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PAPERS AWAITING PUBLICATION

**ECOWAS AND THE ‘NEW SCRAMBLE’ FOR AFRICA:
INTERROGATING THE FRANCOPHONE/ANGLOPHONE
DYNAMICS**

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Abstract

The study interrogates the content and context of the new realities that characterise the relations between the member states of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Indeed, this contemporary form of relations has been popularized as the “new scramble” for Africa in view of the previous scrambles that have been copiously documented in literature – slavery and colonialism. However, the kernel of this study is to situate this new form of relations in the West African sub-region within the complexities of the age-long rivalry in Francophone/Anglophone narratives. It does so through an examination of the political economy of languages in determining the mode of production. In view of this, the study engages underdevelopment and dependency theory (UDT), as a mainstream development theory which views global relations as historical and dialectical processes that necessarily engender contradictions in the political economy of nations. Based on textual analysis and review, the study unearths the distortions inherent in the political economy of the Francophone/Anglophone West African countries in this “new struggle”. Findings suggest that while the French influence in West Africa is still dominant, the forces of globalization are fast contesting that supremacy. More so, the aggressive drive by the emerging economies, especially Brazil, India and China (BIC) for competitive share of the African market and resources makes this new scramble very precarious. The study concludes that the contradictions embedded in globalization will outstrip French influence in the nearest future, while recommending a more robust and inclusive engagement of all countries in the ECOWAS sub-region to maximize the gains of globalization.

KEYWORDS: ECOWAS, New Scramble, Francophone/Anglophone, Political Economy, Underdevelopment and Dependency, Globalization

1. Introduction

To understand the exact content and context of the “New Scramble for Africa” without a prior reference to the historical event that took place in the 19th century from which the terminology is derived will be an exercise in futility (Eze, 2010:5; Kwanashie, 2010:28; Nwoke, 2010:61). The event was the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885 at which the continent of Africa was divided among the European powers having France and Britain as the chief culprits (Ogwu, 2010:11).

The conference was facilitated by the quest to exploit Africa’s wealth in human and natural resources and fundamentally so, an exercise in the conflict-free division and demarcation of territories and spheres of influence in Africa (Obasanjo, 2010:7). Apart from facilitating the penetration and exploitation of Africa, the territorial divisions occasioned by the Berlin Conference effectively determined the state system that exists in Africa today as well as its complex forms of political and economic relations. To be sure, the origins of the scramble

occasioned by the Berlin Conference had deeper roots in the sixteenth century (Jinadu, 2010:16).

However, the current reference to a new scramble connotes a slightly different focus. While the old scramble focused upon the acquisition and demarcation of territory, the new scramble is not interested in redefining national borders but rather in defining access to the continent's vast natural resources (Hadland, 2012:467). Furthermore, in addition to the principal European colonial powers, notably France, Great Britain, Belgium, Germany, and Portugal, who have maintained their presence on the continent through continued neo-colonial ties, and the activities of various multinational and transnational firms, other emerging economies, notably China and India have joined the 'new scramble' for Africa's resources (Anyu and Ifedi, 2008; Ofodile, 2008; Cheru and Obi, 2011; Langmia, 2011; Narlikar, 2013; Vickers, 2013:673; Folarin et al, 2014:2).

Among these emerging powers, China and India are two of Asia's largest economies with populations of over a billion each and rapidly industrializing and developing economies – the economies that are in desperate need of resources to maintain their rapid pace of industrialization (Ariyo, 2010; Oche, 2010; Folarin et al, 2014:10). For instance, China is currently number two oil consumer after the United States and accounts for about 40% of the growth of global energy demand for oil in the last ten years (Alli, 2010:107). Furthermore, China gets about 25% of its domestic energy needs from Africa, mostly from Sudan, Chad, Angola, Libya, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Algeria – the need which is already rising by 9% annually in the last couple of years and will continue to rise astronomically as the Chinese economy continues to prosper (Alli, 2010:107).

Incidentally, it is not surprising why Africa is increasingly being wooed and ravaged by external interests in the current scramble for natural resources. The continent is endowed with enormous human and natural resources capable of making it the most developed continent in the world (Chidozie, 2014:3). It possesses substantial reserves of some of the world's most important minerals, including bauxite, oil, diamond, chromium, cobalt, copper, gold, manganese, phosphate rock, platinum, titanium, and uranium (Klare, 2010 cited in Zabadi and Onuoha, 2012:384).

Furthermore, Africa alone holds about 90 percent of platinum, 90 percent of cobalt, 50 percent of gold and 98 percent of chromium in the world. In addition, it houses one-third of the world's available uranium, and has been estimated to hold 40 percent of the world's

potential hydro-electric power (Chambers, 2008:1). In 2008, it was estimated that Africa had proven oil reserves of 117.481 billion barrels at the end of 2007 or 9.49 percent of the world's reserves. The continent contributes more than 10 million barrels per day (bpd) to the world's supply of over 90 million bpd, and about 185.02 billion cubic metres (bcm) of natural gas, which is about 70 percent of global production (Zabadi and Onuoha, 2012:1).

Fundamentally, in this 'new scramble' for Africa's resources, the new international economic architecture will propel and indeed, impel the forces and factors that will shape the outcome. In other words, since it has become public knowledge that the economies of the traditional imperial powers in Africa, notably France and Great Britain are under serious pressure (CNN.com, 2014), the likely dominance of the emerging powers in this new scramble is without further contest. Holslag (2007) captures the unfolding drama vividly:

These developments in Africa have clearly confirmed the way globalization is entering a new stage; the West, as the world's main industrial powerhouse is outsourcing more and more of its resource-intensive activities to Asia. At the same time, Asia's growth is strengthening the position of the world's large oil and gas producers, so this development of a polycentric world economy is in turn stimulating the emergence of a multipolar political structure and it is this reconfiguration of power that is starting to have such a profound impact on Africa – the region is one of the epicentres where these drifting spheres of influence are interacting...It is this development that now erodes the long-standing Euro-African relationship of the 20th century...and even if Europe still remains the main partner in terms of trade, aid and investment, its relative influence is shrinking (Holslag, 2007:23).

It is against this backdrop that the paper interrogates the 'new scramble' for Africa within the orbit of the current international division of labour, using the Francophone/Anglophone influences in the ECOWAS sub-region as a point of reference. More so, the political economy of languages among the old and new gladiators will become apparent as the vital force that may determine the direction of this new scramble. In view of this, the paper is structured into five parts. Following the introduction, key concepts are discoursed. The third section provides a brief background to the formation of the ECOWAS. The fourth segment contextualizes the dynamics of the Francophone/Anglophone relations in West Africa. The final section concludes the work and proffers relevant recommendations.

2. Conceptual Discourses

The key concepts in the work are identified and their meanings clarified in this section. This is necessary to avoid ambiguities and confusion in the main text.

2.1 New Scramble for Africa

The expression “New Scramble for Africa” is now sometimes used to characterize current realities in the relations of the outside world with Africa. According to Jinadu (2010:15), the two key words, “new”, and “scramble” suggest a continuity or similarity between the past and the present manifestations of the scramble in the underlying structural character, if not the substantive content, of those relations, which current realities reflect. He stressed that the expression has generally been used to denote a new form of imperialism which is defined by the transnationalization of capital and of the diffusion and homogenization of the dominant ideas of cultural, economic, political organizations, which underline and propel it to other societies from the most advanced societies. He submitted that the fundamental stake in the new scramble was the combined pursuit of national power and influence.

For Kwanashie (2010:28), the current scramble for African resources is but a phase in the continuous scramble for Africa which started in the nineteenth century. According to him, with the penetration of mercantilist capital into various parts of Africa, a relationship was established which was later reinforced by the partition of the continent. He opined that a significant point in the “new imperialism” was the emergence of several empires in competition and the predominance of finance capital over mercantilist capital. He concluded that the new scramble is therefore, best understood as part of a broader European imperialist expansion to other parts of the world, much of which is now described as “the Third World”, or “the developing world”.

Furthermore, Nwoke (2010) argued that the new scramble for Africa is nothing but the inter-imperialist rivalries to dominate and control the pillaging of the continent, and the exploitation of its peoples and resources. According to him, the “first scramble for Africa” which culminated in the 1884-85 Berlin Conference was a very brutal and violent affair, but the current scramble is far more penetrating and damaging. He lamented that no matter how much capacity Africa may have built up since flag independence, if the international power structure of inequality and dependence, which determines the pattern of the distribution of global wealth, is not radically changed, Africa will continue to lose out in the scheme of

things. He posited that the critical question should rather be how Africa would take her destiny in her own hands and own, control and defend all her resources as if her life depended on them.

Flowing from the above, if the primary aim of neo-colonialism is the maintenance of the former colony as a dependency, as a controlled source of raw materials, as well as markets for investment and the sale of goods manufactured in the metropolitan countries, then Nkrumah's (1965) thesis that neo-colonialism is the last stage of imperialism becomes pertinent. In other words, since scholars have described the "new scramble for Africa", as a continuation of the old scramble, it becomes revealing that the concept of new scramble can be tied to neo-colonialism. According to Nkrumah:

...A state in the grip of neo-colonialism is not master of its own destiny...Neo-colonialism is the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer from it, it means exploitation without redress. In the days of old fashioned colonialism, the imperial power had at least to explain and justify at home the actions it was taking abroad. In the colony, those who served the ruling imperial power could at least look to its protection against any violent move by their opponents. With neo-colonialism, neither is the case (Nkrumah, 1965:1).

2.2 Political Economy

In traditional usage, 'political economy' was used as synonymous with the general word 'economics'; thus, the study of political economy was the analysis of the economy of a nation-state (A New Dictionary of Economics, 1966). In this sense, political economy was conceived as the older name for economics.

However, early scholars of political economy focused much on the political presuppositions and consequences of the economy. The perspective on economic transactions was that of the political body-the state- and the basic problem concerned the understanding of how economic wealth in a society could be enhanced by the state belonging to that society. Among this group of scholars, the work of Adams Smith becomes pertinent in understanding this perspective to political economy. He suggested that:

Political economy, considered as a branch of the science of a statesman or legislator, proposes two distinct objects; first, to provide a plentiful revenue or subsistence for the people, or more properly to enable them provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or

commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the public services. It proposes to enrich both the people and the sovereign (Smith, 1776:138).

In a more contemporary usage, Frederick Engels defined political economy, in the widest sense, as “the science of the laws governing the production and exchange of the material means of subsistence in human society (Engels, 1977). By this, we understand the subject matter of political economy to mean the social relations between people taking shape in the process of the production of material values, and the laws governing the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of material values at different stages in the society’s development.

In a similar vein, and with specific reference to this study, the subject of ‘political economy’ studies the economic laws governing the development of society, which reflect the most fundamental aspects of the relations of production and their interconnection with the productive forces, or (the same thing) the laws of production, exchange, distribution and consumption of material goods at different stages in the development of human society (Buzuev, 1986).

In essence, political economy studies the “organic unity of the social relations of production and the productive forces, which together constitute the economic system, alternatively referred to as the mode of production” (Ake, 1981:13). The relations of production here connotes ‘the relations which people enter into with each other in the course of production’ and the forces of production describe the combination of three components of the labour process- labour power (comprises the physical, psychological and intellectual capabilities of man, the worker); objects of labour (these are the things to which labour power is applied); and means of labour (these are the instruments with which man labours) which combine to define in explicit term, the subject of political economy (Ake, 1981:11).

It is important to state that in the study of political economy, the relations of production and the productive forces are indissolubly tied in with each other, that changes in the productive forces entail changes in the relations of production, and that the latter exert a reciprocal influence on the development of the former, accelerating or slowing down their advance.

Political economy examines the laws of the formation, development, and downfall of different modes of production (history has known five consecutive modes of production: primitive-communal, slaveholding, feudal, capitalist and communist-with socialism as its first phase) and, consequently, of different social classes, thus affecting the vital interests of all

classes. That is why it is a class, partisan science, which means that it serves the interests of a definite class (Kulikov, 1986).

To this end, there is a distinction in the subject matter of political economy in contemporary literature. There is bourgeois political economy, which expresses the interests of the bourgeoisie. It seeks to camouflage the exploitative nature of capitalism, to shift the blame for the misfortunes of millions of working people from the capitalist mode of production to the laws of nature, to technical progress or the individual's economic mentality. It avoids an analysis of objective processes in the development of capitalism and its contradictions. Bourgeoisie economists are not interested in bringing out the objective laws of the capitalist mode of production and by camouflaging the true essence of capitalist exploitation, bourgeoisie political economy serves the interests of the capitalist class (Kulikov, 1986).

In contrast to bourgeois political economy, proletarian, Marxist-Leninist political economy openly proclaims its class character, emphasising the interests of the working class. It gives a truly scientific explanation of the society's development uniformities and provides a theoretical basis for the proletariat's revolutionary struggle to restructure the society at root on socialist principles. Marx and Engels proved that the only way to end the exploitation of the working people was to eliminate capitalist property in the means of production, and that a revolutionary replacement of capitalism by socialism was historically inevitable (Lenin, 1933; Marx, 1970).

In summation, as political economy studies the relations of production in their dialectical interplay with the productive forces (the combination of which is the substructure) and the superstructure (the political system, the legal system, the ideological system, etc.- the non-economic aspects of social life that are dependent on the economic system), it makes it possible to elaborate effective measures to improve the forms and methods of economic activity, raise production efficiency, and accelerate socio-economic development.

2.3 Dependence and Dependency

The term "dependence" is used frequently in discussions of contemporary international and transnational relations. This popularity is, in part, a result of a widespread acceptance and adoption of theories of contemporary capitalist imperialism, of which the term is a common element. Indeed, an important part of imperialism theory is denoted by the term, that is, dependencia, or dependency, theory, which is attributable primarily to Third World scholars

critical of some of the alleged consequences of global domination by developed capitalist metropolises.

Although the concept “dependence” is very popular among scholars of Third World origin, the popularity of the term is not limited to scholarship critical of developed capitalism; for it is often used, as well, in the language of social scientists who are part and parcel of the capitalist center. This development is due somewhat to an effort by these latter scholars to come to grips with theories of imperialism, but more generally, it is due to “an increasing awareness of problems of the First World such as dependence on petroleum produced abroad and a monetary interdependence among the major capitalist economies” (Duvall, 1978; Lalude, 2006).

Indeed, it is agreed that, there is already a huge literature on “dependence” in international relations, but it is also true that many fundamental conceptual issues remain unresolved. For instance, is the pattern of dependence of advanced industrial states on one another different in kind or only in degree from the dependence of peripheral capitalist societies on other members of the global system? Conversely, what about the nature of dependence of advanced industrial states on the peripheral states and or the character of dependence of peripheral states on one another? In essence, what are the essential components of dependence that one must identify before constructing an adequate measure of it?

Since the answer to the first question is that the two patterns of dependence differ in kind, and the answer to the second question addresses the unresolved dilemma of dependence in development studies, the first order of business must be to provide the grounds for this distinction. Perhaps, in an attempt to draw this important characterisation, James Caporaso defined dependence as “the pattern of external reliance of well-integrated nation-states on one another”, while dependency, which is closer to the *dependencia* tradition, involves a “more complex set of relations centering on the incorporation of less developed, less homogeneous societies into the global division of labour”(Caporaso, 1978:8).

It is evident from the above distinctions that the conceptual components of dependence are the size of one’s reliance on one another, the importance attached to the goods involved, and the availability of these goods (or substitutes) from different sources. The components of dependency are the magnitude of foreign supply of important factors of production (technology, capital), limited developmental choices, and domestic distortion measures. Finally, the concept of dependence is most easily integrated into bargaining analyses, while

dependency is more fruitfully applied to analyses of the structure of relations among societies.

In specific application to this study, the *dependencia school* implies that “dependence” is meant to describe certain characteristics (economics, as well as social and political) of the economy as a whole and is intended to trace certain processes which are causally linked to its underdevelopment and which are expected to adversely affect its development in the future.

Thus, “dependency” then means that, the development alternatives open to the dependent nation are defined and limited by its integration into and functions within the world market. This limitation of alternatives differs from limitations in the dominant nations in so far as the functioning of the basic decisions in the world market are determined by the dominant nations. Hence, the dependent nations must make choices in a situation in which they do not set the terms or parameters of choice (Offiong, 1981).

2.4 Underdevelopment

It is important to understand underdevelopment, from the perspective of this study, not as absence of development, because every people have developed in one way or another and to a greater or lesser extent. Underdevelopment is rather conceptualised as a means of comparing levels of development. It is very much tied to the fact that human social development has been uneven and from a strictly economic view-point some human groups have advanced further by producing more and becoming more wealthy (Rodney, 1972).

At all times therefore, one of the ideas behind underdevelopment is a comparative one. It is possible to compare a country with another and determine whether or not it had developed; and more importantly, it is possible to compare the economies of any two countries or sets of countries at any given period in time.

Another component of modern underdevelopment as applied to this study is that it expresses a particular relationship of exploitation: namely, the exploitation of one country by another. According to Rodney (1972:33), “all the countries named as underdeveloped in the world are exploited by others”, and “the underdevelopment with which the world is now pre-occupied is a product of capitalist, imperialist and colonialist exploitation”.

In effect, the study sees development and underdevelopment as both comparable terms as well as having a dialectical relationship. By this, it is meant that, the interaction of both

produces each other. For instance, in the interaction between Europe and Africa, the former was the master while the latter was the slave and the result was the transfer of wealth from Africa to Europe. This relationship has resulted in a great imbalance or disequilibrium which has remained the fundamental problem in African underdevelopment.

Following from the above, underdevelopment can refer to the state of an economy of a 'satellite' economy characterised by under-employment of human and material resources; such an economy is characterised by low real income per capita in comparison with those of North America and Western Europe; it is characterised by illiteracy, poverty, overpopulation, and diseases (Offiong, 1981).

Thus, it can be conjectured that the implication of the nature of underdevelopment is that, until underdeveloped countries can make a break from the old aristocratic order and the colonial or neo-colonial system they will never break out of their underdevelopment.

Similarly, Charles Anderson (1976:253) gives a graphic illustration of the nature of underdevelopment thus:

The condition of underdevelopment simply deepens the longer a country remains as a backward cog in the world capitalist system. The elite-mass cleavage widens. Rural-urban inequalities increase. City slums grow. Unemployment increases. Illiteracy abounds. Agricultural production stagnates. Malnutrition spreads. Diseases debilitate millions. Birth rates remain high. Death rates begin to rise in some areas. Imported luxuries drain foreign exchange. Foreign debt and balance of payments deficits mount. Inflation runs rampant. Military spending for army and police repression increases. Foreign corporations drain huge amounts of raw materials and profits from the country. Such are some of the hallmarks of an underdeveloped society. Economic growth in the underdeveloped society means unbalanced growth which neglects the most urgent social needs of the people while catering to the consumption whims of the national bourgeoisie and the tax and profit concerns of foreign investors (Anderson, 1976:253 cf Offiong, 1981).

It becomes apparent that regardless of the initial roots, the impetus behind underdevelopment is the growth drive of the developed economies, their systematic pursuit of economic gain through control of raw materials, cheap labour, export markets, tax concessions, prices and a variety of financial gains, hence resulting in miserable material condition under which Third World people live.

2.5 Globalization

The concept of globalization is perhaps today the most recurrent term employed by scholars and world leaders alike to rationalize the development and underdevelopment of the various parts of the world. As a result of this, it has assumed the status of an essentially contested concept and put on the toga of a recurring decimal in the North/South dialogue (Ogbonnaya, 2012:251). Indeed, it is a concept that means different things to different people and different things to the same people across time and space (Ogbonnaya, 2012:252), thus, justifying its elusive nature and character (Conversi, 2010:36; Movius, 2010:7; Omotola, 2010:106). It is therefore, safe to say that globalization is one of the most challenging developments in world history (Eze, 2010:93).

Generally, globalization is used to describe the integration of national economies, expansion of linkages, and deepening of partnerships and interdependence through trade, finance, investment, and technology transfer on a world scale (Edoho, 2012:103). According to Ojo, (2004 cited in Ogbonnaya, 2012:252), globalization encompasses the increasing interaction among persons and institutions across the globe. It refers to the growing interactions in world trade, national and foreign investment, capital markets and the ascribed role of government in national economics. Similarly, Obadan (2004) views globalization as the increasing interconnectedness and interdependence among the world's regions, nations, governments, business, institutions, communities, families and individuals.

However, the most applicable understanding of globalization to this essay is that which sees it as an epochal event movement of history of imperialism (Tandon, 1998:2; O'Rourke and Williamson, 1999). Viewed from this prism, it is a phenomenon that is as old as history, depicting the final conquest of capital over the rest of the world (Toyo, 2000 cited in Eze, 2010:93). Indeed, a number of Afrocentric scholars view contemporary globalization, without formal empire, as a continuation of the historical and structural process of capitalist and imperialist domination on a world scale, and of the global diffusion or replication of its economic substructures and cultural and political superstructures. For them, this globalization has not only led to the marginalization of Africa but also denied it the possibility and prospect of auto-centred development, by regarding African countries as follower-societies in the image of the globalizing and hegemonizing West (Amin, 1976; Fanon, 1968; Rodney, 1972).

Accordingly, Jinadu (2010:19) warns that it is important to go beyond Eurocentric or "west-centred" perspectives on globalization, in their emphasis on "time-space compression",

“shrinking world”, “integrated markets”, “global interdependence” to problematize globalization in terms of “the inequality, unevenness and injustice embodied in the New World Order... and the social, economic, political and gender implications and consequences of the global restructuring of capital through Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP). Eze (2010:92) supports this later claim by affirming that globalization, in its contemporary form, is a bogus ideological project characterized by economism, economic reductionism, technological determinism and political cynicism.

In summary, this contemporary globalization, which has transformed the old globalization, which the “Scramble” exemplified, with new centers, emerging centers, and new peripheries, is, like the old globalization, characterized by structural differentiation and unequal functional integration or interdependence and exchange between metropolitan and dependent or satellite nations, peoples and markets (Jinadu, 2010:20). In short, whereas, a major benefit of globalization is said to be the reduction in global poverty, evidence suggests otherwise as globalization is exacerbating inequality and worsening the conditions of the poor by eroding their incomes, increasing their vulnerability and adding to their disempowerment – leading to the disintegration of African economies (World Bank, 2000).

3. A Brief Background to the Formation of ECOWAS

After the end of the First and the Second World Wars, some leaders of West African countries decided to form a common organization in order to avert such ordeal from repeating itself. Such interest led them into coming together to form the Organization of African Unity (OAU) as it was then called, now the African Union (AU) in 1963 in Addis Ababa. An injury to one country is an injury to other countries. That same spirit formed the ECOWAS in Togo in order to engender unity and cooperation among West African countries especially in terms of trade as the name suggests – free movement of citizens, free trade, among others. It was the late President William Tubman of Liberia that made the initial call in 1964. Then General Yakubu Gowon formerly launched it in 1972. The latter with the late Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo expressed their desire to create an economic community between two states: Nigeria and Togo (Nwoke, 2005:115; Alli, 2006:88; Akindele, 2012:2).

A summit of West African leaders was then convened to discuss proposed community and a treaty was signed by fifteen West African countries at Lagos on 28th May 1975. The fifteen member states involved are: Benin, Burkina-Faso (joined as Upper Volta), Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea (suspended after the 2008 coup d’état), Guinea-Bissau, Liberia,

Mali, Mauritania (that withdrew in 2000 to join the Arab Maghreb Union), Niger (suspended after the 2009 coup d'état), Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Cape Verde, being the 16th country joined in 1977. The ECOWAS treaty was for the integration of economic policy and improvement on the political cooperation among its member states. The three principal languages used in this Institution are English, French and Portuguese (Ajulo, 2007:11; Meagher, 2008:160; Nwokoma, 2009:226).

The impetus behind the creation of this organization is a strong desire by some West African leaders to develop economic cooperation and integration scheme within the West African Sub-region with the aim of promoting economic unity and raising the living standard of its citizenry. Put differently, the goal is to maintain and increase economic integration and stability, strengthen relations among the member states and contribute to the progress and development of Africa as a whole (Adetula, 2009:17). According to Internet sources (africanhistory.about.com/od/glossary/e/9/ECOWAS.htm, retrieved on September 10, 2014), the goals of the Organization are to have a common economic market, a single currency to be used by all the member states, to create a West African Parliament, economic and social councils and a Court of Justice for settling regional conflicts on the Treaty members, among others.

Initially, conflict prevention and resolution cum fight against intertribal/inter-ethnic conflicts, civil wars and terrorism were not among the preoccupations of ECOWAS; the Commission's preoccupation was rather economic, social and political integration, collaboration and development of the Sub-Region (Golwa, 2009:279). To corroborate this, Oyebanjo-Odofin (2007:22-23) has this to say,

The founding fathers of ECOWAS, like their counterparts who founded the OAU did not initially envisage the significance of a defence agreement for regional security. They were preoccupied with the desire for economic growth and development, political stability and social cohesion.

But then, when the Liberian civil war erupted in 1990, the Commission deployed its ceasefire monitoring group, the ECOMOG (the ECOWAS Monitoring Group) to stop the war and maintain peace in the country. ECOMOG was established as a multinational observer and ceasefire group in West African Sub-region. It is a peace-keeping and peace enforcement force, initially a response to the Liberian and Sierra Leonian crises. It is in the light of this that Osagie (2005:6) also observes that, as part of the ECOWAS' achievements,

It is ... not surprising that in view of the formidable obstacles, even policy and literal road blocks to the construction of concrete economic integration, ECOWAS has taken the easier route of promoting sub-regional cooperation through ECOMOG intervention in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and threatened to intervene militarily in post-Eyadema Togo.

In general terms, ECOWAS could be seen in terms of functioning as a concept or its historical, cultural or social implications. It may still not be easy to dissociate the concept (instrument for forging sub-regional cooperation and solidarity) from the functioning. The novels of Ahmadou Kourouma, right from *Les soleils des indépendances* (*The Suns of Independence*) to *Allah n'est pas obligé* (*Allah Is Not Obligated*) and Sembène Ousmane's *Les bouts de bois de Dieu* (*God's bits of Wood*), among others, do raise the issue of inter-ethnic and inter-national conflicts. In Kourouma's *Allah n'est pas obligé*, to be specific, we could see the spate of violence in Liberia and how the Nigerian military intervened under the auspices of ECOMOG.

In event, the fundamental suggestion is for future researchers to investigate whether ECOWAS has actually delivered on its set goals. If not, what agenda do we lay for it in the evolving global politics and economic development in the West African Sub-Region? Furthermore, are the member states living up to expectation in the areas of payment of dues, cooperation in the emerging problems like trans-border crimes, terrorism among others?

4. Francophone/Anglophone Relations in West Africa: A Discourse

West African countries were colonized by both the French and British colonial masters. The French are known for their policy of assimilation while the British are exploitative. The Francophone and Anglophone countries came together for economic reasons since no country can be an island in the international system. The world, being a global village, collaboration and cooperation amongst the Francophone and Anglophone colonies became imperative. It is important to mention that the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), now the African Union (AU), formed in 1963 which brought together many African countries wasn't initially the idea of the colonial masters (Adetula, 2005:158).

The West African Sub-region organization, the ECOWAS that came into being in 1975 is the corollary of the African Union. These organizations aim at forging unity of purpose in West African sub-region in particular and in Africa in general in the areas of trade, commerce, security and development amongst the member States for the well-being of the citizens. But according to Joannidis (ref.allafrica.com/stories/200207030765.html, retrieved on 15th

September 2014),“Francophone and Anglophone countries have often differed and sometimes battled on the political field, especially within the Organisation of African Unity”.

It cannot be ruled out that there could be some mutual suspicions amongst these nation states, be it francophone against francophone, francophone against Anglophone or Anglophone against Anglophone. But it is still in their own interest to come together to forge a common purpose. There are some skirmishes among these Francophone and Anglophone countries, especially demonstrated in the usual killings in the Francophone/Anglophone countries especially between Nigeria and Cameroon at their frontiers, on land and in the sea by Cameroonian gendarmes. The latter killed some Nigerians during Shehu Shagari’s regime that nearly called for a diplomatic brawl. According to Internet sources (www.refworld.org/docid/3f51eaad4.html, retrieved on 12th September 2014),

For more than a decade, the Cameroon government of President Paul Biya has responded with repression and human rights violations to attempts by Anglophone political parties and other groups to ameliorate the situation of Anglophones within Cameroon, according to reports of human rights groups, international organizations, and media sources.

In reference to Chad, a francophone country, its army invaded some parts of Nigeria also during Shagari’s regime. The Nigerian army retaliated and pursued the Chadian army deep into their own territory. According to Schraeder (refbooks.google.com.ng/books?isbn=1555879667, retrieved on September 12th 2014), and particularly West African foreign policies,

The evolving commitment of its elites to three foreign policy principles – la francophonie, regional integration, and conflict resolution suggests the beginning of the bridging of the historic gap between Francophone and Anglophone West Africa. Nigeria’s attendance at the Franco-African summit, increased cooperation between the UEMOA and ECOWAS, and the settlement of the Liberian civil war are examples of enhanced cooperation within greater West Africa.

N.B.: UEMOA stands for l’Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (The West African Economic and Monetary Union). Schraeder (2014) is of the opinion that there is growing Francophone-Anglophone rapprochement among West African elites as against the backdrop of rising Francophone-Anglophone tensions at the continental level, such as in the OAU and within the international system, as witnessed by growing tensions between Washington and Paris.

It is not as if there are no skirmishes amongst Anglophone countries in West Africa; for instance, Nigerians were sent packing from Ghana in the early 1960s. In 1969, the Nigerian Government retaliated by repatriating Ghanaian nationals. Again, during Shehu Shagari's regime in the second republic, there was a 'Ghana must go' drama that played out in the country. This was just to say that there are usual mutual suspicions amongst West African and African States, be they Francophone or Anglophone. More so, the Nigerian size and seeming 'prosperity' makes her vulnerable to attract envy from some other countries in West Africa.

Consequently, it has been observed that there are mutual suspicions and attendant lack of trust that mars the relationship between the Francophone and Anglophone countries of West Africa. And, Jooji (2011:vi) rightly observes that,

Most West African countries share a common historical and political experience, even though there appear to be the Luxo-phone, Franco-phone and Anglo-phone divides;

Similarly, Jooji (2011:8) rightly asserts, that "ECOWAS was founded to achieve 'collective self-sufficiency for member States by means of Economic and Monetary Union, thus creating a single trade bloc". Osagie (2005) proposes a higher level of integration which requires members to surrender national sovereignty over sensitive financial matters, monetary integration where a new currency replaces national currencies. N'zué (2011:8) opines that

Avec l'interconnexion des économies entre elles (la nouvelle économie mondiale), ces problèmes de la zone Euro impacteront sans nul doute toutes les économies et en particulier les économies des pays de la CEDEAO

(With the interconnection of the economies amongst themselves (the new world economy), these Euro zone problems will impact without any doubt all the economies and in particular the economies of ECOWAS countries).

The Francophone members of the ECOWAS have a monetary union called Union Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UMOA) (West African Monetary Union) (WAMU) which is rather closely tied to France, their colonial masters, and is not concerned with the ECOWAS monetary arrangements. Faujas (2014) notes with dismay that,

The common currency among French-speaking countries in both West and central Africa, the CFA franc has also, seemingly, been a burden, despite the fact that it is more protected from inflation than currencies that are not aligned to the euro.

In terms of relationship and cooperation, it is worthy of mention that Nigeria, an Anglophone country, has always been at the receiving end of military incursions by its smaller neighbouring francophone countries. In the spirit of 'Big Brother', Nigeria has always been derided by these small francophone West African countries. Invariably, these countries have always seen the need to come together because there are benefits that can be derived from peaceful coexistence among the nation states. N'Zué (2012:xxiv) points out that case studies of selected ECOWAS countries are carried out to address the issue of how Africa can design schemes to enhance its own domestic resource mobilization capacity with the aim of pushing the ECOWAS regional integration Agenda.

It is worthy of mention to note that the ECOWAS has gone beyond its frontiers and is now collaborating with the Economic Community of Central African States to combat piracy and maritime crimes.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The task of this paper was to critically appraise the contours of the relationship between the ECOWAS countries within the precinct of the "New Scramble for Africa". In doing this, it zeroed-in on the Francophone/Anglophone countries within the ECOWAS sub-region, arguing that the umbrella regional economic organization has not sufficiently succeeded in eliminating the mutual suspicions and rancour that have characterized their relations. Furthermore, it became evident that the recent mistrust among the Francophone and Anglophone countries is not only fuelled by the quest for continual relevance by these traditional powers (notably France and Britain) in West Africa, but has fundamentally been heightened by the emergence of, indeed aggressive drive by the emerging and developing economies, notably Brazil, China and India for their competitive share of the African resources.

In view of the above, the paper conjectures that the interaction of these forces and the contradictions that inevitably arise from these complexities will result in diversification of markets and dissolution of age-old order accentuated by language proximity and historical propinquity. Therefore, the paper recommends, among others that since the main objective of the union is to establish a regional integration in the areas of economy, trade and politics, there is need, at the ECOWAS platform, to foster a cordial multilateral relationship amongst all the member States, be it Francophone or Anglophone.

There is also the need to expand intra-West African market. To easily achieve this, the Francophone businessmen and women should, as a matter of urgency, endeavour to learn English while the Anglophone businessmen and women should learn French. By extension, teaching of both English and French at primary and secondary school levels should be made compulsory in all member countries to facilitate easy communication amongst ECOWAS citizens generally; hence there is a saying, “One more language, one more friend”. Another saying goes this way: “One more language, one more means of organizing the universe”. And when we are able to understand one another, a better means of organization of the universe is promoted. Closely linked to this is the need to expedite action to get a common currency for all ECOWAS member States.

In conclusion, we note that all West Africans, Central Africans, and indeed all well-meaning Africans as a whole, must ensure that all hands are on deck under the platforms of ECOWAS, Economic Community of Central African States and the African Union (AU) to rebuild the Sub-Region and of course the continent. Africa must jointly strive to combat, not only piracy and maritime crimes but also poverty, disease, illiteracy, political upheaval, inter-tribal conflicts and civil wars, security challenges, trans-border crimes among others. As such, we can all live peaceably in a united Africa promoting the African renaissance.

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