CONCLUSION
CONCLUSION

The relationship between France and the French West African states, as surveyed in the preceding pages, falls into two categories. The first category includes those states which attempted to minimise their economic and political dependence on France after getting independence. Guinea represents a model in this category. After opting out of the Community in 1958, Guinea strove hard to disengage from France. In 1963-64, Dahomey too tried to emulate Guinea's example although unsuccessfully. Dahomey attempted to reduce its dependence upon France by forming Benin Union with Nigeria. But the 'Benin Union' never came into being.

The countries which fall into the second category tried to maintain cordial ties with France: Niger, Upper Volta and Senegal are the foremost states in this category. They chose to follow the path which the 'ex' metropolitan country had offered. In one sense, however, Upper Volta attempted to deviate from this path when it refused to join the French security scheme in 1961.

As we have seen, Ivory Coast falls into neither of these categories. It did not opt for the Guinean path, but its relations with France did not simply remain static as in the case of the second category of states. On the contrary, the Franco-Ivorian co-operation in both economic and political fields continued to grow and assumed an importance far beyond the bounds of bilateral relations, during the period under review.
To start with, Ivory Coast opted for the French Union in order to evolve within the framework of close Franco-African relations. The Ivorian leaders persuaded the R.D.A. to endorse this stand. At this time the other African leaders outside the R.D.A. also supported the same stand. As a result the entire French West Africa became a part of the French Union. This provided an opportunity to the Ivorian leaders to play a prominent role in the politics of the Fourth Republic. It was at this time that Houphouet Boigny rose to fame, especially after he secured the passing of the bill of abolition of 'forced labour' (1950) in the French Assembly. Houphouet chose to operate in three different circles viz. territorial, federal and metropolitan circles. At the territorial level, he tried to consolidate his position by founding Parti Democratique de la Cote D'Ivoire (P.D.C.I.). At the federal level, he worked for closer Franco-African co-operation by assuming increasingly important leadership role in the R.D.A. At the metropolitan level he tried to establish contacts with various French parties and politicians.

Houphouet chose to co-operate with the French Communist Party (P.C.F.) which appeared to be a strong force in the Fourth Republic. P.C.F. helped R.D.A. in building its organization and improving techniques of communication. The R.D.A. also banked on the support of 183 members and sympathisers of the P.C.F. in the French National Assembly. By 1951, however, the P.C.F. began to lose its strength both inside and outside the French Assembly.
Also, the 1951 elections showed a considerable decline of support for the R.D.A. This situation was the result of R.D.A.'s association with the P.C.F. After the elections, Houphouet decided to break relations with the P.C.F. The R.D.A. formally endorsed Houphouet's decision.

Governmental instability gave the R.D.A. further opportunity to play an active role in French politics. It joined the coalition governments under Fourth Republic to boost up its bargaining position. Houphouet Boigny and François Mitterand were the architects of U.D.S.R. - R.D.A. coalition during 1956-57. The only African leader who became minister in successive French cabinets was Houphouet. He utilised this position and influence to consolidate his own position in the Ivory Coast. It was thus, Houphouet who was instrumental in securing the passage of the Loi-cadre reforms in the French Assembly - which divided the federation of West Africa into eight constituent units. The reforms suited Ivorian interests because they advanced further Ivory Coast's territorial autonomy.

After 1957, Houphouet Boigny began to work for the realization of the Franco-African Community. The Community which came into being in 1958 conferred on the African states the status of self-governing autonomous republic. Ivory Coast became now the champion of territorial autonomy. It opposed federal movements in West Africa as initiated first by the Ghana-Guinea Union and later encouraged by Senegal, Soudan, Upper Volta and Dahomey.
There were three broad dimensions to the inter-state politics in West Africa during 1958-60. The first dimension concerned the developments in French West Africa. The second covered both, the English and the French speaking states in West Africa. The third embraced forces outside Africa.

In French West Africa the three relatively prosperous coastal states were Guinea, Senegal and the Ivory Coast. In 1958, in order to fight colonial domination in Africa Guinea joined Ghana in a union. It was at this stage that Guinea sought to build cordial ties with Russia and the East European countries.

Senegal was dissatisfied with the Loi-cadre reforms. It opposed the division of African states by the metropolitan country. After 1958, Senegal became a staunch champion of federalism and under Senghor's leadership it approached the leaders of Soudan, Upper Volta and Dahomey to form a federation. In contrast, the Ivory Coast stood staunchly for local autonomy.

The three coastal states searched for allies from the interior territories in order to pursue their goals. For instance during the formative stage of Mali federation, its two top leaders namely Senghor and Modibo Keita, tried to woo Dahomey and Upper Volta. The Ivory Coast tried to checkmate this move with the help of France. It took the advantage of Dahomey's dependence on France. Dahomey needed financial assistance to build a deep water port at Cotonou. France promised to give the financial assistance if Dahomey did not join the Mali Federation. Dahomey also was dependent upon Ivory Coast. When anti-alien riots took
place in the Ivory Coast roughly 12,000 Dahomeans, working in
the Ivory Coast, had fled to Dahomey. This gave an evidence
of Dahomey's dependence on the Ivory Coast. Like Dahomey
Upper Volta too was dependent on the Ivory Coast and France.
The Ivory Coast absorbed its migrant labour and provided a
market for its goods. Upper Volta was also depending on French
financial assistance. The Ivory Coast along with France
encouraged anti-federal forces in these two countries. Thus,
in the end, the Ivory Coast succeeded in preventing Upper Volta
and Dahomey from joining the Mali Federation.

In 1959 the Council of Entente was formed. It was
based on two principles viz. territorial autonomy and
affiliation of each territory with the metropole. French
support played a crucial role in bringing Niger and Dahomey
with the Council. Thus, France assisted Hamani Diori to wipe
out Sawaba Party of Djibo Bakary who stood for independence and
maintained friendly ties with Ghana and Guinea. Both, the
Ivory Coast and France supported Hamani Diori because he
stood for Franco-African co-operation. Eventually, Diori won
the battle and Ivory Coast got an ally in Niger.

After this, Houphouet sought Niger's help to persuade
the Dahomean leaders to join the Council of Entente. Since
the bulk of Niger's trade passed through Cotonou, Dahomey
earned a considerable revenue from this trade. Also a sizable
number of Dahomeans were employed in Niger. Thus, economic
reasons made Dahomey to follow Niger into the Council. France
also promised to build a deep water port at Cotonou in case
Dahomey joined the Council. As far as Upper Volta was concerned, the Ivory Coast did not need any outside help since Upper Volta's economic dependence on it was overwhelming. The Ivory Coast absorbed 45 per cent of products of Upper Volta. Thousands of Mossi workers worked in the plantations of the Ivory Coast. Thus, it was mainly for these reasons that Upper Volta joined the Council of Entente.

By 1960, defence of national sovereignty became the primary goal of Ivorian policy. With this goal in view, it stood for the preservation of sovereignty without closing the door for workable association with both African and non-African countries. Thus, the Ivory Coast began to build itself independently and retained the membership of the Council of Entente as well.

Due to financial supremacy and political stability of the regime, the Ivory Coast was able to assume the leadership of the Entente states. The French support strengthened further the Ivorian position inside West Africa. This support was manifested by the maximum financial and technical assistance which France offered to the Ivory Coast in relation to other Entente states. On the other hand, the association with Entente states contributed to the strengthening and consolidation of the sovereignty of the Ivory Coast.

After 1960, the policy of the Ivory Coast became one of persistent opposition to the radical forces as represented by Ghana and Guinea. The difference between Houphouet and Nkrumah was ideological in character. For whereas Nkrumah
championed the cause of total independence for Africa, Houphouet Boigny had opted for a kind of strong territorialism within the French controlled federation. It was only after Senegal and Soudan achieved independence that Houphouet also decided to negotiate with France for independence.

Secondly, both Ghana and Guinea wanted to form a United States of Africa. Houphouet, on the other hand, retorted to the enthusiasts of African unity by saying "Go ahead, but I shall not be with you."

The third point of difference was that Houphouet did not believe in snapping ties with the 'ex' metropolitan country. His fear was that such a course would result in total disruption. Clarifying his stand Houphouet stated in 1959:

At present Africa is divided by two currents. The first is powerful and passionate. It is a stream called 'African Unity' or 'Pan-Africanism' which defines neither its ends nor its means, and brands everyone a traitor who desires the real and rapid emancipation of African people within a great community which includes the highly developed people of the earth... the traitors are accused of Balkanization of being dutiful slaves in the party of colonialists, grave diggers of African dignity and African people.

The other stream is ours. Our limited know-how foresees the realization of true unity in the framework of great political grouping by reconciliation, friendship, brotherhood and the same application of the true interests of the African masses.

In order to meet the Ghana-Guinea challenge, Houphouët
made efforts to get his principles accepted by other African
states. Initially, he succeeded by inducting Dahomey, Upper
Volta and Niger in Council of Entente. In December 1960, he
widened his circle by extending relations with eleven
Brazzaville states. The Algerian and the Congo question
precipitated the formation of Brazzaville grouping which adopted
a rival stance to that of the Casablanca group. The latter
group condemned French colonialism in Algeria. They supported
the Algerian Front de la Liberation Nationale (F.L.N.). One
of its members, Guinea, went even to the extent of formally
recognizing the Provisional Revolutionary Government of Algeria.
On the Congo question, the Casablanca group supported Lumumba's
regime. Some of its members sent troops to join the U.N.
Emergency Force in the Congo.

The Brazzaville group, on the other hand, refrained
from taking any side on the Congo crisis. They believed that
the crisis could be resolved only by direct negotiations between
the concerned parties. On the Algerian issue, they appealed
to France to settle it amicably.

The Brazzaville group also aimed at implementing a
concrete economic plan. The establishment of the Union
Africain et Malagache (U.A.M.) in 1961 indicated their final
success in this regard. Houphouët's principles of 'sovereignty'
and 'promotion of technical co-operation among African states'
had influenced the U.A.M. formation. Both France and the Ivory
Coast played an important role in it. For example a French
company namely, Societe de developpement des transports aeriens en Afrique, offered roughly 34 per cent of the capital to 'Air Afrique' which was run under the U.A.M. It also provided technical assistance. The Vice President of that company was Ivorian. Besides that, Abidjan became the headquarters of Air Afrique.

With the emergence of Monrovia group in May 1961, Houphouet's principles of national sovereignty and non-interference went beyond the border of French West Africa. Such non-committed countries as Ethiopia, Nigeria and Liberia also began subscribing to his principles. These countries condemned the alleged interference of Ghana in the domestic affairs of the neighbouring states. The paradox of the situation was that the Ivory Coast too had, at times, interfered into the domestic affairs of the Entente states as we have shown in Chapter IV. However, even with this kind of interference Houphouet Boigny stood for the principle of non-interference, because it helped him to protect the sovereignty of the Ivory Coast.

Houphouet's stand on African unity came to be vindicated when the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U.) formulated principles to regulate interstate relations in Africa. It accepted principles of sovereignty and non-interference. Though the O.A.U. also subscribed to Casablanca's stand on anti-colonial and anti-racist struggles, in fact as an inter-state regional organization it came nearer to realizing the policy goals of Houphouet Boigny.
After the establishment of the O.A.U. the Francophone states formed the Organisation Commun Africain et Malgache (O.C.A.M.) for the consolidation of sovereignty and technical and economic co-operation among Francophone states. Houphouet believed that the type of organization such as the O.C.A.M. was consistent with the Charter of the O.A.U.

Franco-Ivorian relations, thus could be understood in two broad phases: (a) the colonial phase, (b) the post-independent era. In the first phase, France needed the support of the African states to run, effectively, the French Union. Opposition to the Union from the African side might have weakened it from within. It is in this context Houphouët's support to the Union assumed importance. The participation of the Ivorian leaders in the French parliamentary bodies helped in strengthening the emotional bond between the two countries. Since France wanted to continue its rule in Africa, the continuation of such a bond became all the more necessary.

The Anglo-French-Israeli attack on the Suez; failure of French policies in Indo-China, and the rise of Algerian nationalism preceded the passage of Loi-cadre reforms of 1956. Whereas the reforms granted territorial autonomy to the colonies, they also weakened the federal structure of French West Africa. From the point of view of France, Loi-cadre was a new device of perpetuating colonial rule. Radical groups in the R.D.A. as well as leaders like Senghor opposed the reforms but the opposition became muted because Houphouët Boigny mobilised a sizable section of the African population
in support of these reforms.

The Algerian crisis brought down the Fourth Republic in 1958. The constitution of the Fifth Republic, headed by De Gaulle, established the Community which became another important instrument of holding the colonies together. France found in Houphouët a great supporter of the idea of Community. Guinea withdrew from the Community. Independent Guinea’s policies towards foreign investments and anti-colonial stance added to the problems of France. It is in this context that the support of the Ivory Coast to the Community contributed to the interdependence of the two countries.

France, at this time was opposing federal movements in Africa. It supported the anti-federal forces in two ways. First, it attempted to pressurize Dahomey and Upper Volta from joining the federation. Second, it legitimized the anti-federal movement by extending financial support to the Entente states.

In the later period that is, 1959-60, French attitude towards federal movements became less rigid. This was so because France wanted to keep close relations with as many African states as was possible. Also, the African scene had changed radically after 1960. First, the process of decolonization had brought into being over thirty new states. Secondly, the Ghana-Guinea-Mali union had become a source of tension for the French interests. Third, the Algerian war had gained such a momentum as to constantly push France into the defensive. Yet, France was trying to achieve the position
of independent world power. Leaders like De Gaulle wanted to achieve this objective by operating in two circles: First by playing an important role in Africa and second by extending French involvements in Europe. These two roles were actually complimentary: By seeking African co-operation France wanted to play its role in Europe. Similarly, with its growing importance in the European Community, it sought to further strengthen its position in Africa.

The evolution of Franco-Ivorian relations can be viewed in this light. Supporters of the Pan-Africanist movement in Africa, viz. Ghana, Guinea and Mali were threatening French position by condemning policies in Algeria, in Congo, and also French nuclear testing in Sahara. This persuaded France to lean on the support of the Ivory Coast, in particular because Ivory Coast had taken initiative in forming the Brazzaville group. Since this group stood for sovereignty and non-interference France gave full support to it. This helped in neutralizing a number of African states in regard to French policies in Africa. The Franco-Ivorian accord was, as we have noted, consolidated with the formation of U.A.M. and later the O.C.A.M.

Houphouet established his supremacy in the O.C.A.M. by admitting Congo-Leopoldville in the O.C.A.M. and by preventing majority states of O.C.A.M. from attending the Accra Conference of 1965. Along with Ivory Coast, France too befriended Congo. The attitudes of O.C.A.M. states also suited France since they protected French interests in Africa from the attacks of the Pan-Africanist countries.
The Franco-Ivorian economic relations during the period under review, however, appeared somewhat loaded in favour of France. This is evident from the figures of trade, aid and investment. As observed in Chapter VI, there was a continuous decline of prices of Ivorian exports to France. Though the total size of the French involvement in Ivory Coast increased, it also resulted in larger outflow of profit to the metropole.

It is in the economic aspects that one finds conflicting opinions among observers regarding Franco-Ivorian relations.

One group of scholars led by Samir Amin, who is a staunch critic of the Ivorian policies holds the view that foreign capital entered Ivory Coast with hoisting rate of interests and exercised its absolute domination by making Ivory Coast externally dependent. The increasing domination of foreign capital was shown by increased share enjoyed by large firms, which rose from 28 to 40 per cent of foreign non-agricultural income.

European technical personnel accompanied the export of foreign capital. They absorbed 40 per cent of the non-agricultural salaries and occupied key administrative and technical posts. Until 1965, even the Finance Minister of Ivory Coast (J. Saller) was a Frenchman.

3 The foreign capital penetrated from Western countries, particularly from France. The proportion of gross profits attributable to large foreign companies, naturally destined to be reexported, rose from 7 per cent of the G.D.P. in 1950 to 14 per cent in 1965. See Samir Amin, Le développement du capitalisme en Côte d'Ivoire (Paris, 1967), p. 274.

Samir Amin also pointed out the emergence of new classes which perpetuated the social and economic inequalities. Roughly speaking, 20,000 rich planters exploited $\frac{1}{4}$ of the land by employing $\frac{2}{3}$ of the labour force and earned 40,000 C.F.A. Francs per month. This gave them sufficient surplus to reinvest in tertiary sector/the urban economy.

Finally, Amin observed that the regional income differences were extremely great between Northern and Southern part of the country. The South had 25 per cent of the rural population with 24,000 C.F.A. Francs as per capita income while the North had remaining rural population with 14,000 C.F.A. Francs as per capita income. Thus Samir Amin concluded that Ivorian economic development was 'growth without development'.

As opposed to this view, Elliot Berg and others argued that from 1958 to 1965 the Ivory Coast G.D.P. increased by 125 per cent in money terms or with an annual rate increase of 15 per cent during 1958-65. The monetized G.D.P. rose from 87 billion C.F.A. Francs to 207 billion C.F.A. Francs. This helped Ivory Coast to secure built-in safeguards against possible misallocation of resources. It maintained a capital of technical assistance in civil service and at the same time reduced the area of error by leaving productive activity to the private sector. Total Central Government investment was

5 Ibid., p. 277.
6 Ibid., pp. 277-9.
78 billion C.F.A. Francs between 1960 and 1965, and total investment, including public corporations and supplier credits, was about 100 billion. Of this 59 billion came from recurrent budget surpluses, and 7 billion was self-financed out of current revenues and public corporations. This meant that two thirds of total investment during these years came from budget surpluses of current earnings of corporations - a remarkable achievement in a poor country with high rate of investment.

While refuting Amin's argument regarding North-South disparity, Berg asserted that only one third of the rural population was in "isolated and stagnant" zones as compared to sixty per cent in 1950. He stated that Amin's figures, leaving out the isolated zones, did not show enormous inequality. In fact inequality was shrinking fast and the differences in wage earning appeared rather modest for a country whose growth was recent and whose regions were very unevenly endowed. Berg explained the regional imbalances between South and North in these words: "The productive coastal regions have been tied to the world market rather than to their own hinterlands or to each other." The Northern section was economically lagging

8 Ibid., p. 222.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., pp. 222-3.
behind the Southern one. The large scale investments took place in the already developed regions because an investor was sure of getting quick profits.

Thus, Samir Amin and Elliot Berg, have held two opposite viewpoints on Ivory Coast's economic development. It is difficult to conclude that Ivorian economic development was the 'growth without development' as held by Amin since economy showed concrete results in terms of increase in G.D.P., per capita income and trade surpluses. It is true that France was the principal client of Ivorian export and import. Nevertheless, Ivory Coast succeeded in reducing its dependence on France. Ivory Coast also succeeded in reducing its dependence on coffee as single exportable commodity. This helped it to diversify the trade pattern of the country.

On the other hand, the outflow of money, concentration of investments in a single region, and deterioration in terms of trade appears to have harmed the Ivorian economy in some ways. Encouragement to the private sector proved a stimulus to the growth of social inequalities.

12 Richard Stryker while analysing the regional imbalance stated that European capital was closely tied to the European presence in the Ivory Coast, and that presence was heavily concentrated in Abidjan and several secondary towns of the South. Abidjan alone contained 69 per cent of all commercial and industrial establishments in the Ivory Coast and 85 per cent of the salaried employees. Needless to say, these figures approached 100 per cent if only largest business and the top personnel are considered. See Richard Stryker, "A Local Perspective on Development Strategy in the Ivory Coast", in F. Lofchie, ed., The State of Nations: Constraints on Development in Independent Africa (California, 1971), p. 131.
In the study, we have tried to avoid these controversies. The basic aim of our study had been to trace the evolution of Franco-Ivorian relations at varying levels. Ivory Coast with its defence of territorial autonomy contributed to the smooth functioning of the French-sponsored community. It was Franco-Ivorian entente that shaped the inter-state politics in West Africa. Resting on French support Ivory Coast widened its circle of friends in Africa. This helped Ivory Coast to play a crucial role in Entente, Brazzaville, U.A.M. and O.C.A.M. groupings.

France received Ivorian support to widen its own circle of friends both in Europe and in Africa. Its pre-eminence in European affairs depended on its overseas ties with the 'ex' colonies. The co-operation helped the two partners to promote their respective ambitions. To the extent these ties proved mutually beneficial, France and Ivory Coast became interdependent.