

Does the West African Colonial Tax (CFA Franc) serve as an extension of Haitian Revolution's "Indemnity" ?

**"Let us leave this Europe which never stops talking of man yet massacres him at every one of its street corners, at every corner of the world" -
Frantz Fanon**

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Introduction :

Colonialism in Africa is usually narrated through a European gaze of imperial conquest, the Scramble of Africa, and decolonization. However, although Africa now occupies the “ambiguous temporality of the postcolonial (Hall, 1996) the realities of decolonization remain bound by new imperialisms and the pursuit of recognition in the form of postcolonial statehood and sovereignty. This appeal for recognition by an international community of sovereign states continues to enact violence and extract resources from nominally independent African states. The postcolonial tax is a principal form of neocolonial violence and extraction. . This historical relation of colonial extraction draws on the foundational precedent of post-revolutionary Haiti and is later extended to former French West African colonies. The need for recognition gave rise to the French colonial tax in exchange for the colonial states' sovereignty. The consequence of this search for recognition of postcolonial sovereignty draws on historical parallels by the states that the French colonial tax is imposed upon. These parallels and shared historicity can be seen in various post-colonial-states like Haiti, though the indemnity imposed after the Haitian Revolution and the former French West African colonies indemnity through the use of the CFA Francs pervasive influence, strengthened by the policy of Françafrique as a form of colonial tax which preserves French West Africa's predatory relationship with France. In turn, this thesis examines parallels between the Haitian indemnity and its legacies bound by the perils of the recognition of postcolonial sovereignty, which ushers in mechanisms of new imperialism and indemnity in the form of the West African French Colonial Tax.

To explore the parallels between Haiti's indemnity and Françafrique, I will discuss the search for recognition of postcolonial sovereignty as a form of colonial tax as a means of maintaining a “colonial global economy (Bhambra, 2021).” The colonial tax is tied to the efforts of these postcolonial states search of their sovereignty, in the colonial global economy that fails to “acknowledge the significance of colonial relations which underpin the processes, as formative of, and continuous with them (Bhambra, 2021)” The ties to the colonial structure by force forms a legacy of the search for state sovereignty, in the post-colonial world. For example, although Haiti is considered as an independent state, its current state is connected to Haitian indemnity. Secondly, although the French West-African former colonies are free, they are still bound to the policy of Françafrique. Both can be seen as coercive agreements established by the French state to keep the umbilical cord that attaches the colony to the core.

This umbilical cord remains attached due to former colonies' pursuit of political sovereignty and economic independence. However, former colonies are starved by the imperial core by an umbilical cord that takes valuable nutrients and returns poison. This poison fuels these post-colonial states with a sense of inferiority. This inferiority allows the French state to prey on their weak sovereignty, and fuel the postcolonial states search for recognition by the core as a result this system builds a model in which the accumulation by dispossession is carried out in the present.

Accumulation by dispossession

The framework of accumulation by dispossession allows us to explore the exploitative nature of capitalism, especially as we analyze the relationship between the French state and its former colonies. As defined by David Harvey, accumulation by dispossession "reveals how the right of ownership changes in the course of accumulation into appropriation of other property, how commodity exchange turns into exploitation, and equality becomes class rule (Harvey, 137)." Through the use of the definition of accumulation by dispossession we are able to understand the predatory relationship between the core and the periphery. In this context, the French state represents the predator, and its former colonies represent the prey through the use of the post-colonial tax, which comes into fruition by the transformation of the right of ownership of the colony from the French state to the periphery. As a result, the tax is founded on the former colonies' search for the recognition of their sovereignty in a post-1945 world order marked by the advent of decolonization in the Global South. This very recognition highlights the battle of ownership between the core and the periphery. Under the process of accumulation by dispossession, its "predominant method is attached to colonial policy." (Harvey 137). These colonial policies can be seen as we explore the former French West African colonies that remain tied to colonial policies like Françafrique's CFA Franc and the Haitian indemnity.

Through the preservation of colonial policies, former colonial states are placed at a disadvantage in exchange for sovereignty. Through the accumulation by dispossession, these colonial policies are rooted in "an international loan system, a policy of sphere of interest, and war. Force, fraud, oppression, looting are openly displayed without any attempt at concealment, and it requires an effort to discover within this tangle of political violence and contests of power the stern laws of the economic process" (Harvey 137). This very entanglement bound by the colonial policy of the

core can be seen in both Haiti and the former French West African Colonies. Accumulation by dispossession as a colonial policy places the former colonies in the French sphere of influence. Within this sphere, post-colonial states are compelled to appeal to the core for their freedom. This appeal is tied to the threat of recognition of post-colonial sovereignty, however as the accumulation of dispossession highlights, the core state's violence is meant to establish a long-lasting and never-ending sphere of influence, where only parasitism can thrive. This relationship remains protected today through the use of force openly displayed in Haiti's indemnity, and the Former French Western African colonies. In both instances, taxes act as an effect of "the historical career of capitalism" (Harvey 138). These taxes act as the long-lasting umbilical cords that do not split from the core, the taxes are instead mechanisms that connect the periphery and the core, as the tax acts as an extension of covert acts of violence against the former colony, to punish the colonies for their fight for recognition and sovereignty. As a result, Haiti's indemnity is a foundational model on which accumulation by dispossession is carried out in the present through the French West African Colonial Tax that we see today.

Theory of Governmentality

These colonial taxes are tied to power, which can be seen through Foucault's definition of governmentality. On the concept of governmentality Turkel observes: Foucault encourages us to think of power not only in terms of hierarchical, top-down power of the state. He also widens our understanding of power to include the forms of social control in disciplinary institutions (schools, hospitals, psychiatric institutions) and the forms of knowledge. Power can manifest itself positively by producing knowledge, and certain discourses that get internalized by

individuals and guide the behavior of populations. Leading to more efficient forms of social control, as knowledge enables individuals to govern themselves (Turler, 1990)

This form of social control through the accumulation of wealth, and the capture of these former colonies' sovereignty highlights the dangers of these socially coercive forces, as a medium for maintaining power in the former colonies through the capture of their sovereignty that upholds France's sphere of influence through the control of major institutions. The control of these major institutions shapes the lives of every member of these former colonies, whose livelihoods are interconnected to their provision of rights, goods, and privileges. However, this very practice of governmentality is tied to the colonial structure of accumulation by dispossession, which fosters colonial repressions in the periphery that thrive in our post-colonial society through the use of neo-liberal mechanisms that uphold the power of the core, and the inferiority of the periphery.

The use of violence to shape the peripheral states' inferiority through the use of power, and the monopoly of violence support Frantz Fanon's reason for recommending violence for the periphery to enact on the core. Fanon sees “violence as a necessary therapy for a cultural disease brought about by colonial subjugation, the mere departure of the colonizer is not enough; liberation and dignity cannot be recovered unless the colonized get involved in violent performances” (Messay, 1986). To some extent violence by the periphery must be used as means of legitimizing their own sovereignty, statehood and to disband the inferiority that binds the periphery to a system of repression, though the inferiority of the periphery, as the theory of governmentality allows the core to obtain the monopoly of violence and the legitimacy to enact violence on the periphery.

Neoliberalism

Accumulation by dispossession, in addition to Foucault's theory of governmentality, permit neoliberal policies to thrive in postcolonial societies. Under neoliberalism, "low-income countries and regions that were previously subject to older forms of European imperialism into a new regime of global governance which serves to secure the interests of the USA, its western allies and of global capitalism more generally" (Tikly, 1). As a result, under neoliberalism, the west under the guise of development has been able to assert its power, "by which the west has come to understand and hence control the non-West" (Tikly, 1), highlighting the role of governmentality and power play in forming the global structure. Neoliberalism, as a result, bears the fruit of a new form of colonialism that thrives off of covert forms of structural violence.. Although covert, the repercussions of this new structure have equally dire consequences to the previous regime of overt colonialism. Under neocolonialism, the predatory practices of the state are disguised and the French sphere of influence is protected through neoliberal structures that have detrimental effects on the state and its sovereignty. States located on the capitalist periphery are met with predatory capitalistic practices through the use of neoliberal policies, as these post-colonial states are forced to participate in an exploitative global market in exchange for their sovereignty. In order to protect this exchange, postcolonial states must uphold France's sphere of influence through policies like Françafrique and Haiti's indemnity.

Francafrigue and Haiti's indemnity are examples of neocolonial structures that thrive under capitalism, as both allow the core to prey on the postcolonial states, through the use of manipulation, simply by the withholding of the sovereignty of the periphery. This withholding of

sovereignty can be seen in the formation of Haiti's indemnity. As indemnity is a mechanism put in place to stunt the state's growth and restrict the actions of the peripheral state. By considering the French colonial tax in Haiti as a form of indemnity, Haiti's indemnity will be analyzed as a foundational model of accumulation by dispossession that is replicated in the present through the CFA Franc. France uses these taxes as a means to profit from postcolonial states' search for recognition. Today, I argue that the modern-day French colonial tax is tied to the theory of governmentality and the inferiority of the former West African colonies, as the *Françafrique* policy serves as an extension of Haiti's indemnity. For example, "The Haitian Indemnity is a product of an 1825 coercive agreement between France and an unrecognized Haitian state. France demanded 150 million dollars as indemnity to be paid by Haiti in claims over property, and Haitian slaves lost by the Haitian revolution (Goodman, 2010)". Both the Indemnity that Haiti had to pay and the CFA Franc colonial tax share one crucial point, both were forced on colonial states that had already gained their "freedom".

In compassion to Haiti's indemnity, The French colonial "tax" (CFA Franc) is a tax that 14 African Countries Forced by France to pay a colonial tax for the benefits of slavery and Colonization (Koutonin, 2014). Although not recognized, the tax is rooted in the CFA Franc that acts as a tax of indemnity, where the use of the Franc grants these states limited sovereignty. Secondly, states in opposition to the tax were met by severe systemic violence, and political insurrection, which can be seen through the initial analysis of the Haitian revolution. If indemnity were not followed, the Haitian state would be met by the threat of France's re-occupation of the former colonial state. Both indemnities serve as mirror images of the post-colonial dilemma tied to France's occupancy. The colonial dilemma itself is related to the

French state's national interest on both the domestic and foreign stages, as the colonial dilemma itself is threatened by colonial revolution and the threat of freedom that the colonies sought, which threatened France's sphere of influence and national interest, through “bureaucratic structures (Masood, 2021)” that protect neo-colonialism through limited policy designs.

Introduction to Haiti's Indemnity

Haiti's indemnity can be seen as a colonial tax, and as an extension of accumulation by dispossession shaped by colonial policy. As the core state continuously reaps from the former colony through the use of capitalistic structures. The colonial tax as a form of indemnity relies on governmentality through the coercive power shaped by historical capitalism. This historical relation creates a continuum of predation and parasitism, as only the colonial power gains a benefit. Whereas, the former colony is still seeking their sovereignty, which normalizes a state's inferiority, upheld in neoliberal policies that uphold the unequal relationship between the core and the periphery.

Haiti's indemnity can be seen as a form of colonial tax, as the policy allowed the French state to benefit from its loss of formal power over the former colony. However, although formal control was lost, Haiti's indemnity allowed the colonies to uphold France's economy, and strength as a hegemony, while protecting France's national interest in the west. The indemnity that Haiti was forced to pay can be deemed as a legitimate colonial tax and a foundation for the Françafrique policy that upholds France's colonial tax in the former West African colonies, as both institutions highlight the fact that sovereignty is tied to these taxes, and these taxes are tied to a state's ability to truly gain its statehood.

As a result, "The Haitian Revolution indemnity is a particularly notorious example of colonial theft" (Daut, 2020). This arises through the association of dispossession theory, which highlights the threat of long-term oppression and force. Haiti's indemnity serves as a remnant of colonization, and a form of settler-colonialism that ensures that economic and social slavery (connection) still lingers today. These forms of indemnity have the ability and continue to severely damage these newly independent countries' ability to prosper (Daut, 2020), hindering the independence of the state both short term and long term, while profiting the proverbially greatest heist in history.

The long-term conditionalities attached to historical violence allow us to analyze the relationship between Haiti and the former French West African colonies, especially when we look at the Haitian Revolution and its indemnity as a form as the foundational model on which accumulation by dispossession is carried out in the present, which allows us to better and to analyze this relationship between Haitian indemnity and the French Colonial Tax. Due to this tax, French West Africa and Haiti in various capacities serve as mirror images to one another, due to the strong influence of the former colonial powers' that impact the very foundation and historicity that has led to long term civil conflict within many of these former colonies that are tied to a history of French colonial indemnity.

The Historicity of The Haitian Revolution

To understand the link between Haiti and the former West African colonies, requires a discussion of the role of the Haitian Revolution in the formation of the French postcolonial policy as a mode

of extraction, through accumulation of dispossession that transformed this indemnity into a colonial tax. This Haitian indemnity begins on "The August 1791 slave revolt (Hochschild, 257)," "when a building was set on fire on one of the hundreds of sugar plantations (Popkin, 10)." This fire within itself sparked the fire of the Haitian Revolution, and on August 22nd-23rd, bands of blacks attacked plantations in Saint- Domingue's richest sugar-growing area. The revolution was conducted by setting fire to the crops and killing or driving out the white owners and overseers (Popkin,39-40).” Firstly, The Haitian struggle for freedom led to the success of the fifteen-year-long insurrection on the French half of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola.

Secondly, the revolution led to the first population of African origin overthrowing white rulers. However, although Haiti had gained its freedom after a 15-year struggle; the war of independence was followed by the struggle for recognition, and the beginning of Haiti's entrapment within the coercive power of governmentality. This struggle for recognition bore fruit to the "recognition" of postcolonial sovereignty, as Haiti was not recognized by the French states until 1825, and in order for Haiti to be recognized by the French state, the French government demanded an indemnity. As a result, "in exchange for Haiti's payment of a debilitating indemnity of 150 million Francs, in which France had claimed on behalf of former colonies who had lost their plantations and fortunes during the revolution (Ghachem, 17)" The irony of this indemnity is tied to the reality that Haiti was forced to pay for their freedom. In war, usually, the state that wins is not responsible for the losses of the other state. However, the search for recognition of the state's sovereignty would not be granted, without indemnity, Haiti would not be granted its sovereignty, as the first free black state was marked as a threat to global capitalism.

The International Effects of the Haitian Revolution

The exclusion of Haiti is the consequence of the Haitian Revolution due to the impact that it had on the national interests of not only the “French, but also the western empires, like the United States of America, Spain, and England, due to their colonial investment in the Caribbean, and their reliance on the colonial global economy in addition to the natural resources of these colonial states who contribute to the power of the hegemony (Hudson, 2018)”. As a result, Haiti would help inspire independence movements in North America, Central America, and South America. Haiti's success showed the colonies that freedom was possible, and "that freedom had the ability to leap across the boundary of the race... This revolutionary boundary has shaped Haiti's central role in world affairs (Popkin, 11)", especially as the Haitian Revolution posed a threat to the national interest of the French, and a colonial world structure of core and periphery relations, that heavily profited from the colonial structure, embedded into the national interest of the core.

Although the Haitian Revolution highlighted the change of an era and the rise of freedom. For other colonies, the Haitian Revolution had different effects. Many in the Caribbean were resistant to the Haitian example; freedom to these colonies came later on and was typically not acquired through violent means due to fear of retribution. For example, enslaved peoples in many Central and South American countries were instead granted freedom by the colonial powers. However, some of these countries were not granted total autonomy, sovereignty, or independence. These states include "Puerto Rico, and French overseas territories like Martinique and Guadeloupe (Popkin, 21)" as well as the Netherlands Antilles, U.S. Virgin Islands, and U.K. Virgin Islands..

However, many countries did resist in South and Central America, but in some Latin American countries, the Haitian Revolution had adverse reactions as it promoted the growth of slavery rather than " hastening its disappearance (Popkin, 13)" which protected colonial interest in the state, especially in Brazil and Cuba. The indemnity inflicted on Haiti serves as a colonial tax and as a warning to the colonial state. However, no one can challenge the reality that the Haitian Revolution highlighted the inescapable fate of slavery and colonialism in the west, as "its meaning could be rationalized or repressed but never really forgotten since it demonstrated the possible fate of every slaveholding society in the New World (Geggus, 2020)." This is why Haiti's indemnity can be used as a foundational model on which accumulation by dispossession is carried out in present day Francophone West Africa. Especially since "In the 1780s, the French colony of Saint-Domingue was the centerpiece of the Atlantic slave system (Geggus, 2020)." Following the Haitian Revolution, France's gaze inadvertently turned to Africa, this leads to the shared history between Haiti and the former French West African colonies, and draws the connection that we can see between Haiti's indemnity, and the present-day French colonial tax in French West Africa. One can argue that the policy of Françafrique is connected to the same policies that created Haiti's indemnity.

Both serve the purpose of protecting French national interest in the postcolonial world. We can see Françafrique, a policy entrenched in the accumulation by dispossession, in addition to the theory of governmentality, shape these long-lasting neoliberal policies. Haiti's indemnity is seen as a tax because it is the colonial state's price for its freedom. Haiti's indemnity was a detrimental policy that led to the weakening of the state, weakening state's sovereignty and even recognition in the post-colonial world. Haiti's indemnity has led Haiti since its independence to seek its

sovereignty. Although the state has sought its autonomy and legitimacy post the Haitian revolution, the state within itself has paid a severe price, such as a threat to the state's autonomy and capacity. As a result, because of Haiti's marginalization, post-revolutionary Haiti could never fully restrengthen its state infrastructure. Leading to the state's long-term search for recognition for sovereignty. When we look at Haiti's indemnity, the theory of governability is at the height of the indemnity as the use of power by the core was used to manipulate the former colony in exchange for its sovereignty. To this day, due to this coercion by France, the state as an extension of the accumulation of dispossession shaped by capitalistic structures, protects neoliberal policies that surpass the chains of colonialism.

The dangers of these neoliberal policies lie in their protection of predatory systems of oppression, through institutional and systemic methods like the Francafrique that continue structures of predatory colonial ties. These predatory colonial ties pose an imminent threat to the state's sovereignty, as we have seen in the Haitian States search for the recognition of their sovereignty, as the Haitian state to this very day continues to struggle to fight for their respective sovereignty. What was once the pearl of the Antilles, is now a weak state fighting for its respective sovereignty from the state's independence in 1804. A country that once "lionized as the pearl of the Antilles. (Remember Haiti)" has been stripped of its resources, as a prey of the accumulation by dispossession and victim of capitalism.

If Haiti did not fulfill these commitments, the French reserved the right to withdraw their recognition of its independence. For example, Haitian President Boyer was warned that if he rejected the French ultimatum, the French would bombard Port-au-Prince. However, he was

eager to find a compromise that would end Haiti's diplomatic isolation, rooted in inferiority. Although the French Pact of 1825 was initiated by loss of profit, it was also established because of the fear of U.S intervention, and shift in world power structures in the west, threatened by the likes of the Monroe Doctrine and the echoing United States powers. When we look at the indemnity charged to Haiti in the name of the state, in the name of the legitimacy, and sovereignty, and we look at Haiti today we can see that these indemnities serve as a neoliberal form of colonial policy that maintain the power of the French state additional to their shareholders. The foundation of this indemnity is rooted in the protection of France' national interest, and the predation of the Haitian state, in the past and present. This predation continues today not only in the Haitian state, but also in the former French West African colonies, as these colonies within themselves are in search of their sovereignty post-independence.

French Imperialism

France's gaze did not stop at Haiti. As a result, the Haitian Revolution's role inadvertently serves as the link to the beginning of the new age of European imperialism, and a new form of French Colonialism that has evolved, and mutated from the Haitian Revolution. By the end of the nineteenth century, neoliberalism grew on the African continent through France's new colonial venture in Africa. Which has expanded into the 20th century through the use of Fracanique's policy, tied to the French Colonial Tax. This French colonial tax is embedded in protecting France's sphere of influence through the use of the CFA Franc.

The French colonial venture was strengthened by the scramble for Africa, tied to expansionist policies of the French imperial state, as an extension of the colonial project post-Haitian

independence. This fortified the "[e]mergence of the expansion of French interest in the colonial project in which French West Africa would become a part of France (Crowder, 1981)." These former French west African colonies would be the subjects of the French expansionist policies, in which the colonies would be used as extractive inferior colonies. The structures of governability govern the relationship between France and the colonies. The relationship established the African state as an extractive state. As a result, these low-skilled extractive states were not designed to assimilate into the French state; these relationships were instead constructed to bind the colonies to a legacy of predation, by "satellite economies that are complementary to the French economy (Sylla, 2021)"

The former colonies, though independent, would only receive their sovereignty in exchange for the preservation of France as an economic hegemon, through the installation of "a very centralized federalist administration in their new territory, a system of direct rule (Gulpinar, 2021)." These systems of direct rule were implemented across the eight federations of eight French colonial territories in Africa, including Mauritania, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Benin, and Niger. The subordination of these states mimics the core and periphery relationship through the extractive nature of the French state. These periphery-like relationships formulated what Chase and Grimes describe as "The peripheral units/regions structurally conditioned to replicate their subordination to the 'core' (Chase-Dunn & Grimes, 1995)" and serve as a product of not only neoliberalism but the "world system theory (Wallerstein, 1974)." Accumulation by dispossession is made possible through the predation of peripheral states by the imperial core. This peripheral unit is established through the unequal systematic exchange and transfer from systematic transfer of surplus from the semi-proletarian periphery to the high-tech

industrial core. " This differential status is necessary for the sustenance of the system as stronger states maintain and increase the flow of peripheral surplus to the 'core' (Pujari, 2020).” Capitalism itself is tied to the accumulation by dispossession as power is used by the core to strip away from the periphery, creating continuums of poverty while protecting the core's surplus from the periphery. The French rule, in comparison to the English rule due to this post-colonial violence, has paralyzed French Africa to this very day, in comparison to the former English West African colonies such as Ghana and Nigeria in West Africa.

For example, "Whereas in the British areas of West Africa some portion of the economic gain accrued to an African middle class, no such dynamic occurred in the French context (Crowder,1987)" The French imperial structure never formulated such development in the former colonies. Notwithstanding France instead, fostered harsh inter-dependence on the French colonies, to the metropole due to their severe rule and lack of state development, and when threatened to lose her influence in West Africa, "French actions have arguably turned desperate and even unethically violent (Devecioglu, 2020)", as seen in Haiti post-revolution.

By 1960, the majority of the French West Africa territories had achieved independence through non-violent means. The new nations faced a difficult future, as newly autonomous states with little power due to the French state and introduction of the CFA Franc. As a result, many have suggested that the fragmentation of French West Africa today, like Haiti, was an attempt by France to create a "destabilized and fragmented West Africa, perhaps in hopes of gaining the upper hand in the approaching post-colonial period (Crowder, 1990: 78)". This allowed French interest in West Africa to continue to this day, through the adoption of intervention in the

Post-French Colonial State, adopted by France's threat to the former colonial states rooted in the periphery-like relationships. This relationship has created a form of a sovereignty through indemnity in the French Colonial States post-independence through the use of the CFA Franc as an extension of the former colonial relationships, in which sovereignty would not be granted without the acceptance of the legitimization of the French intervention within the colonial states, as it became the responsibility of these free states to pay their way as a "free state" as a means to continue the extraction of a valuable resource and the reliance on the French economy. This enabled French intervention in French West Africa to become commonplace, under the guise of "maintaining stable African political orders (Powell, 2020)" broadly favorable to French interests." Which deemed France as a "Francophone protector." Since the inception of These colonies independence, "France has intervened more than 50 times militarily on the continent (Powell, 2020)" furthering "halting development and regional growth or what they consider their backyard, in grandiose, ideologically informed narratives (Powell, 2020)" that have protected French interest and fortified their intervention policies, by profiting from the colonial-states fragmentation, as an extension of the policy of intervention.

This policy of intervention has been strengthened through neo-liberal policies. The policies have tied the French West African states to a form of colonial tax that protects their sovereignty through the use of the CFA Franc. CFA Franc, like Haiti's indemnity, is an example of the politics of intervention as it exemplifies how CFA Franc is a colonial tax and serves as an extension of Haitian indemnity. Both are rooted in the search for sovereignty as the price of freedom if long-term French intervention, extraction, and isolation. As a result, the tax has led to the absence of a reliable regional network. This absence of regional development has preyed on

West French Africa's weak state, and permanent struggle entrenched in neocolonialism, favoring the exploitation of weak states and promoting intervention. Haiti and the former French West African colonies can be seen as weak states that were forced into freedom at a cost. We saw the example through the analysis of the Haitian Revolution, and now we will be exploring the CFA Franc as a form of colonial tax charged due to the liberation of the West African Colonies. Just as the colonies had to pay their way, those that gained their independence had to also pay their way for their independence through the introduction of the CFA Franc, which can be seen as a form of colonial tax and a long-term socio-economic structural indemnity on the former colonies.

CFA Franc: The West African Colonial Indemnities Background

The CFA Franc was born as an "aftermath of World War II, in the wake of the French Colonial states rally for independence, French policy-makers initiated a process of decolonization "as they came to realize that the ending of formal control need not necessarily be accompanied by a loss of real power and influence on the continent (Martin, 2002)", in hopes of maintaining the core states power. The French state has had great luck that has transcended the colonial era and penetrated the walls of colonial revolutions, as the methodologies put in place are tied to colonial legacies like the CFA Franc, which has been able to destabilize the economies of the former colonies structurally and socially. While preserving the French Franc, the CFA Franc has been exhausted by neoliberal policies and institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These neoliberal policies have led to high inflation in the former French West African colonies. The implementation of the CFA franc is an extension of colonial rule through an indirect, covert method grounded in indemnity and French intervention for the continuous extraction from the colonial state. This post-colonial relationship was formally introduced by the Accord de

cooperation, which wanted to appeal to "France's sense of historic responsibility to advance the development of its former colonial "family" (Chafer, 2005). This historical responsibility is touted in the predatory practices of France and their fear of the loss of the colonies, similar to how Haiti's indemnity was introduced once the formal control of the Haitian state was lost. As a result, "France signed cooperation accords with its former colonies, which provided them with cultural, technical and military assistance such as sending French teachers and military advisors to work for the newly formed African governments (Krosiak, 2004)" Secondly, The accords allowed France to maintain troops in Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Ivory Coast, and Senegal and established a framework that would allow France to intervene militarily in the region. Most interestingly, "Under President de Gaulle, French aid and assistance were made contingent on signing these accords (Yates, 2018)." These very same conditions can be seen as extensions of the terms offered to the Haitian state post the revolutions due to France's disbelief that the state had the ability to manage itself.

Former colonies that refused to sign this accord were met with violence. "For example, when Guinea refused to sign the accords, France immediately withdrew its personnel from Guinea and terminated all assistance to the state (Yates, 2018)" as a means of protecting its place as the pseudo protector of West Africa as a means to protecting its hegemony. Guinea's refusal to sign the accord led to the destruction of Guinean infrastructure from what the French believed to have been the "benefit of colonization (Huillery, 2014)". The violence embarked on Guinea was meant to send a message to the remaining seven colonies that their resistance to the accord would lead to colonial violence. Therefore, in order for the state to gain its sovereignty and legitimacy, it would have had to subscribe to the French Accords. This was the very same influence Haiti's

Indemnity had on its colonial neighbors, which isolated Haiti, and paralyzed the state's sovereignty as it was not recognized. Guinea was not the only anomaly, nor was it the only state touched by the cruelty of French interventionist policy. For France to uphold the status quo post-independence in the former French West African colonies, violence was embarked on the colonies. Violence tied to the withholding of the absolute sovereignty owed to these former colonies in the post-colonial states. Guinea was not the only victim of this institutional violence. Violence was also seen in Togo, as the post-colonial state sought its sovereignty and an escape from the CFA franc to protect the state's sovereignty and legitimacy. However, as the state sought an exit from the former colonial power and its legacy through the CFA Franc, the state was cruelly oppressed.

The violence imparted by France due to Togo's threat to break away from the colonial states' formal control as an "independent state" draws a remarkable resemblance to Haiti's structural impairment by the French state, in exchange for the state's recognized sovereignty. Togo's oppression is closely related to the power play of France tied to governability and the oppression of Togo searching for its absolute sovereignty. Haiti from 1804 to 1825 was not recognized as a sovereign state until the state agreed to the indemnity. The same policy was practiced in Togo as "Sylvanus Olympio, the first president of the Republic of Togo... found a middle ground solution with the French. He did not want his country to continue to be a french dominion. Therefore, he refused to sign the colonization continuation pact De Gaule (*Françafrique*) proposed (Koutonin, 2014)" a practice of governability, put in to protect France's sphere of influence. The middle ground sought to establish that Togo had to "agree to pay an annual debt to France for the so-called benefits Togo got from French colonization (Benyera, 2020)". It was the

only condition for the French not to destroy the country before leaving. However, the amount estimated by France was so significant that the reimbursement of the so-called "colonial debt" was close to 40% of the country's budget in 1963 (Koutonin, 2014)". Although the financial situation of the newly independent Togo was volatile, Olympio still wanted to get out the french colonial money FCFA (the Franc for French African colonies) and issue its own country currency (Koutonin, 2014)" and agreed to pay the French state the one-time payment for Togo's absolute sovereignty. The threat of losing formal control of "Togo led to a French-supported assassination by bounty of Togo's first democratically elected President (Samuel, 1990)." In addition to Togo, we have seen the same violence inflicted on Mali in 1962 due to the state's decision to no longer adopt the current CFA. In 1968, Mali's first president became a victim of the coup carried out by a French foreign legionnaire (Koutonin, 2009). In the last "50 years, a total of 67 coups happened in 26 countries in Africa, 16 of those countries are french ex-colonies, which means 61% of the coups happened in Francophone Africa (Koutonin, 2009)" resulting from French support, French intervention, and for the oppression of the French West African former colonies post-independence. As a result, If states did not adhere to the CFA Franc, they would be met with unethical repercussions, which challenged the stability, legitimacy, and the state's sovereignty.

The colonial repression analyzed in Guinea and Togo has also been inflicted in Mali, in 1962 due to the state's decision to no longer adopt the current CFA, in 1968 Mali's first president became a victim of the coup carried out by a French foreign legionnaire (Koutonin, 2009). In the last "50 years, a total of 67 coups happened in 26 countries in Africa, 16 of those countries are french ex-colonies, which means 61% of the coups happened in Francophone Africa (Koutonin, 2009)"

resulting from French supported coups, French intervention, and Francafrique policies, as a mechanism of colonial repression to protect the accumulation by dispossession by the French state, as "endless accumulation requires the endless accumulation of political power, and any attempt to do so will result in disaster (Harvey,140)". In which a core state that does not retaliate in violence protects its claim to the colonial land, within the accumulation of dispossession, capitalism has the ability to "create its own other...The idea is that some sort of outside is necessary for the stabilization of capitalism (Harvey, 141). This other's fruits are the neoliberal structures that empower policies of Francafrique, which protects the core-periphery relationship that we see between France and her former colonies. In this relationship, if obedience is not maintained, then violence is used as a means of re-establishing formal control through indemnity. These indemnities are bound by the dangers of "recognition" of postcolonial sovereignty.

These post-colonial violent practices institutionalize the predatory governability that strengthens policies like Francafrique, which protect the CFA Franc and hinder the recognition of the sovereignty of the former French West African colonies—forcing these states to continue to fight for their sovereignty today shares similar yet unexplored historicity. The threat of repaying the infrastructure built by France in the former colonies that the colonies were threatened to lose is equivalent to the French request of Haiti post the revolution for the loss of property, which included the plantations, in addition to the former slaves regarded as property. The infrastructure provided in Haiti and the French West African colonies are not signs of development, but device geared as a means of extraction, only to be used for the benefit of the French hegemon, but once the formal control of the French hegemon is threatened, just as quickly as the French provided these infrastructures, it is just as easy as it could be destroyed by the very own makers of these

structures and institutions alike, such as schools, churches, hospitals, and infrastructure like roads, railroads as if these colonial states even asked for their predatory implementation. Equally, these states did not pour their blood, sweat, and tears into the building of these institutions and infrastructure, which shape their very own state capacity.

One of the CFA Franc's main conditionalities is the confiscation of the former colonies' natural reserves by the French treasury. "At Least 65% of its foreign exchange reserve in an "*operations account*" held at the French Treasury, as well as another 20% to cover financial liabilities. Ironically, the 20% cover is imposed on states that never asked France to take hold or control their natural reserves (Koutounin, 2009)"; they are still seen as the liability while the French state takes advantage of its colonial power. This is the same currency that both Guinea and Mali denied, and both of their leaders paid the price. This currency has not only further enhanced the fragmentation of the state, but its exploitation as the CFA bank also imposes a "cap on credit extended to each member country this is equivalent to 20% of that country's public revenue in the preceding year. (Kpokou, 2015)" Most importantly, the CFA Franc symbolizes the former colonies' lack of power in the monetary policies of the state, as the CFA Franc has completely devalued and weakened the post-colonial economy and fostered greater development in the French state.

Secondly, because of the marginalization of the pos-colonial economy within the periphery, we have seen the devaluation of the CFA Franc and the rise of inflation within the former colonies destroying the economic vibrancy of these post-colonial states through the use of the CFA Franc, which serves as an extension of the French colonial legacy of Francafrique, in addition to the

modern-day colonial tax presently. Although there is a committee that oversees overdrafts overseen by the respective African state members, many say that there is participation by members of these respective post-colonies, but is it enough? Especially as the consent of the French Treasury is highly regarded. This gives way for a significant amount of critique of the CFA Franc and their top-down approach to shaping these postcolonial economies. The consent needed by the French is not the final mark, as the French have the final say in the investment of the foreign reserves of the African countries. Not only do these states not have a say in the usage of their reserves, but they also have very little power in the operational usage of these very reserves. As a result, the bank today has no power, as all of the power is yielded to the French. Thirdly, these eight members do not know how much is in these reserves and how much each respective reserve holds for each country. The French have the ultimate power as they hold the power of the purse, although these are respective sovereign states. This ties back to the post-revolutionary period of Haiti when the state itself was not recognized because the hegemon saw the state as incapable of taking care of itself and incapable of owning its sovereignty and managing its finances. Today, the freedom of these colonial states' freedom is tied to predatory conditionalities that are the terms and conditions for state sovereignty.

In addition to not having access to their own reserves, France allows them to access only 15% of the money in any given year. "If they need more than that, they have to borrow the extra money of their own 65% from the French Treasury at commercial rates (Koutonin, 2014)." Therefore, the colonial states would still owe the French a great deal while not having access to their funds due to the interest owed to these commercial banks that prey on the colonial state's lack of autonomy. The CFA Franc is tied to the African colonies' monetary reserves and these states'

natural resources each year, it is alleged that 500 billion is taken as a form of colonial tax. In addition, as per the agreement, The French would have first "dibs" on the state's natural resources intended for sale. It is only if the French are not interested in a natural resource that these states can sell these resources to other states competitively, paralyzing the state and its agency.

Beyond the natural resources, the same is considered for these states' public procurement, which controls the leading utility companies of these French colonies, the same as seen is the same for commerce, construction, agriculture, and also defense. Regarding the purchasing of military supplies and also training exclusively by France. Giving France the access to “military bases (Koutonin, 2014)” within the states, the power to approve allyship, and automatically join warfare that France is involved with the shaping of military predation, monetary prevention, and cultural prevention through the enforcement of French as the Primary state language. The policy of FrancAfrique has created a colonial tax, embodied in a capitalistic structure, that acts as a parasite that has infiltrated the post-colonial state, and its inner body and the most central pieces of the parts of the body needed to run a state. These states, in a sense, wear a facade of sovereignty, and legitimacy due to these neo-colonial structures that act as extensions of the indemnity executed in Haiti and present-day former French West African colonies.

This system is solely based on systems of force and fraud, as highlighted in the foundation of accumulation by dispossession. As these structures are bound in the perpetual cycles that protect the exploitation of the periphery by France's hegemonic power and dominance. Indemnity within itself is shaped by the protection of the French economy, resulting in The Haitian Revolution

indemnity, in addition to The CFA Franc shaped by the dangerous legacies tied to the preservation of French geopolitical interest. Haiti and the former French West African are linked by the coercion of their respective sovereignties (Dr. Jobson, 2020). This coercion within itself is rooted in violence and indemnity as a form of colonial tax. For sovereignty to be awarded in these two conditions, there has to be an exchange that satisfies the empire in exchange for sovereignty. This very exchange is tied to systemic indemnities that hold sovereignty hostage for compliance by the colonial state.

Connection between the Haiti and Post Colonial French West Africa

Haiti and the Former French colonies share a connection through their shared historicity as former French colonies that have had to carry the burden of France's national interest. Secondly, the former colonies are connected through their shared indemnity. For example, Haiti had gained its independence through violent means, whereas the French West African colonies gained their independence through non-violent means. Although they acquired their freedom by different means, both have felt the same wrath from the French state. This violence is why I argue that Haiti's indemnity is the building block to the former West African French colonies through the CFA Franc.

The Haitian state took 166 years to pay off an equivalent of "41 billion today (Goodman, 2010)" Haiti's indemnity has had significant effects on state development, and has fostered state fragmentation, especially in northern and southern Haiti. The same can be said about the former French West African colonies and their 60 + years of enduring French tyranny. Although the indemnity placed on Haiti had an end, it has had lasting impacts but, when we look at the

indemnity placed upon the former French colonies, the sovereignty exchanged in 1960 was faulty. By adopting the CFA Franc for their sovereignty, the state gained fragile sovereignty. Through the exchange, the state could only secure transactional sovereignty instead of absolute sovereignty.

The indemnity placed on these colonies has shackled the state's sovereignty, and has given the French the power to act as the former French colonies' overseer. The mechanism used to tie the French West African state is so powerful that 60 years later, French West Africa has not truly seen independence. Although the same systematic violence was used, the first in Haiti was only in its formative years. In contrast, the latter is in its mature state. As a result, "recognition" of post-colonial sovereignty remains conditional, and therefore recognition is a central theme to the abuses systematically placed on the periphery. The unbalanced colonial relations shape this push for recognition by the colonial state. Typically, sovereignty is provided to the state by its members' who recognize the nation, and the state that forms the nation-state. Through the citizenry's recognition of the state and statehood, the state can enact legitimate authority and build state capacity over its territory. Indemnity challenges this sovereignty, as the sovereignty awarded to the former colonies are constantly challenged by violence. The force of abdication through indemnity shows that the French Colonial Tax, connection to the colonial state to a predatory system of long-term never-ending predation set on protecting the transactional sovereignty of these former colonies. Indemnity is shaped by the protection of the French economy and the protection of capitalism through the perpetuation of accumulation by dispossession, which breaks the formal process and the social contract formed between the state and its members. This fragmented social contract protects the French national interest, as this

system paralyzes the former colonies' national interest. This allows the French economy to remain relevant today, through manufactured colonial structures rooted in a neo-liberalism to maintain control in the territories. Therefore, these systems are tied to legacies of economic oppressions built on lasting inequities, and parasitism that grant the hegemonic state access to wealth while crippling the colonial state through non-symbiotic relations.

These non-symbiotic relations are built on French national interest, which binds the two histories together. Both are the victims of a cruel shared history, as they were accumulated forcefully by predation grounded on protecting French relevance on the world stage. Without Africa today and Haiti then, the France that we see today would not be a prominent player on this very stage, as the Former French President Jacques Chirac acknowledged in 1957, "Without Africa, France will have no history in the 21st century (O'Brien, 2017)." Africa then and now is critically and geopolitically important for France.

However, this geopolitical relationship is maintained by indemnity. As the current monetary structure ensures that only the core can reap the benefits of the periphery. The core's fear of losing its treasure, so much that it infiltrated the state every crevice as a means of paralyzing the state to infancy, to ensure that just as much as France needs Africa, that Africa would need France. This infancy is shaped by the fragmentation of the states wealth, capacity, statehood and consciousness by the core, as punishment for the colonies search for sovereignty. The threat against the periphery's sovereignty is so significant that colonies like Haiti cannot compete in the global market due to France's autonomy over the former colonies and the lack of institutional development of the periphery. Although there are highly skilled state members the zone is only

seen as an agricultural region, limiting the region's development, this is why former colonies are still seeking their sovereignty, as the core pillages the periphery. The CFA Francs monetary control of the periphery, allows France to have a total monopoly of the state. Today we say that Colonial West Africa carries a 60+ year burden of a colonial tax through Francafrique's CFA Franc. This colonial tax was paid way before the 1960s, since France stepped foot on the continent, France has always been the "Black Man's Burden (Huillery, 2014)." The cemented sphere of influence through Francafrique relies on contractual sovereignties [Indemnity/CFA Franc] to protect its privilege. Through the use of monetary, political, social, and exceptionally constructed monetary policies founded on the confinement of the former French Colonial state. Today the state allegedly contributes 500 billion a year to the reserves, which serves as a social tax on the periphery. Not only does the periphery pay a social tax, or welfare tax but also various supplemental payments to the French state through the devaluation of the CFA Franc which benefits the core. In addition the periphery has paid this tax with its development, legitimacy, sovereignty, and belittled economy. The country's legality is challenged by this system day in and day out through crippling infrastructure and stagnation. The same tax can also be alluded to in the case of Haiti post its revolution and the state's current political climate, and the use of "soft power of cultural ties" for the hegemonic imposition of the state that undermined democratic institutions.

International Recognition

This undermining of Africa by France was brought to international headlines by Prime Minister Luigi Di Maio. Mr. Di Maio accused France of using the currency to exploit the former West African colonies. He stated that Mr. Macron "first lectures us, then continues to finance public

debt with the money he exploits Africa," according to ANSA, the Italian press agency (New York Times. Specia, 2019). While these colonies remain taxed through monetary and social means, France can also use the reserve that French West Africa does not have access to without the consent of the French hegemony. As a result, "France maintains the position that the CFA franc is an 'African currency', existing only as a support to Africans, who retain their 'sovereignty' (Sylla, 2017). Due to the Franc, the French state has access to these reserves, as if the reserves belong to the French state and have inclusive autonomy over the reserves of the respective sovereign states.

France's hands in the reserves of the former colonies allow them to have a hand in the private and public sectors in these states operated by the CFA Franc. Italy has been one of the only countries in the west to speak against the French. The Francafrique police has had a significant impact on immigration in the former French West African colonies. The intervention and the lack of development have fueled the region's migration crisis, which Italy believes stems from France's long-term intervention in Africa. Prime Minister Maio “ blames France for impoverishing Africa and encouraging migration to Europe (Giles, Goodman, 2019) ” As a result, Italy has pushed sanctioning of the French state by the European Union to pull France out of Africa. The Prime Minister boldly stated that "France has never stopped colonizing tens of African states (Reuters, 2019)" which is the reason why the Prime Minister believes that the state has been able to remain the world power that it is today, through its interventionist policies France remains a hegemon in the 21st century, as it milks Africa dry. As a means of expressing this sentiment, the Prime Minister stated, "If France did not have its African colonies, it would not be the 15th largest world economy. Instead, it is amongst the first, exactly because of what it

is doing in Africa (Reuters, 2019)." This same action within itself is what Italy believes is leading to the current migration due to the instability and fragmentation of the state, leading to various economic and social push factors that promote illegal migration.

The Italian prime minister perfectly described the present-day exploitation of Africa's postcolonial states, France's never-ending cycle of colonialism, through neo-liberal methods of extraction that are dependent on colonial bridges that have not been burned but reinforced. In addition to the Prime Ministers recognition of modern colonial ties, the Prime Minister also brought to light that this colonial system is still in place because "France was manipulating the economies of 12 African countries that use the CFA Franc-- a colonial era-currency which is underpinned by the French treasury (Reuters, 2019)" this underpinning brings to light the constraints that France has placed on the French West African states married to this system protected by the idea of stability. Due to this system, "France is one of those countries that by printing money for 14 African states prevents their economic development and contributes to the fact that the refugees leave and die in the sea or arrive on our coasts (Reuters, 2019)." The Prime Minister concluded that in order to look at the problems of today, what truly needs to be analyzed are the causes of these problems rooted in colonial structures, and legacies that always persist, in the modern-day colonization of Africa through monetary, social and political means which not only fragments the development of the state but also taxes the state through the use of these socio-political construct which holds the sovereignty of the state as leverage.

"Francafrique" promotes French interventionist policies. These policies are Paris' long-standing habit of meddling in its former colonies' political, economic, and military affairs on the continent

(Barbero, 2021). Although France's interventionist policies are well known in the international community, To date, Italy seems to be the only country that has brought France's predatory practice to light and the only country which has sought to denounce the French state. Countries like China have alluded to the contradiction of the global north, and developing countries, however many countries in the west have not spoken against the French state and its practice in Africa. Africa or even the periphery have no other hegemony that can hold these states accountable, because many of these hegemony represent the world's democratic pillars, have their crosses to bear, and are unable to bring France's dirty laundry to the tables without the fear of their dirty laundry being exposed.

Dangers of the CFA Franc:

The CFA Franc zone for the past 50 years has consisted of 14 countries; former French colonies adopted it because, The CFA Franc zone's ability made it possible for these states to share a fully convertible common currency across the French portion of the continent, which was the main reason why the CFA Franc was accepted some former colonies. However, in 1994, there was a unanimous fifty percent devaluation. The devaluation of the CFA Franc meant raising the parity rate from 50 CFA francs per French franc to 100 CFA francs per French franc (Donovan, 2021)." This did have not only economic effects but also socially as "CFA member countries' governments imposed wage freezes and layoffs in the wake of the CFA devaluation (Signe, 2019)". As a result, "This devaluation "led to widespread unrest over inaccessible goods for consumers and unmanageable price controls for suppliers (Signe, 2019)." Although this system has had detrimental effects on the state itself, the currency is still backed by "Many European

and African leaders who support the currency's continuation, while some seek separation from France, the European Union, and Francophone African countries. (Signe, 2019). Too many of these states support these systems as optimal networks and financial institutions that serve as a "currency border" (Gurtner, 1999), and currency stabilizer, that attempts to combat the threat of inflation, but fails due to the structure of the CFA Franc as an inherently monetary policy.

As a result, the CFA Franc acts as a failed monetary policy that protects the core, enabling the protection of all that the core reaps from the periphery through mechanisms like devaluation and inflation. Although the IMF has tried to balance the inflation bound to the currency, it has repeatedly failed. I believe that this failure is due to the analysis of the former colonies as sovereign states, and not as former colonies bound by a harsh legacy of restriction that has real implications on the state and its capacity. Not only is the failure of the IMF linked to the protection of a failed monetary policy, but the IMF also takes a developed approach to the currency without understanding its implication and impact on the former colonies. For example, in 1996, the IMF's France's devaluation aimed to put these countries back on a path of sustainable growth by helping them regain their competitiveness in the world market (Ogunbamowo, 2021)." However, the model since then has continued to paralyze these countries by further weakening their markets. Their market strategy had failed these states. Instead of restoring or reshaping the policy to implement and foster actual development in these states, it remained the same, under the pretense of stability. Instead, this pretense "encouraged exports at the expense of imports because it enabled CFA franc zone countries to sell their products for half as much but required them to buy products from other countries for twice as much (Ogunbamowo, 2021)." The IMF is responsible for "Promoting international financial stability

and monetary cooperation... Facilitate international trade, promote employment sustainable economic growth and help reduce poverty (IMF)". Today, the IMF has failed to implement its purpose in French West Africa. The IMF has not established any viable solutions for the former French West African colonies. INSTEAD, the IMF has encouraged governments to couple devaluation with sound macroeconomic and structural adjustment policies that continue to dry the region.

Realities of the CFA Franc:

The adoption of the CFA Franc as a monetary policy highlights the biases of this structural system. These structures were never implemented in the global north, even when looking at The United States' separation from Great Britain. However, these policies have been systematically implemented in the global south, designed as a solution to the threat of independence. Policies like the CFA Franc and Haiti's indemnity were used to design solutions for the "global south." France, as highlighted earlier, never invested in the growth and development of the state; therefore, the use of modern-day structural adjustments in a state paralyzed by underdevelopment is honestly not a reality; the IMF did not tailor a system suited for the development of these states. The IMF instead recycles policies used in the global north, with firm certainty that these policies work on a state inhibited by structural roadblocks that threaten the state's ability to grow its capacity. Due to the French state's deliberate colonial practices. In addition to structural adjustments, the IMF also suggested "trade liberalization, elimination of price controls, diversification of agriculture, reduction of government workforces and spending, and privatization of state-owned industries (IMF, 2000)." Which led the state to further depend

on the French to implement these suggested policies by the IMF. The irony is that the IMF, in the case of these former colonies, has the confidence to dish out these policies but has not provided the necessary equipment needed for the success of these policies. Secondly, the stabilization that the CFA Franc allegedly provides economic growth. However, since the implementation of this currency, we see that "states in the zone have only grown 5% annually (IMF, 2000)" Thirdly, there has also been agricultural growth, in addition to growth in employment in the states, in addition to more competitive markets inviting state investment (IMF, 2000). Defenders of the CFA franc say that "the currency stability keeps inflation down — it is less than 2% for the West African Economic and Monetary Union. This stability is attractive to investors and brings more money to the region (Herrmann, 2019)." These successes have fostered much support for the CFA Franc in and out of the continent, as we can see through the support of the Franc by leaders like Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara.

However, many are opposed to this alleged "voluntary currency." States that have tried to withdraw have been met with great tragedies, as seen earlier in the case of Togo, Guinea, and Mali. Many are opposed to this mechanism due to the exploitative relationship. "In which it feels as if African states are paying dearly for the stability the currency brings (Herrmann, 2019)." This payment can be seen through the French requirement, mentioned earlier, requiring CFA member countries to deposit at least 50% of their foreign exchange reserves, currently about \$11.19 billion, into a special account in the French treasury. In return, "France guarantees the unlimited convertibility of CFA francs into euros (Herrmann, 2019)." This currency allows for the artificial rising of African products due to countries having the ability to use currency rates to influence their economy, which hinders the African state from completely capitalizing on their

goods. By devaluing the currency, France can make the price of goods they produce cheaper and boost exports. Lastly, as a critique of the “CFA Franc, 70% of the population in the CFA zone work in the agricultural sector (Herrmann, 2019)”. These small enterprises have difficulty getting loans because of high-interest rates due to the CFA structure, highlighting the benefits it serves the French and the detriment it provides the state and its state members.

Although participation in the currency is “voluntary”, there have been various inequities tied to the system, in which preferential treatment is allocated to the French regarding African resources through currency arrangement. Moreover, the operational withholding of “50% of the reserves and low-interest rate affected by inflation, and the conversion of currencies foster poor returns to the colonial states (Sylla, 2019)”. However, what is most important is the inherent mistrust that exists within the state. In the Haitian context and the French West African Context, the French did not trust these colonies to have the agency to run their state. As a result, the legacies that shape these systems have been built by fallacies that black nations are unable to manage their sovereign state.

The main concern with the CFA Franc itself is the fact that "it is inherently an extension of mistrust among and of the African countries says Jean-Paul Fitoussi, an economist at the French Economic Observatory, "so they decided to put the reserves into the Bank of France," for safekeeping. This alluded to safekeeping limits of the states very own development, as the "CFA Franc limits the economic levers African countries can use - that they cannot set their interest rates (Giles, 2019)". The CFA Franc is designed for these respective states, the CFA Franc is designed to make it easier to obtain international currencies needed for trade and foster French

growth and prosperity, and not African growth and prosperity, which can be seen today since CFA franc countries are poor, and is the relic of the past fails "to stimulate trade integration between user nations," writes the Senegalese economist Ndongo Samba Sylla. (Giles, 2019), highlighting the effect of capitalist structures encompassed by post-colonial dispossession.

The ECO

Regardless of the CFA Francs' structure and limitations, some continue to believe in the purpose of the CFA. In contrast, others do not believe that the CFA serves a moral socio-economic purpose in the postcolonial world, due to the CFA's unequal advantages to the core and shareholders in these respective states, which places the regions in a very contradictory position. Whereas the former West African states are seeking their liberation from the currency, The French, on the other hand, have a vested interest in the region that they want to protect through the CFA. This has led to the debate regarding the new aspiring currency. The Eco-Currency is he proposed West African common currency of the states bound to Economic Community of West African states. The formation of the Eco-currency (ECO) asks "can Africans create African futures within a modern world system structured by global coloniality ? (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014)." The Eco challenges the world system as it hopes to create a common currency that escapes colonial ties and colonial boundaries through the unification of the Western African Region that is not attached to the Euro and its high inflation due to the devaluation of the CFA Franc.

The Eco hopes to provide a framework for central banks in the Western African Region in order for the region to have the capabilities to print their own money. This idea is historic in its own right as it is a system made for Africa by Africa, not entrenched in the "colonial structures and colonial development structures and measurements that the IMF and Western structuring bind (WAMI,2013)" to incorporate markets through a positive mechanism, that do not prey on countries but instead promote regional and continental development. This single currency system hopes to "increase market size and opportunities for member countries. Secondly, the ECO hopes to create deeper financial integration through economic and monetary integration, leading to greater financial stability. Thirdly, the Eco hopes to promote potential trade gains for member states through trade creation. While enlarging the market leads to improved foreign direct investment flows within and outside the region. "The larger market achieved through the Ecos regional integration holds the potential for increased returns to firms as economies of scale are more fully explored (Omojuwa, 2013)" which will be geared towards promoting African regional development.

The CFA Franc has shaped West Africa structurally in two ways. The first is the lack of development, in the area and indemnity used to secure their national interest. Through the intervention of these sovereign states by withholding their sovereignty through dependency mechanisms like the CFA Franc, this new currency will alleviate French West Africa from the burden of the French hegemony. The Eco will give the region a chance to free itself from the shackles of colonialism. The legacy of the periphery, and a taste of long overdue freedom, aims to cut the ties of indemnity. Overall, indemnity, and the French West African Colonial Tax, are tied to colonial policies founded on systems of force and fraud. David Harvey describes it as a

mechanism of New Imperialism. These mechanisms of old world domination are rooted in the crisis tendencies of new imperialism linked to capitalism. These linkages to capitalism are bound in the perpetual cycles that protect the exploitation of the periphery deemed by the hegemony, as we can see in Haiti and French West Africa. However, these relationships cannot be manifested without the state's buy-in, though limited in a capitalistic global structure bound to the expansion of capitalist territories, which promote the protection of these networks in the 21st century.

Although the Eco shows signs of a change in the narrative, it has been under fruition for five years due to the respective states not meeting some of the requirements. These four requirements include A single-digit inflation rate at the end of each year, A fiscal deficit of no more than 4% of the GDP, A central bank deficit-financing of no more than 10% of the previous year's tax revenues, and lastly, a gross external reserves that can give import cover for a minimum of three months (Hu, 2020). This is due to the lack of structural development instituted under French rule, and the lack of interest in the hegemonic state in developing the periphery due to fear of a strengthened periphery that can threaten the core. As a result, the lack of investment and the accumulation of dispossession through capitalism's methods of oppression and force have slowed the development of the periphery while exacerbating the periphery's interdependence on the core, halting the development of liberatory mechanisms like the Eco.

Conclusion

The stagnation of the Eco is tied to the current neo-colonial structures that preserve the core's power and dominance through the structure's inherent use of capitalism and regional specialization, as seen in Haiti and in post-colonial French West Africa. For that dominance to be

maintained, capitalism and its neoliberal practices depend on extraction to thrive. Indemnity within itself is shaped by the protection of the French economy through Francafrique, resulting in the protection of neo-colonial, practices that stray away from the traditional plantation-style economy but perpetuate these cycles of extraction to the economic and social marginalization of the periphery tied to legacies of economic oppression, founded on lasting inequities and parasitism that grant the hegemonic state access to the peripheries wealth. This wealth is accumulated while crippling the post-colonial state by a coercive non-symbiotic relation and protection of the post-colonial states in search of "recognition" of post-colonial sovereignty.

This ongoing search for sovereignty by the periphery acts as a form of capitalist expansion advertised and enacted as a method "necessary for the stabilization of capitalism (Harvey,138)." as sovereignty in the post-colonial state is defined by capitalism. Capitalism carries great relevance, this faulty relevance is dependent on the hegemonic state, as it uses capitalism to protect the core's wealth and privilege. This form of relevance takes form in predatory mechanisms that are "pre-existing and even manufactured by the hegemonic state (Harvey, 141)". However, these practices have great relevance on the periphery through the systematic economic paralyzation of the states in search of sovereignty. Indemnity as a postcolonial tax is a reinvented preexisting structure through neo-liberalism, that formalizes neocolonialism in the postcolonial world. Indemnity acts as a means of maintaining formal control in the territories through covert means and structural violence that inadvertently compares to overt violence on the state and its people. The relationship shared between the hegemon and capitalism is used interchangeably in the world-system theory to protect policies like Francafrique tied to the CFA Franc. These indemnities subdue the threat of the postcolonial world. These indemnities help

maintain the balance of power that protects French assets and the economy outside of the French state. Indemnity has become an evolved product of capitalism that has created a stable neo-colonial structure through neoliberalism—transforming capitalism itself to modern-day imperialism, which Harvey describes as accumulation by predation through endemic mechanisms like the present day French Colonial Tax.

These predatory practices have interchangeably handicapped the post-colonial states, leading to their accumulation by dispossession by the core. This accumulation has been shaped by force through the threat of the periphery states sovereignty, while the periphery is still searching for international legitimacy. Ironically, this search for recognition has halted the periphery states' ability to utilize capitalism to benefit the national interest of the periphery. The search for recognition oppresses the state because the post-colonial state does not allow the periphery to utilize capitalism for its gain. This silent oppression establishes the periphery as a dependent inferior state that relies on the crumbs of the periphery. This oppression is a method of accumulation by dispossession meant to perpetuate the pre-existing colonial system post-independence systematically. The forces exerted by these systems are methods of state isolation that threaten the post-colonial state's legitimacy, and sovereignty as a means of compelling these very territories to strengthen systems of fraud. Capitalism, by definition through these neo-colonial practices, is as predatory as the past colonial structure, as the expansion of the core is "reliant on the subjugation of the other through the use of Colonial Repression (Harvey, 140)" and predation. This predation preys on the periphery state as a commodity, leading to the erasure of the periphery's legitimacy, sovereignty, and capacity through the neo-liberal monopoly of violence used on the periphery and its people.

These neocolonial systems come into fruition through state-sanctioned violence, which leads to the crippling of the state former colonial state. This very violence takes the shape of indemnity through the colonial tax. This process relies on the predation of capitalism. As a result, the hegemonic powers construct an umbilical cord that binds the CFA as a "financial mechanism in such a way as to benefit the hegemon while leaving sub-alternate states on the golden path to capitalist "development" (Harvey, 152)." The development that Harvey interrogates is shaped by unequal development, fostering "periphery" stagnation, this lack of development shapes some of the most "vicious and inhumane manifestations in the most vulnerable and degraded regions with uneven geographical development (Harvey, 173)" meant to continuously stifle the peripheries' growth while continuously fostering the growth of the imperial core. These unequal geographical developments have led to an exploitative cycle of abuse against the periphery. When one looks at the relationship between Haitian indemnity and the French colonial indemnity with an understanding that both serve as a form of tax of sovereignty. Both, have "formed dialectical relation between territorial and capitalistic logics of power, that are tightly invasively interwoven (Harvey, 171)" That form system of capital bondage and socio-economic interdependence, manufactured as internal relations to each other is through the accumulation of disposition in which "recognition" of postcolonial sovereignty remains conditional and therefore shaped by recognition of the core.

The foundational model on which accumulation by dispossession is carried out in the present is through the state's taxation for recognition of its statehood. The colonial tax analyzed in this paper looks at independence and the politics of independence tied to systems of the accumulation

of dispositions as predatory practices meant to protect the interest of states that hold power. In this case, we were able to look at two linkages that have both been the victim of the colonial legacies and have paid for these ties through indemnity, as a means of challenging the state's claim to legitimacy and sovereignty. This indemnity, as a result, is in exchange for the state's limited power. The colonial tax itself is the price that the state has paid through indemnity by its lack of sovereignty and development, and this tax is paid through literal and figurative means. Systems like the CFA Franc in addition to Haiti's indemnity are examples of the rule of governability, in which control is not only physical but also psychological, as these states to this day are in search for their recognition "Psychologically, with regards to the vision of sovereignty and managing your own money, it is not good that this model continues (Signe, 2019)," These models like their legacy bound institutions are tied to covert and overt taxes, not typically recognized, but carry significant implications to the state and its development.

Although many assume that these systems of indemnity, to an extent, are voluntarily looking at Haiti's indemnity and the adoption of the CFA Franc, we must understand that both policies were introduced and forced by coercion by the core, through the use of state violence. When we consider the violence imposed by France on the leaders who opposed this currency, we understand that this is not a consensual relationship. This relationship is continuously perpetuated in history, through the legacies of indemnity and abuse by the core. The formation of the periphery through indemnity, and even the colonial tax that French West Africa has taught us indicates that the more fragmented a state, the better the use it serves to the hegemon. The narratives shared by Haiti and French West Africa highlight two stories on two different sides of a coin that serve as extensions of one another through experience. In addition to forming the

legacies of peripheralization of the state that are deemed unable to foster their development. The infantilization of Haiti and French West Africa has strengthened the French interventionist policies that have been fostered through violent means and significant biases. Many consider the white man's burden or the West's burden as the periphery's burden, the global south's burden.

The Prime Minister of Italy Luigi Di Maio voiced it very beautifully; these countries that prey off of the periphery are on top of the food chain (bbc,2019). They are the states that rank first in the world system theory and modern-day hegemony. However, these hierarchies of global states would cease to exist without the "black man's burdens (Huillery, 2014)". Without these covert and overt colonial taxes tied to indemnity as a means of profit, the core states that we see today would not be powerhouses that we see today. The parallels explored through the analysis of the Haitian revolution history and the colonization of French West Africa highlight the legacies bound by the threats of the continuums of new imperialism attached to mechanisms like indemnity. In order to combat these legacies, the shared historicities and their respective parallels have to be exposed in order to decolonize the systems at hand truly and to better understand the unexplored, which have a long-lasting impact on the states that fall victim to these silenced pasts. These silenced pasts have a significant impact in the present and future. Without the proper understanding of these mechanisms, we cannot understand the price that these states had to pay and continue to pay as a means of acquiring their present limited freedom. A *tax* can be defined as "a charge or burden laid upon persons or the property for the support of a Government (Bhagat, 2018). Indemnity as a form of taxation on the post-colonial states is accepted as a charge by the state in exchange for its recognized sovereignty. However, in reality, this sovereignty is never recognized as the core through indemnity can feast on the state, and practice

a form of hegemonic retribution towards the periphery. As a result, the periphery's sovereignty is never truly absolute nor recognized.

Today, the Haitian state can be seen as a foundational model on which accumulation by dispossession is carried out in the present through politics of recognition; although not formally recognized, the former French West African colonies tax is rooted in the CFA Franc that acts as a tax of sovereignty, as the use of the CFA Franc grants these states limited sovereignty, in the same token that the Haitian state indemnity acted as a granter of limited sovereignty, these mechanisms are systemic acts of violence, and serve as unexplored legacies of capitalism, carried out through the mechanism of accumulation by dispossession, governability, neoliberalism and unfulfilled dreams of independence that births post-colonial indemnity. In order to recognize this freedom, and break these colonial ties by exploring these silences legacies to break the shackle of the search for sovereignty.

However, these shackles pervade, for example, when we look at the most recent case of Mali, and “France exit out of Mali after nine years (Aljazeera, 2021)”, leading to the expelling of the French ambassador from the state, this may be the rise of a new era. However, the French responded by stating, “The French army will be present in a different way’ as former colonial power draws down its military presence in Mali (Aljazeera, 2021). Although this may be an example of the colonial power scaling down, it also highlights the predatory interest of the French state in the former colonies. This interest transcends the economy but also the foundation of the state. Although expelled, the military stated, “French army will be present differently (Aljazeera, 2021) .” As a result, this exasperates the mechanism of accumulation by

dispossession through the threat of governability and further promotes a form of performative decolonization, preceded by ceremonial sovereignty rooted in the symbolic freedom of the former French West African colonies, which protects a legacy of post-colonial trauma, and reminds us that "‘the colonial’ is not dead, since it lives on in its ‘after-effects’ (Stuart Hall).

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