the formation of ECOWAS in 1975. Despite these laudable objectives, the organization has beleaguered with so many problems. Hence, the need to find a lasting solution to the multitude of problems.

Based on the global assessment of the problems militating against the growth and attainment of the set objectives of ECOWAS, it is recommended that certain positive measures such as "Re-colonization" of the region by the powerful state (Nigeria), through economic diplomacy, military, cultural and educational programmes be undertaken to attain the set objectives of ECOWAS. In addition, Nigeria needs to strengthen bilateral relations, expand educational, cultural and military co-operation with France.

Lastly, Nigeria should be at the vanguard, in collaboration with West African leaders in protecting the overall interest of the West African sub-region.

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CHAPTER ONE :INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Most African countries gained independence from their colonial masters in the 1960s, a period which coincided with the growth of regional integration schemes in the various regions of the world. To combat such challenges ranging from poverty, economic and political dependence, coupled with the urgent need to develop their new sovereign states, African countries adopted regional integration as one of the major solutions to there problems. With the small and weak nature of these newly independent states, politically and economically, their impact would not be felt in the international sphere. Moreover, they could not grow on their own especially with their vulnerability to external pressures and the dependency syndrome on foreign powers. Although there was the absence of consensus on the perspective to adopt, leading to the creation of the Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazzaville blocs, there was the burning and urgent desire for the establishment of regional integration schemes. These disagreements were only overcome in 1963 when the organization of African Unity, (O.A.U.) was created.

The consciousness of the small size of most of the countries involved and the realization of many of them that without joining others in larger groups they faced serious obstacles in promoting their economic development soon brought to light a multiplicity of regional integration schemes in the various sub-regions in Africa. For over three decades of independence and experimentation on regional integration by African countries, little has been achieved. Most regional integration schemes have failed to transcend from theoretical to performance-oriented endeavors. With the changing trends in global affairs especially the advent of the European

Union and increasing global drive towards regional integration, emphasis is again being placed by African leaders on commitment to the reinvigoration of their decade's old integration schemes. Adebayo Adedeji maintains that;

> ...there is a realization on the part of each government that this is something that must not be allowed to fail. If it fails, the crisis is Africa will deepen. No African country, no matter how big it is, can really go it alone in the world we are entering in the 1990s. The economic integration of Africa is part of the solution to crisis of Africa[6].

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Reasons abound for the failure of African integration schemes to meet set objectives. Some of these factors are internal while others are external. Internal factors range from the fear of states to surrender their sovereignty to a supra-national body, poor infrastructure for transportation and communication, unstable governments and regime types where co-generation among leaders depend on the personalities in power, fragmentary currencies on the continent and most importantly recurrent differences on the formula of benefits accruing to an integration scheme as a function of the level of contributions, strength of the economic base and level of development among countries involved in an integration endeavour. External factors compound the internal ones. Apart from the actions of transnational firms that have derivedalot of benefits through their heavy financial strengths supereeding those of most integration schemes, sophisticated communication and technological breackthrough, colonial legacies also play a very prominent role clogging the development wheel of most integration endeavors, in Africa. Colonialism left most African countries more devoted and committed to their relations with

European powers than with fellow African countries. This was particularly the case with France and her former colonies where military, economic, monetary and defence pacts were signed at independence. These agreements and other elements of colonialism, what Osagie calls "lingering colonialism" ensured that African countries of French colonial genealogy remained tied to the dependent apron strings of France[7].

The experience of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a clear reflection of the negative impact of colonialism on regional integration efforts. ECOWAS membershipcuts across Anglophobe, Francophone and Lusophone countries. Despite the size and seeming commitment of member states and most importantly the enormous sacrifices committed by Nigeria as the core state in ECOWAS, very little achievements have been recorded by the scheme.

Despite the internal factors militating against the scheme realizing its objectives. French colonialism and continuous presence in Africa has gone a long way in militating against set goals and objectives of ECOWAS. The French policies of "Assimilation" and later "Association" intended to make Africa a clear reflection of the metropole succeeded in establishing a French African Empire in West and Equatorial Africa[8]. This was informed by the fact that France strove to regain through colonialism the grandeur she had lost in Europe Africa the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Early in 1960, she had succeeded in entrenching her policies and influence in Africa that most elites in Francophone Africa saw themselves as French citizens. Regional Integration schemes were formed under French influence and control and most especially the Franc zone was formed with the use of a common currency the CFA-Franc which was backed by the French Franc. When the Economic Community of West African States

was formed in 1975, and came to effect in 1977, France saw this move as an encroachment of Nigeria in its territorial interest in Francophone West Africa. Over the years she had viewed Nigeria as a continental power that stood to threaten her interest. Quoting Olajide Aluko, Alkali maintains that:

> it is no secret that it has been the cardinal policy of the French government to encourage co-operation among its former West African colonies in order to counter balance the weight of Nigeria. Thus instead of accepting and supporting Nigeria's leadership role in Africa, the French policy is intended to challenge and weaken it[9].

Such a policy has gone a long way in dwarfing the commitment of Francophone African countries to ECOWAS thereby rendering the scheme crippled in achieving the goals set by member-state in 1975 when the endeavour was established.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite the realization by African leaders that regional integration can contribute meaningfully to their development solution to the economic crisis in the continent and boost their position and bargaining power in the International Community, their commitment has remained nascent. Experimentation on regional integration for over three decades has failed to register discernible successes. While internal and external factors militate against the success of these schemes. French influence and continuous presence in Francophone West Africa has negatively

contributed to the achievements of ECOWAS as member-states of the dependent on and committed to France than to other member-state of the endeavour. This research sets out to examine the role of France in African integration efforts with particular reference to ECOWAS and how this has negatively affected the noble objectives of ECOWAS. The following research questions will be examined;

- How have the French policies of Assimilation and Association affected post-independent relations between France and her Former Colonies in Africa?
- Does the success of ECOWAS threaten French influence in West Africa?
- Have French policies kept Francophone West African countries more committed to the metropole than member-states of ECOWAS?
- What impact does French opposition of Nigeria in West Africa have on ECOWAS?
- What efforts can be made by ECOWAs to contain this French influence on Francophone African States?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

- To examine the factors militating against the realization of ECOWAS objectives.
- To examine the increasing challenges to regional integration in Africa.
- To examine the impact of French continuous presence in West Africa and how it affects the realisation of ECOWAS' objectives.
- To identify possible steps to be taken to limit or contain France's influence and its effects on ECOWAS.
- To re-emphasis the need for the commitment of African countries to regional Integration

1.4 PROPOSITIONS

In terms of providing tentative answers to the research questions raised above, the study will examine the following propositions:

- The French colonial policies of Assimilation and Association succeeded in making Francophone Africa dependant on and committed to France more than to African countries.
- Nigeria's involvement in regional Integration in West Africa has remained a major threat to French influence in the same region.
- French influence and continuous presence in West Africa has grossly affected positive development of ECOWAS.
- Intensification of Franco-Nigerian co-operation stands to minimise French fear of Nigeria's encroacheme into her areas of interest in West Africa.
- Successful regional integration in West Africa depends so much on the elimination of a multiplicity of schemes with the same objectives and the formation of a single scheme irrespective of colonial descent and linguistic divergences.

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

The multiplicity of the existence of regional integration schemes in West Africa with similar objectives do not only breed non-commitment but wasteful efforts[11]. This adds to the carate of external and internal factors already dwarfing the chances of success of these schemes. The recent and increasing global drive calls for a deeper reflection on what contributions and position African countries want to have in the next millennium. A critical examination of the

forces militation against the development of regional integration objective in African paves the way for the solution to these problems. This study, apart from contributing to the abundant existing literature on regional integration efforts, attempts a critical analysis of the external forces particularly colonial legacies and African, cleavages militating against successful integration of ECOWASS. The containment of France's negative role in West Africa, as this study sets to expose, will go a long way to contributing solutions to problems militating against the realisation of ECOWAS' objective.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

1.6.1 SCOPE

This study takes into consideration France and the sixteen (16) West African States that constitute the membership of the Economic Community of West African States. Emphasis will be placed on France's relations with Reancophone States in West Africa and how this affects the realization of ECOWAS objectives. Also the period covered by this research will be between 1975 when ECPWAS as formed to date. For historical purposes, consideration will be given to the period of French colonialism in Africa.

1.6.2 LIMITATION

This study will suffer from numerous and forcible problems. Exhaustive consultation of literature will be handicapped by its absence in English particularly as it concerns France's role in West Africa. Secondly, most published works concentrate on the internal factors affecting regional integration in Africa generally and ECOWAS in particular. Moreover, the period

within which this research is to be completed is too short for primary data to be used. Despite these shortcomings, exhaustive use will be made of whatever materials are available.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

1.7.1 TYPE AND SOURCES OF DATA

In as much as lots of work have been done on the problems under study, there is scanty materials and documentation done on this subjects. This research shall make use of secondary data, which shall be sourced from books, journals, magazines, unpublished works of writers, research and thesis material, internet, FTP, Cd-Roms seminars and workshop proceedings, etc.

1.7.2 METHOD OF GATHERING DATA

In our attempt to obtain the best of information on the subject under study we shall rely on the use of library facilities and extract vital information, arrange them purely on scientific basis and present them for analysis.

1.7.3 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The data presented shall be analysed purely in accordance with the rules of social science research using a content method of social science analysis.

Effort shall be made to ensure that the researchers personal orientation and disposition do not affect judgement and conclusion.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research will be situated within the Neo-colonialism period which has been viewed from different perspectives by different authors. Gamel Abdul Nasser, former Egyptian leader, saw Neo-colonialism as an attempt;

> to attain the same aims of exploitation as the old colonialism, using new methods which outwardly appear to be more in line with the spirit of the age. In this domain, military pacts are directed more against internal fronts of nations seeking to free themselves ... than against foreign aggression. In the same way aid and trade were used as a veil to dominate the resources of nations and exhaust them to the benefit of the benefit of the exploiters[13].

When it became clear to the Western colonial powers that colonialism could not more be sustained as a function of the agitations by Africans to free themselves from foreign domination, various powers designed new strategies and initiated policies that would grant political independence to Africans but would not necessarily mean the complete elimination of the influence of the former colonial masters in the socio-economic and political as well as control of certain strategic minerals and the military[14]. This is reflected in Kwame Nkrumah's view of Neo colonialism as;

> ... the state which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality, its economic system, and thus its political policy, are directed from outside[15].

This gives a clear reflection of the situation in Francophone Africa after independence and beyond. Three decades of dominance of the economics and politics of French African countries has left large scars creating a dependeht syndrom of these countries on France with far reaching implication for sound commitment of these countries to any integration schemes

in West Africa especially when powerful states like Nigeria are seen as a threat to French interest in the sub-region more so when successive French Governments since "De Gaul saw the survival of France only in the continued domination of the colonies as they became independent[6].

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The research is divided into give chapters. Chapter one will be the introduction comprising of a general introduction to the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, propositions, scope and limitations, justification for the study, methodology, theoretical framework and the breakdown of chapters. chapter two will be devoted to the review of relevant and related literature. Chapter three will peruse the various colonial policies especially Assimilation and Association and their impact on Francophone Africa. Chapter Four examines the impact of French colonialism and France's influence and continuous presence in West Africa on the furtherance of ECOWAS. Chapter Five will be the summary of the study, conclusions, drawn and recommendations for policy options.

FOOT NOTES/REFERENCES

1. Uka Ezenwe: 1987 ECOWAS and the Economic Integration of West Africa. West Books Publishers Ltd. Ibadan P. 134.
2. Uka Ezenwe, Op. Cit P. 134.
3. Nigerian and Ghana disagreed on whether regional Integration should emphasize on political or economic issues. To Nigeria political Integration should be preceded by

economic Integration while Ghana felt the approach should be political. The outcome was the creation of the various divergent blocs on Regional Integration under the leadership of Ghana and Nigeria.

4. Olatunde Ojo et. al.: African International Relations Longman, New York, 1985 p. 113.

5. Jalloh Abdul Aziz cited by Olatunde Ojo et. al. Op. Cit P. 142.

6. Professor Adebayo Adedeji, Former Executive Secretary, United Nations - Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA) commenting on the organization of African Unity's adoption of a treaty establishing a time-table towards the creation of an African Economic Community by the year 2025 in "Africa Recovery" vol. 5 June, 1991 P. 12.

7. For details see Osagie and Edeozien: African Economic Integration: Lessons from outside Africa. In The 'Challenges of African Economic Integration". Nigerian Economics Society Conference Proceedings, Ibadan, 1992.

8. French colonial acquisitions were concentrated in West and Equitorial Africa which eventually became what is known today as Francophone Africa. Her presence and influence in Maghrebs Africa was extirpated after independence.

9. See Brunschwig Henry: French Colonialism 1871 - 1914. Myths and Realities. Paul Mall Press London. 1966, p. 18.

10. Alkali Ahmed Rufai: Issues in International Relations and Nigeria's Foreign Policy Bob Academic Press, Zaria, P. 115.

11. See Uka Ezenwe in "Rationalizing West African Groups for African Economic Integration" in The Challenges of African Economic Integration O. Cit. P. 86.

12. Cited by Usoro E.J. "Part and Present Attempts at Economic Integration in West

Africa", in E.C. Edoziem and E. Osagie (eds.) in Economic Integration of West Africa, Ibadan University Press, Ibadan, PP. ...

13. Nasser, Gamel Abdel - Address at the first Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

14. For details see GUY Martin: "Continuity and Change Modern African Studies Vol. 33. No. 1, 1995. P. 3.

15. Nkrumah Kwame: Neo-Colonialism: The last stage of Imperialism. Thomas Nelson Sons Ltd, London, 1968. P. ix.

16. For details see Mahmoud Yahaya: Ne-Colonialism - France's Legacy to Africa, ECPER, Kaduna. 1994. P. 9.

CHAPTER TWO

WEST-AFRICAN REGIONAL INTEGRATION: MEANING, PROSPECTS AND PROBLEMS

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In discussing the impact of French Presence in West Africa on the limitations of the success of ECOWAS, it becomes necessary to examine the concept of Regional Integration as well as other factors that constitute a clog to the attainment of the aims and objectives of the scheme. An attempt is made in this chapter to situate the study within the mainstream of relevant and related literature. The concept and Rationale for Regionalism is treated from a general perspective while emphasis is devoted to the problems affecting African Integration Schemes. The study then maintains that despite the existence of multiplicity of negative factors affecting ECOWAS, French presence and activities in West Africa is the most disturbing of these factors.

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Regional Integration has been variously defined. According to Ernst Has, it is "any inter-state activity with less than universal participation designed to meet some commonly experienced need"[1] Adopting the same definition, Olatunde Ojo adds that such a common experienced need mentioned above could be military, political of economic, technical or residual public interest.[2] Viewed this way, Regional Integration assumes an encompassing of holistic perspective.

Adopting an economic angle, Kayode Fanimoli sees Economic Integration as an Attempt by a group of countries to make their economies believe more of less like a single economic unit for the sake of efficiency and better co-ordination of policies.[3] This definition gives the impression that the various stages that involve Regional Integration have been successfully met ending with the harmonization of the policies of member states of the Integration Scheme. Referring to the various stages in Regional Integration, Uka Ezenwe defines Integration as "The gradual but steady process of harmonized tariff disarmament along with the removal of other barriers to trade between the contracting parties to their mutual advantage.[4] He argues that the process of integration is not limited to economic, but from his definition, it is quite discernible that emphasis is on the economic benefits member-states will draw from forming an Integration Scheme.

From the definitions above, one comes to the conclusion that Regional Integration is a continuous process and there is need for time and caution for the various barriers to be phased out to reach the level in Familomi Kayode's definition. Once these barriers are extirpated, harmonization transcends the economic into the political domain. Such a scheme would manifest tendencies like elimination of tariffs to ensure free movement of goods, services and factors of production, the harmonization of economic, fiscal, taxation, social and foreign and defense policies as well as the use of a common currency.

2.2.1 THE RATIONALE FOR REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN AFRICA

When most African countries gained political independence in the 1960s, there was the realization that meaningful development depended heavily on the nature of Regional Integration and co-operation that member-states within the same Sub-Region adopted. That urge has increasingly gained more grounds over thirty years of their independence as the challenges to their development also increased. The Rationale for Regional Integration more often is viewed from a dual perspective: Political and economic.

Colonialism left behind its geopolitical configuration of division and fragmentation. Many of the new African States in the 1960s, emerging from colonial domination, although normally independent were so small and weak both politically and economically that they had little prospects of rapid economic development on their own. Pious Okigbo presents the geopolitical nature of Africa as follows:

> *Since Namibia became independent in April 1990, there are now 52 countries that are members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). They vary widely in population and geographic area. From large massive countries like Nigeria, Zaire, Tanzania to Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Togo etc. Twenty-three of them have populations of less than 5 million, ten of less than 1 million. Fourteen African countries are land-locked and 13 have areas of less than 50,000 square kilometers. In effect, nearly half of the 54 African countries can be described as "Micro States". Added to this, the fact that 29 of these 54 belong to the world's 43 least developed countries or put another way, 67% of the world's poorest countries are to be found in Africa*[3]

The situation above explains Jalloh Abdullaziz's position that consciousness of the small size of most of the countries involved in Regional Integration coupled with the realization that without joining others in larger groups, they faced serious obstacles in promoting their economic development.[6] Without committing themselvesto genuine regional integration, the factors above which made them extremely vulnerable to external pressures and which worked to perpetuate African dependence upon their former colonial masters and other foreign powers would not be eliminated.

In addition to the small size of African States, Nicholas Plessz maintains that the small size of each national market and the narrow range of natural resources available in each country both constituted severe limitations for any industrialization programme oriented towards import substitution re-enforced by the mounting pressure of unemployment and the desire for gradual achievement of economic independence; African countries were forced to indulge or embark on one regional integration scheme or he other.[7]

Politico-security reasons re-enforce the economic nationals for the establishment of regional integration schemes in Africa. The newly independent and weak African States recognized the need to present a collective front against the rest of the world particularly their former colonial masters and the imperialists of Western Europe, Japan and America. In another vein, Regional Integration was seen and used as a security of defensive strategy against larger and more powerful neighbours. The large size of some states posed a threat to their smaller neighbours. Integration schemes were therefore formed to counter these threats and to check their domineering tendencies. Examples

abound. Nigeria and Zaire's sizes and strength instigated the establishment of the Customs Union of Central African State (UDEAC); OCAM was formed from the fear of Ghana and the Casablanca Block.[8]

In the same light, Olatunde Ojo argues that the West Africa Economic Community (CEAO) which comprises mainly of French Speaking West African States was formed to counterbalance Nigeria's political and economic weight and in particular to check her attempt to organise a larger economic community[9].

Either for political, economic or security cum defence reasons, regional integration has increasingly gained relevance not only in Africa but also in Latin America, Asia and Europe. The reasons that accoutered for African States interests in regional Integration in the 1960s has been re-enforced by the challenging nature and the changes that have taken place in the International scene with far reaching implications for the pattern of International Economic relations.

2.3 CLASSIFICATION OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION SCHEMES

Earlier seen was the definition of Regional Integration as the gradual but steady process of harmonized tariff disarmament along with the removal of barriers to trade between the contracting parties to their mutual advantage. By classification therefore, reference is being made to the degree or level of removal of discriminations to trade and tariffs. For a group of countries to make their economies behave like a single economic unit, depends on the nature of integration.

In examining the classification of Regional Integration, the categorization by Bela

Balassa is often adopted. He identifies five (5) categories, which include the Free Trad Area, the Customs Union, the common market, the Economic Community or th Economic Union and finally the Political Union.[10]

2.3.1 Free Trade Area

Bela Balassa identifies this as the lowest form of Regional Integration. Here discrimination the discrimination is only related among the members of the Integration Scheme. Tariffs and quotas are eliminated among the member-states of the scheme bu maintained for non-members.

2.3.2 Customs Union

In this second stage, discrimination involves both members of the Integration scheme as well as non-members. Tariffs and quotas are eliminated among member states in the integration scheme and in addition, common external tariffs are set up against non-members of the scheme.

2.3.3 The Common Market

At this stage, it is assumed that all the last two stages have been attained. What is peculiar to this stage is that in addition to meeting the first two stage of Regional Integration, there is the free flow of factors of production particularly labour and capital. All barriers to their free flow are eliminated. It must be noted that most African Integration Scheme is often limited to these three stages even when they profess the next

stages.

2.3.4 Economic Union or Economic Community

This stage is quite advanced in Regional Integration. It involves the harmonization of economic, monetary, fiscal and social as well as cyclical policies. This stage also involves the adoption of a common currency by member-states of the Integration Scheme. So far, this has been partially attained by the European Union (EU) alone which for now is the most advanced Regional Integration Endeavour in the world. This is quite alien to African countries.

2.3.5 Political Union

This is the highest and last stage of Regional Integration. At this stage, the assumption is that the preceding four stages have been attained and in addition structures and political institutions which harmonize politicize are themselves harmonized and become unified.

2.4 FACTORS HINDERING THE PROGRESS OF AFRICAN REGIONAL INTERGRATION SCHEME

Earlier noted was the fact that Regional Integration as a development strategy was embarked upon over thirty years ago. Despite this long existence, very limited successes have been registered by these schemes due to certain factors militating against them. While some factors are locally inspired others have an external or foreign

introduction.

2.4.1 Local Factors

These local factors refer to those which are generated by member states in an integration endeavour. They range from the existence of multiple schemes with the same aims and objectives in the same geographical location; multiple national currencies; poor and underdeveloped infrastructure; refusal by stares to surrender part of their sovereignty to the incessant government changes and their interests. Others are the unbalanced and disparities in resource endowment and the quarrels over sharing the benefits or losses from integration schemes.

2.4.2 Existence of Multiple Intergration Scheme

Right from the 1960s, the disagreements between Nigeria and Ghana on the approach to Regional Integration had produced the Casablanca, Monrovia and Brazzaville groups. Although the differences were settled when the organisation of African Unity was established in 1963, a foundation had been laid for the multiple existence of different integration scheme with different nomenclature but having common aims and objectives. The existence of multiple Integration Schemes in Africa is quite deceptive of the success story of their schemes in Africa. When they exist in the same Sub-Region with common aims and objectives, this breeds wasteful competition in terms of resources, unhealthy duplication of efforts especially where the same member-states belong to more than one integration efforts with the same of similar aims and objectives. These often have the

effect of divided commitment, which could have been concentrated on a single scheme with chances of success.[11]

2.4.3 Resistance to the Surrender of Sovereignty

When African States got their political Independence in the 1960s, they became sovereign states with the capacity to participate in International affairs. They equally possessed certain powers refereed to as Plenipotentiary wherein they could act without any external interference of influence. They therefore cherished their sovereignty so much that they were not ready to surrender part of it to any supranational entities in the form of Regional Integration despite the recognition that this was a major path to development. This resistance to surrender part of a state's sovereignty is transformed into the non-commitment of member-states in realizing the aims and objectives of Regional Integration Schemes. Adedeji Adebayo contends that, "almost all the countries in ECOWAS have found it difficult to surrender either in part or in whole, their newly won sovereignty"[12] This situation has not changed for the better over three decades after independence.

2.4.4 Existence of Multiple Currencies

Among the stages in Regional Integration, the last features the harmonization of the currencies of Integrating member-stages. Among the legacies bequeathed African countries is a multiplicity of currencies. Most English speaking states adopted the Pound Sterling as national currencies while the CFA Franc was accepted as a common currency

in the years that ensued decolonization. Although the situation has changed for the former British colonies, it has equally ushered in multiple national currencies making the march towards the harmonization of monetary and fiscal policies a herculean task. In the care of ECOWAS, despite the establishment of a West Africa Cleaning House (WACH) to facilitate transaction impinging on the use of varying currencies, much is left to be derived from is generations. The persistence of national currencies grossly affect Interregional trade which constitutes a major attribute of regional Integration.

2.4.5 Poor and Undeveloped Infrastructure

Successful Regional Integration depends heavily on the state of infrastructure in the Integrating member-states. These factors also account for the level of development. Infrastructure in terms of developed transport and communication systems are quite lacking in Africa. Most roads are fairly motorable only in the dry season. Rail, road and inalnd waterways are at a nascent state with very little impact on regional integration. Communication systems are lacing with restricted accessibility making transactions slow and discouraging to potential investors. Unless the infrastructure in most African countries is developed, little fruits can be tapped from the multiple integration Scheme that exist in Africa.

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2.4.6 Incessant Regime Changes and their Interest

Until recently, military take over of governments in Africa was a common phenomenon. In the last thirty years or so, African states south of the Sahara have either

experienced a military regime or attempts at a military take over. Nwabuzor explains that by 1975, only four civilian regimes existed in Francophone West Africa. He adds that by 1980, still in former French West Africa, only Cote d'Ivoire among these countries was under a civilian regime.[13] The rest had been involved in at least a military Coup d'Etat. In most cases, the regime personalizes the commitment or responsiveness to existing integration endeavour in which his country is a member-state especially when the regime is a military type. More often the continuity in the regime's commitment is measured by the support given this regime by member-states in the Integration Scheme. In a situation where leaders of other member-states oppose the new regime, this often has far reaching implications for the Integration Scheme. Nwabuzor ails us the case of the collapse of the East African Community partly due to disagreements between Julius Nyerere of then President of Tanzania and Idi Amin Dada when he took over from Milton Obote, former president of Uganda. Nyerere did not only refuse to recognize Idi Amin's government but granted political asylum to Obote. This grossly affected the relations between the two countries and by extension the East African Community (EAC).[14]

2.4.7 Unbalanced Levels of Development

Early seen was the fact that Africa is full of disparities. This disparities are manifested in the form of unequal resources endowment, smallness in territorial size, accessibility to the sea and landlocked nature of some countries which have a lot to do with the level of development. Also noted was the fact that the formation of some

Integration Schemes was a function of threats from the size and strength of countries like Nigeria and Zaire. Once countries of unequal levels of development engage in any regional Integration Scheme, there is the tendency that smaller and poor members feel dominated by the larger and more developed ones. This often creates apathy and breeds suspicion among member-states with Fe reaching implications for the Integration Scheme.

This issue can be linked to the cost and benefits to be derived from the scheme. The more developed states, especially those considered as the core states that propel the scheme to success often question whether her output is equal to the numerous and enormous sacrifices. On the other hand, the small and less developed states have the feeling that the scheme is only beneficial to the more developed states. This situation is clearly seen in ECOWAS where dispute the enormous sacrifices being made by Nigeria to ensure the realization of the goals of the scheme, her good intentions are often interpreted as dominance and threats to weaker member-states.

2.5.1 Foreign Factors

While local factors are internally inspired or generated from within the Integrating member-states,foreign factors have an external origin. Principal among these, and central to our discussion are Foreign Direct Investment in the form of Multinational corporations or International firms and colonial legacies.

2.5.2 Foreign Direct Investment

There are international firms that combine advanced technology and a strong capital base belonging to home states which are often the Development countries of the West and Japan spread over numerous countries or hosts states involving in manufacturing the same products. Most of these corporations have remained quite controversial in their activities as they could either influence development in their host states or retard the progress of infant industries in these countries. Because of their profit drives,they often act as conduit pipes in sucking away surplus values from the developing to the developed world.

Became regional integration schemes emphasis the freedom of movement of factors of production and the removal of discriminative barriers to trade like tariffs and quotas, multinational corporations if given a free hand could be the advantages at their disposal to maximize profits to an extent that member-states in the scheme would have nothing to benefit. This has been a major issue in ECOWAS given the existence of numerous multinational corporations' subsidiaries in member-states especially in the French speaking states. At inception, ECOWAS in its preliminary Articles of the original ECOWAS Treaty tried to address this issue but the experience over the years has proved its ineffectiveness. This is the same bone of contention in most African Integration Scheme.

2.5.3 Colonial Legacies

Colonialism left Africans more divided than it met them. Earlier integration efforts by colonial masters especially in British and French colonies were meant for easy administrative purposes and not to be beneficial to the Africans at independence. Due to colonialism the identification of Africans now became related to European powers as they saw themselves as French of English Africans even when they share common cultural values. In French speaking Africa; formal colonialism ended in the 1960s but certain agreements signed between France and the newly independent African states kept them perpetually ties to the dependent apron strings of France. Most policies in French speaking Africa till today are either sanctioned, influenced or directed from Paris. This makes Africans more depended and related to Western powers than with other African States.

An attempt has been made in the chapter to situate the study within existing relevant and related literature. It inevitable to discuss the impact of the continuous presence of France and its influence in French speaking West African countries on the limited success of France. Without first of all examining the concept of Regional Integration, its rationale and categorization and most importantly the problems confronting African Integration Schemes. At the level of these problems, most works devote their attention to local issues with little attention to the colonial legacies bequeathed African Schemes by their former masters. This is the gap which this study intends to fill.

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*For more detail on classification of integration schemes, See Table 2.1: Classification of Economic Integration Scheme, Banlilon Tani Victor's Ph.D Thesis. p. 54

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 FRENCH COLONIAL POLICIES AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FRANC ZONE IN AFRICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

By 1860, the African show line was experiencing one form of European presence of the other. European powers had shifted their interest from Europe to Africa to an extent that it was common place for one European power to clash with the other on a strategic territory in Africa. Africa therefore became central to the International Relations of European powers. The stating point for this scramble for territories in Africa has been identified to be related to the succession of Lapeled II to the Religion throne. In the years that followed, the scramble had produced so much disunity that European sovereigns recognized the need for a conference to agree on the modalities to pursue their interests. The Berlin conference of 1884 provided this need and in the years that followed, all of Africa except Liberia and Ethiopia came under the control of one European power of the other.

Besides Spain, Belgium, Germany, Britain and Portugal, France became a prominent figure in colonial politics and interest. Certain factors provided France to be at the fare of colonialism to the extent of establishing the French Empire in west and Equatorial to central Africa. The French policies of Assimilation and Association embarked upon went a long way in entrenching French present in dominance in Africa. Despite the seeming failure of there policies, a French community was establishment in Africa Edith the one of the French currency, French language, culture and cuisine as

well as French-Africa nationality. At decolonization, the French colonial legacies bequeathed Africans include the Franc zone, security and military pacts.

This chapter examines the scramble for Africa by major European powers and the Berlin conference than ensured this scramble as an attempt to ensure a peaceful occupation of Africa. Central in it, the French policies of Assimilation and Association are discusses as attempts by France to make Africa a pure reflection of the metropole. Despite the failure of these policies, the French still succeeded in establishing her presence in Africa in the years that followed. Our central argument is that these factors present us with the establishment of a Franc zone with all the colonial legacies which have now been central to the unachieving nature of Regional integration endeavors between French and English speaking African in the West African Sub-Region.

3.2 THE EUROPEAN SCRAMBLE FOR AFRICA

The succession of Leopold II to the Belgian throne sparked the scramble for Africa.

Despite the fact that he was only a minor sovereign, his territorial expansive ambitions placed him at the fore in the acquisition of extra-European territories. Leopold II recognized the fact that his influence could remain minimal in a Europe already dominated by France under Nafwleen Bonapacte and Britain considered as the mistress of the sea. There was need for him to pursue his territorial ambitions out of Europe and he soon realized that to realize this goal, he needed the support of other European powers. This was achieved in 1876, when he organized the conference of brussels, with

its principal achievement being the formation of the International Association for the Exploration and civilization of Africa.[1]

After the conference of Brussels, there was an increasing rush by European power to register their presence in Africa through the acquisition of territories and protectorate in Africa, seen as central to the International Politics of these powers. So, interests soon started clashing over specific straits of land or relief features often at the point of involving these powers in war. In an attempt to forestall the situation, European powers agreed to organize a conference in which modalities for the acquisition of territories were to be drawn and effectiveness of occupation defined. This culminated in what became known and has remained central in the history of colonialism as the Berlin conference of 1884.

3.3 THE BERLIN CONFERENCE OF 1884

Organized by Otto Von Bismarck, the chancellor of a United Germany, the Berlin conference ran between October, 1884 and February, 1885. It was attended by Spain, Portugal, Netherlands, Austria, Italy, Britain, France and Belgium with the United States of America assuming an observer status[2]. In an attempt to contain the rivalry and disagreements arising among major European powers in the acquisition of territories in Africa, the conference in final document referred to as the Berlin convention drew modalities for exploration and acquisition. Its principal aims "to regulate the escalating imperial conflict by officially delineating the territorial boundaries of colonial processions"[3] seems to have been the met through this document. Among others, the

following issues were considered in the conference.

- Conditions for the claim of territorial processions such claim over my territory by a European power had to be backed by effective occupation as well as the power exercising real authority not just an intention which hitherto the Berlin Conference often instigated disagreements among powers.

- **Dissociation of Political Groups from Economic Exploration:**

This concerned specially the Congo, the Berlin Conference recognized the conventional Congo Basin, larger than the geographical basin, be maintained as a zone of total commercial liberty and the navigation of the Congo River opened to all European powers.[1]

- **Humanitarian nature of Colonial:**

Article 6 of the final document of the Berlin conference addressed the humanitarian drive of colonialism. It maintained that all powers exercising rights in the Congo had a responsibility to fight against slavery, ameliorate the material and moral condition of the indigence, respect the freedom of worship, religion and conviction. It also meant all missionary activities were to be ensured by all European powers involved in colonialism. By February, 1885, when the Berlin Convention was signed, European powers now had a legal basis and backing to indulge in the formal acquisition of territories in Africa, even without the consent of approval of Africans in this final document. This same document formally recognized the non existence of disappearance

of African states with the exception of Ethiopia and Liberia, the only two countries in Africa that did not experience colonial domination.[5]

3.4 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCED FRENCH INTEREST IN COLONIALISM

Before 1870, France had little or no interests in exploration and territorial acquisitions. Apart from Algeria and Senegal in Africa and Cochin-China, France was lagging in the pursuit and acquisition of territories. Even these territories were not enjoying effective occupation from France and remained for a long time the pre-occupation of young soldiers interested in exploration as well as sailors who were interested in discovering new markets for their final products and raw material sources.

After 1870, major factors were to constitute a turning point in France expansive drive for the acquisition of territories. Firstly, France had been defeated in major European was thereby costing her a heavy blow on her grandeur. Secondly, the development of grography as an important subject in the humanities as well France's civilizing vocation and economic gains soon put France at the fore in territorial acquisitions and colonization.

3.4.1 THE FRANCO-PRUSSIAN WAR

Under Otto Von Bismarck as the German Chancellor, France was recognized as a major blockage to the unification of Germany. During the Napoleonic wars, France had succeeded in assuming a prominent position in European politics that even threatened

subsequent French administrations failed to maintain France prime position. Minor sovereigns increasingly agitated for unification of their various peoples under the principle of self-determination. These included Italy and Germany. By 1970, the Germans were so determined to attain unification that the need to crush France become the last stage for this drive. In the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, France suffered major draw backs and with her defeat, France grandeur suffered the last blow. She ceased to be a major power in Europe.

Against the background of the foregoing, the French saw exploration as a means of rehabilitating France from the 1870 defeat by Germany. Alfred Rabaud maintained that, "a lesson to be learnt from the last war was that one must collaborate with the manly effort of those who explore, describe and exploit the earth. If it did so, France would heal its wounds and recover its place in the world.[6] The French felt that France's involvement in exploration and colonization would ensure her Webal spread in global politics thereby asserting her position as European power irrespective of her defeat in the Franco-Prussian War.

3.4.2 THE CIVILIZING MISSION AND TRADE

After the French Revolution of 1789 that preached fraternity and equality, the French had this feeling of being the most civilized European state. On humanitarian grounds, the French felt that there was need to extend these ideals to Africa and other parts of the world beyond Europe that were considered barbaric and uncivilized. After acquiring territories in Africa, the experience was that those ideals produced by the

French Revolution were not applicable in Africa. French colonialism reflected a complete contradiction from what the Revolution preached.

Besides the civilizing mission, the French recognized the need to expand markets for finished products and sources for their raw materials. It is therefore not surprising that traders and sailors led the crusade for French official recognition and pursuit of territories out of Europe. In the years that followed, the economic drive superseded all other factors responsible for French interests in the acquisition of territories.

3.4.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

Prior to the formation of the International Association for the exploration and civilization of Africa.[7] Geography had become the most important of the humanities. Geographical societies soon had their numbers swollen in Europe with a lot of emphasis and importance placed on exploration. In the case of France, the main origin of French colonial imperialism has been traced to the founding of the French Geographical Society in 1921. Its prominence was visible only from 1860 when its membership started using. By 1881, a third of all geographical societies in Europe were in France. In 1874, was founded a French Commercial Geographical Society in Bordeaux.[8] There geographical societies not only encouraged exploration but financed most exploration ventures by Europe to Africa.

In the years that followed, the French advocated for government involvement in exploration and colonization basically with the same theme: the need to rehabilitate France after its defeat, the civilizing mission, the development of trade and colonial

expansion. These eventually formed the principles and guide posts under which French colonialism in west and Equatorial Africa were built.

3.5 FRENCH COLONIAL POLICIES

Once colonial expansion was given formal recognition by France, it became the responsibility of the French government to finance the costs of conquests and administration. Territorial acquisitions were either done through the exploration of the African terrain by soldiers of traders where treaties were negotiated and signed with local chiefs. In some cases, territories were secured by subduing the authority of local chiefs, here known as conquests, with the inevitable use of force. Through these means therefore, France soon acquired territories in Congo, Gabon Chad and Oubangui-Chari (Central African Republic) Added to these was Kamerun after the first World War. These territories formed the Equatorial Wing of the French African empire. In the West African Sub-Region, she secured Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Coted'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. Others were Dahomey (Benin), Niger and Togo.

Having acquired these territories, France was now faced with the task of administering this large spans of territory with people of divergent cultural values, vegetation and politics. In a bid to ensure a smooth administration for both Equatorial and West African territories, the French designed two policies namely Assimilation and Association. These were not only meant to keep these territories dependent on France, but equally to reflect the metropole in all dimensions.

3.5.1 POLICY OF ASSIMILATION

Assimilation was the more dominant of the two French colonial policies. The initiators of this policy set out to make the African colonies a complete replica of the metropole. It was meant to eliminate those differences that existed between the metropole and the colonies in order to ensure a total fusion of both entities. If successful, African territories will have French nationals and every aspect of Africa would be the same as in France.

Optimistic as the French colonizers soimded, the adoption of this policy raised a lot of dust. Were the colonized to be brought to the same level as the colonizers? Or was the uniformity be lim l to physical persons or extended to institutions so that assimilation not only be seen from a personal perspective but to include the political, economic and administrative structures of France's colonies.

If Assimilation was to be at a personal level, it meant Africans would not be different from the metropolitan French citizens. The argument for personal assimilation maintained that there existed no difference between an African peasant and his French counterpart in the metropole's country side. They further invoked he ideals of the French Revolution of 1789 by arguing that all mén were equal irrespective of their racial origins of cultural backgrounds. In other words an illiterate African was just as worthy of French citizenship as was an educated Frenchman. Proponents of this policy of personal Assimilation also contended that Assimilation could not be immediate simply by being a citizen of a French colony. The equating of all men was only given potential recognition. Such a policy was therefore gradual where an African could through

education of achievement ascend to French citizenship. It was therefore gradualism and selective.

On the their hand, Non-personal assimilation came under moral persons." Such a policy of Assimilation affected the administrative, political and Economic domains. The question here was where these would have the same structures in Africa and the metropole. French interest here, especially in the administrative domain was to adopt the centralized system in the metropole with the "Departments". Due to the virtues of the terrain coupled with the divergences among Africans, the French soon realized that non-personal assimilation especially in the administrative domain was a Herculean task to implement.

Under the economic domain non-personal assimilation apologists advocated for economic integration between France and her colonies. This domain ran through the colonial ear and accounts for the continuous presence of France in Africa. Accordingly, colonial economies were to be seen as sub-units of the French economic structure having similar fiscal, taction, budget and investment policies. No distinction would be identified between African resources and those of the metropole.

Where personal or non-personal, Assimilation policies only remained theoretical with little chances of successful implementation. Education was not enough to qualify an African as a French citizen. Administratively, assimilation could not work as the wherewithal and human resources were lacking to unformize the cultural differences among Africans. Assimilation soon registered major shortcoming and had to be thrown aside in favour of Association.

3.5.2 POLICY OF ASSOCIATION

Assimilation could not be attained as a French colonial policy. Biter from a practical and economic perspective, its application was impossible and moreover, the African was just unassimilable. Association was therefore adopted to replace Assimilation. H. Labored maintains that:

> *the policy of association is based on respect for customs, manners and religions; everywhere is substituted mutual aid for the exploitation of native energies and for the usurpation of their property and lands. It stimulates their intellectual development. In other respects, it is realistic and wise, preserving with resolute firmness all the rights and necessities of domination. It does not intend to create equality which at present it too often impossible.*[10]

Association recognized the vast differences existing between the colonies and the metropole in terms of culture and civilization. It was also a reflection of the fact that despite these differences, there was still the possibility of co-existence of people with different origins and civilization. Association had no intention of continuous domination of the colonized as the existing divergences could not be contained without one party dominating the other.[11]

The French policy of Association assumed the following format:

- Africans were made to undergo radical re-organization to meet colonial demands.
- Educated Africans with some Frenchmen assumed administrative responsibilities.
- Traditional Chiefs were introduced into the administrative machinery as agents of auxiliary administrators.

Became of the realistic nature of Association, elements of assimilation were still incorporated in the new policy and it found its relevance beyond administrative circles predominantly in the years that ensured the independence of former French colonies. The perfection of this policy has ensured French presence and influence in Africa that her former colonies have been caught in a widely spread dependent web in West and Central Africa.

3.6 THE CREATION OF FRANCOPHONE AFRICA

By 1960, French colonialism has succeeded in creating an Empire in Equatorial and West Africa. This large spans of territory had a common language and culture, similar legal, fiscal and taxation policies. The same administrative and economic structures were instituted cutting across French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa including Togo and Cameroon. In the domain of political developments, parties in existence in the metropole had their membership affiliations in the colonies. The Franc zone was officially created on September 9, 1939, shortly after the Declaration of the Second World War.[12] A currency was introduced to harness and facilitate commercial and other business transactions among the colonies and between the colonies and the metropole. French West and Equatorial Africa were placed under the same military French system, a situation which continuous today with some improvements.

By these actions, the French had succeeded through Assimilation and later Association in creating what remains today as Francophone Africa united and co-operative among themselves and with France than other African countries.

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5. (During this period Ethiopia was known as Abyssinia never placed under colonial rule. Liberia was recognized as a settlement for African slaves repatriated from the West Indies).

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CHAPTER FOUR

FRENCH CONTINUOUS INFLUENCE IN THE WEST AFRICA SUB-REGION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE REALISATION OF ECOWAS OBJECTIVES

4.0 INTRODUCTION

Despite the fact that African countries had realised the rational for the formation of regional integration schemes after independence, little commitment was attached to the nascent schemes that sprang up in the various African sub-Regions after the 1960s. When ECOWAS was established in 1975, it was the realiazation of a long dream by Nigeria especially after the civil war of 1967 – 70. Nigeria single-handedly identified the potential benefits to be derived from its creation, and therefore strove to see its creation and growth even at the sacrifice of enormous resources pumped into this venture. In their spray diplomacy geared towards having her influence felt in the west African sub-region as a means of securing a large market for her booming industries, and a drive towards regional security, due to the lessons from the Nigeria civil war, it was therefore not surprising when General Yakubu Gowon, after the war made economic integration the cornerstone of his diplomacy in West Africa. Secondly, Gowon hoped that with the formation of ECOWAS, Nigeria could regain and expand her influence, and most especially to reduce French interests and influences in the West African sub-Region.

French continued interests and influence in the West African sub-region since the colonial period was definitely going to clash with Nigeria's interests in the same region. Due to her colonial policies of assimilation and later association and the signing of

agreements covering military defence pacts, monetary, strategic, minerals and even co-ordination of foreign policies for Francophone African states, France's roots had grown so deep that any encroachment into what she considered a private hunting ground would be resisted with enomous might. Even prior to the formation of ECOWAS, France had continuously adopted strategies that will minimize or even eliminate Nigeria's interests in the Went Afrian sub-region.

This chapter being the main focus of this study, shall examines the formation of ECOWAS, the continous clash of interests between Nigeria and France in west Africa and how this has affected the success of ECOWAS.

4.1 THE FORMATION OF ECOWAS

At independence, regional integration was identified as a major strategy in the development drive of Most African States given their small size, undeveloped states in experience in International politics and their weak economic strength. Despite this realization African leaders failed to adopt a common approach to regional integration. Led on the one hand by Nigeria, which favoured economic, before political integration as opposed to Ghana's reverse position. Such disagreements soon led to the formation of the Brazzaville, Casablanca and Monrovia group. When the Organization of African Unity (OAU) was formed in 1963, it helped in burrying these differences which were increasingly tearing African countries apart and introducing elements of super-power rivalry in the cold war between the USSR and USA.

Paul Izah maintains that the formation of ECOWAS had both economic and security implication for Nigeria. The Lessons from the civil war to Nigeria proved that she had to take concrete steps to maintain good neighbourliness with her immediate neighbours. In her drive to establish an integration scheme encompassing Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone countries, Nigeria took into consideration the herculean task that lay ahead of such a venture. Most integration schemes in Africa had suffered a multiplicity of difficulties by recording very minimal successes. Nigeria therefore took into consideration such difficulties and pledged to reverse or contain them and make ECOWAS' integration scheme a success. Firstly, Nigeria recognized the fact that to secure the support of former french colonies in the west african sub-region for the formation of an economic community was a herculian task. She therefore adopted what has been described as "spray diplomacy" in which she offered her neighbours and most other west african countries interest free loans, grants, concessionally priced oil and equity investment projects. Such a diplomacy soon bore some fruits. Nigeria focused her attention first on Togo with whom she enjoyed good and friendly relations. Togo's leader, Eyadema also recognized the need for the formation of a large integration scheme beyond Francophone confines. Once Togolese support was gained, Benin gave in, to avoid being isolated and to also benefit from Nigeria's spray diplomacy. Nigeria reality got good relations with the two countries. Moreover, Hammani Diori, Niger's President maintained in June 1973 that "any economic arrangement in West Africa that excluded Nigeria would be unrealistic" [3]

It must be noted that, Nigeria was able to secure the supports of most the smaller West African States with relative ease as a reflection of their level of dependence, especially on petroleum products. As most of them are non-producers of the "Black-Gold, this was factor re-enforced by Nigeria's strategic and geographical location as an outlet in the exports, and outlet for the imports of most landlocked and poor West African countries. Despite this case, Senegal and Cot d'ivoire provided the major stumbling blocks to Nigeria's drive for the formation of ECOWAS. Nigeria's calculation that Senegal and Cote d'ivoire would fall in once the support of all other Francophone states was secured soon proved right. On May 28, 1975, the treaty of Lagos was signed, establishing the Economic Community of West Africa states (ECOWAS) among others, it aimed at the following:

*Raising the standard of living of the people in the West African sub-region.

*Increasing and maintaining economic stability

*Encouraging closer relations among the participation countries

*Eventually contributing to the progress of Africa as a whole.[1]

More than two decades after the formation of ECOWAS, the scheme has only made minimal successes. Initial-community trade has remained marginal and the other organs of the community have remained unfunctional due mainly to the irregular financial contributions and arrears owed by member-states. Nigeria has remained the single country, from inception, that has devote its manpower and financial resources to this course a task too enormous to be borne by a regional hegemony, an issue which Professor Ibrahim Gambari has questioned as to whether ECOWAS benefits could match

such huge sacrifices.[5] Unless the commitment and co-operation of other states is enlisted, Nigeria's efforts may only end up in frustration.

The 1985 ECOWAS annual report observed that, despite the impressive number of agreements reached, and decisions taken regarding the harmonization of certain documents. The adoption of common procedures, and the program for deregulating non-manufactured crude goods, industrial products, the Economic Community of West Africa State has not made tangible progress in practical terms.[6]

Moreover, the apparent realistic corrective mechanism adopted by ECOWAS at inception has equally remained unattractive to member-states to surender even partially their sovereignty as one of the costs of belonging to a super-national body. The protocols on the free movements of persons, goods and services within the community have remained inapplicable as community citizens are still expected to present international boundaries. The difficulties involved in crossing such ECOWAS borders are not reflective of the aspirations of the integration scheme.[7] This situation of difficulty of movement and acces to community territories is compounded by the fact that the protocol on the free movement having been signed in 1986 has remained unratified by Most ECOWAS member states, until just of recent.

Besides the multiple currencies in use in the subregion and the efforts of the West African clearing House, its record has remained disappointing, as members do not finance their intra-regional trade transactions through this institution, an aim for which it was established. In this vein, the area of trade does not present any major progress.

Despite these problems confronting ECOWAS, it has for a long time remained the only scheme in Africa with a multi-lingustic and divergent colonial origins of membership. It is also the largest scheme in Africa in terms of membership with the most populous and most attended summits of integration schemes in the continent.

4.2 PROTECTION OF FRENCH INTERESTS IN WEST AFRICA

In the course of protecting their interests in West Africa , France's interest would definitely clash with those of Nigeria, an aspect which became eminent in the years that followed the independence of most West African countries. In the years that led to decolonization, the French policy adopted to ensure continous co-generation between France and her to-be colonies. The establishment of a unique system of monetary and exchange rate management in the form of the CFA Franc zone was established. In this vein came into existence a currency union in which France's former colonies in West and Equatorial Africa as independent states pegged their exchange rate firmly and at a common level to the French franc.8. After World war II, French policy initiated a process of decolonization involving new strategies that would ensure the continous presence of France in West Africa and the protection of French interests. In this wise, France would end her formal control over her colonies after independence but would still maintain real power and influence over her African colonies. Inernal self government was to be granted to africans while france would rerain her control over such essential and sensitive areas as defence and foreign affairs, economic, monetary and strategic minerals.[9] All these strategies made former

french colonies in both West and Equatorial Africa to see themselves as more attached to france than other African countries an issue which has grossly affected regional Economic and political Integration in the West African sub-region.

4.3 THE NIGERIAN WAR AND FRENCH ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE FORMATION OF THE CEAO

When the Biafran war broke out in 1966, it soon became clear that France had found an opportunity to ensure the complete dismember ment of the components that made up Nigeria. Cote d'ivoire quickly recognised Biafra as an independent state, being the first African country to do so. She equally mounted pressure on France to follow recognition. It continuously supported the seceding forces in the thirty months of the war. At the end of the war the Federal forces came out victorious and the proceeds from Nigeria's oil boom exacerbated the threats of Nigeria on France assumed 'reserved domain" in West Africa and Cot d'Ivoire's influence in the same region.

Having maintained the corporate existence of Nigeria after the Biafran War, France and Cote d'ivoire did not relent their efforts in containing Nigeria's influence in the West African sub-region. This was clearly manifested in the formation of the West African Economic Community (CEAO) which was only open to French President during his tour of francophone Africa in 1971, encouraged francophone states in West Africa to "harmonize their efforts so as to counter – balance the heavy weight of Nigeria in the West African sub-Region. Francophone West African states heeded to this call in 1973

ouert (CEAO). This treaty, in its provision stipulated for free trade in specific products, free movements of goods, services and community citizens within the sub region. It also established a common external tarriff to back it up to 1975 as well as a compensatory mechanism at the benefit of those member states likely to lose or benefit little from the integration arrangement. The CEOA together with the West African Monetary Union (UMOA) have been merged and transformed into what is now known as the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA) which has since its formation in 1994 remained the most vibrant integration scheme in West Africa. All the objectives of ECOWAS are contained in the UEMOA with its success and prospects rejected by the securing of membership of the scheme by Anglophone countries like Guinea Bissau".

The main strategies adopted by France with the support of her African proteges in West Africa have gone a long way in undermining the succes or the realization of ECOWAS objectives. The existence of the VEMOA with the same aims and objection like ECOWAS and the far advanced integrative credentials of francophone African countries since the colonial period have not only dwarfed ECOWAS chances of success, but have also ensured France's continuous presence, influence and dominance in the sub-region. The areas she considers as a "reserve domain".

FOOT NOTES/REFERENCES

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4. See Article 2: The Treaty of Lagos, 1975, P. 7
5. For details, See Gambari Ibrahim in Daily Times (Lagos) May, 6 1978. p. 19.
6. Cited by Carol Lancanter, Op cit. p. 254
7. West Africa Magazine Dec. 8 - 14, 1997. p. 130
8. See Banlilon Tani, Op cit. p 2.
9. See guy Martin: "Continuity And change in franco African Relations" in the journal of Modern African Studies Vol. 33 No. 1, 1995 P.3
10. For details, see Olatunde Ojo. et al, Op cit. p. 15
11. See Africa in Business Magazine Oct - Nov. 1977 - 1988
12. French continuous influence in West Africa and its import on the realization of ECOWAS objective:

*Policies of Assimilation and later association

*Signing of co-operation Agreement Military /defence
Economic
Monetary
Foreign policy
Strategic minerals

*French support in the break up of Nigeria by supporting the BIAFRAN in the Civil war

*Formation of CEAO - It was formed on the eve of ECOWAS creation and later transformed to CEAO.

*Divided commitment, due to multiple membership by ECOWAS members states

*The Language Barrier - Anglophone, francophone and Lusophone.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY , CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

The attainment of political independence by most of the African countries in the 1960 coincided with the period when most of the regions of the world were embracing regional integration. The reason for the quest for integration was as a result of the socio-political, economic challenges posed by their dependency on their former colonial masters. Coupled with these, are the nature of these states and their vulnerability to external pressures. Despite lot of disagreements and encroachment they were able to cross the first hurdle with the creation of OAU in 1963.

The creation, brought about increase yearning for more integrations at different regions of Africa with the aim of promoting their socio-economic and political developments. But due to some external and internal factors the quest for the general integration of the African continent was not forthcoming as some progressive countries would have wished.

The above development does not exclude the Economic Community of West African States(ECOWAS) as the francophonic and Anglophonic setting of her members really impede her development. All these setbacks Nigeria was determined to correct. But the most important factor that really affected the objective of the scheme is the French factor, which was as a result of her colonial linkages to most of these countries that have first experimented this integration via the French policies of "Assimilation" which was later changed to "Association" with a unified socio-economic and political system, which hitherto encourages their assimilation. All these negative activities of the

Francophone countries in contemporary West African States ECOWAS, has dwafted this regional organisations commitment to the scheme as it was echoed in her goals when it was established in 1975 May.

Thus, the failure recorded by ECOWAS leaders in their quest to realise regional integration of the West African States through ECOWAS, and the influence of France in some francophone members state, sound disturbing and at the same time stand as the basis for the study. Hence the research was set out to examine France's role and influence in West Africa and how this has negatively affected aims and objectives of ECOWAS.

After reviewing existing literatures in order to lay a historical background for our work, and consulted all data available to us, it was shown that regional integration is a continuous process and there is the need for time and cautions for the various barriers to be phased out to reach the level of political integration.

It was posited that the colonialists' geo-political configuration of division and fragmentation of Africa; t he smaller status of the African state, the small sizes of the national market and the narrow range of natural resources available in each african country, and the political security of states. amongst others make case for the need to integrate the West African region, thus the regional integration schemes were classified into free trade Area, custom unions. the common market, economic union and the political union. One thing about this classification is that one stage preceedes the other.

The scheme would have been a success if not because of some factors that are hindering it, these factors are enumerated as; local factors, like, existence of multiple integration schemes, resistance to the surrender of sovereignty by members; existence of multiple currencies; poor and underdeveloped infrastructures; incessant Regime changes and their interest; unbalanced level of Development and; foreign factor; like; foreign Direct Investment and the Colonial legacies. All these tends to hinder the process of integration of Africa.

The French Colonial policies and the establishment of the france zone in Africa was also considered. The analysis explained that; the french interest in Africa initiates their willingness to colonies Africa along side other European powers like Britain, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Belgium. The result of this rivalries later on led to the scramble for and partition of Africa at which some part of Africa was ceded to France at the Berlin Conference of 1884/85. The reason why France was interested in colonialism was nothing but in order to relaunch herself to reckoning after her defeat by Germany in the Franco-Prussian War; to undergo a civilising and trade mission; and to add to the development of geography. Thus on occupying the West African territories of the present Senegal, Mali, Cote d Iviore, Guinea, Burkinafaso Dahomey(Benin) Niger and Togo. They instituted the administrative policy of Assimilation in order to effectively Administer the vast region under them. The policy was aimed to make Africa colonies and Africa a reciplica of the metropole and the french people. But due to the inability of this theory to assume proper practicability, lack of manpower and the morality of the policy among other factors, the policy was modified as association policy.

This is reflected in vast differences in between the colonies and colonial power till date. This was the situation before the french West African States were given their political independence in 1968.

The the result of these policies were and achievement were a French empire which was created in the West African region, where france zone was instituted, a unitary french political system was in practice, these systems and policies which made that francophone countries to remain united and coherent and still tied to france uptill today.

It is not a fallacy to submit that french ever since has continue to exerts their influences in the West African region ever since and thus has great influence being within ECOWAS and has an impacts on the ECOWAS realisation of her objectives. This submission was based on the basis that, France influence on the ECOWAS were recorded in the sense that france always adopted policies that will minimize or even eliminate Nigeria's interest in the West African sub-region. Most of this instance are seen in the battle for influences in the ECOWAS between Nigeria and france up till today. Most especially Nigeria opposition from Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire.

5.2 CONCLUSION

From the Analysis embarked upon in the research above, on the French influence on Francophone African countries and its effect on ECOWAS, it can be concluded that;

1. The French colonial policies of Assimilation and Association has succeeded in making the Francophone West African state more dependent and committed more

to France than to African countries even after their independence.

2. The most formidable threat recorded in the actualisation of France total influences on the Francophone West African countries and in ECOWAS vs Nigeria, due to her immense population, economic boyancy, superior leadership and government etc. The Nigerian involvement in regional integration in West Africa has remained a major threat to french influences in the same region unlike the France influences in the France zone before independence in 1960.

3. The most fundamental influences to the hinderance to the general achievements of the ECOWAS objectives as highlighted in her charter of 1975 has been the France's continuing influence and dominance in the socio-political and Economic life of the francophone countries.

4. The multiplicity of different integrational schemes by the Africa leader, instead of having a unified integration schemes which will harmonise all the beginning with systems. The integrated steps from free trade area, to the total political integration of the whole region.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

From the analysis above, the following are recommendation that;

a) For proper and progressive integration by the whole West Africa to be achieved, Nigeria should re-colonise the whole sub-region through economic penetration. This is in line with the recolonisation theory. Instead of encouraging the french to recolonise the region through their Neo-colonialism tendencies as elaborated

in the study. Nigeria as an example of a bigger state should take it up and exert her influence in the region in as much as she has the leadership qualities and capacities to actualize this proposition.

b) The West African leaders should be straight forward and sincere with the process of integration. The situation at which multiple schemes are designed towards integration should be discarded.

c) The single monetary unit should be established for the whole region without any further delay. This will then enable the single monetary unit so established to be strong enough to fight to a standstill the France zone.

d) All leaders of ECOWAS in line with the objectives of the ECOWAS should make it mandatory that all colonial institutions should be dismantled in the countries. This will enable them pursue a tangible level of integration without much delay.

e) Nigeria should also go ahead and introduce French as a second official language.

f) Nigeria should intensify bi-lateral trade relationship with France in addition to the present relationship. This will further get France more committed to Nigeria because of the enormity of her investments in Nigeria which is bigger than all her investments in other parts of Africa put together.

g) All other educational and cultural and scientific cooperation should be strengthened.

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