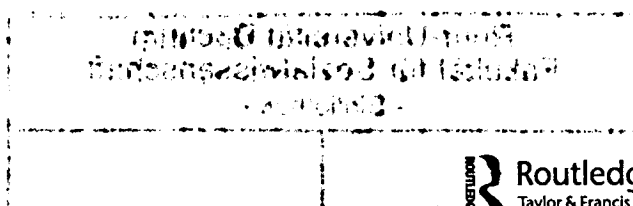

The Routledge Handbook of Critical European Studies

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The EU's development policy

Forging relations of dependence?

Mark Langan and Sophia Price

Introduction

The European Union's development policy has historically focused upon former colonies, especially those within the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) group. Indeed, EU discourse – as far back as the Schuman Declaration in 1950 – has emphasised a unique European responsibility for the wellbeing of poorer peoples in (former) colonial territories. Most notably, the founding fathers of the European project regularly spoke of the *Eurafrican* rationale behind development policy, as embodied in the creation of the European Development Fund (EDF) with the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Namely, that development interventions and aid-giving would secure a necessary political and economic fusion with African countries to the benefit of all concerned. Europe – through its development policy – would maintain close economic links to (former) colonies essential to the supply of raw inputs to European industry. ACP countries, meanwhile, would benefit from aid towards infrastructural improvements (for instance, ports and roads) and from the investment of European consortiums into lucrative sectors including agri-business and mining.

In contrast with the formal narratives of European officials, however, critical scholars have queried the strategic power plays involved with such benevolent development discourse. In particular, scholars have raised concerns about the EU's paternalistic gaze towards its (former) colonies in the ACP bloc. This is especially so since the origins of *Eurafrican* discourse are firmly rooted in the colonial period. Moreover, the Treaty of Rome itself incorporated then colonial territories into an 'Association' with the European Economic Community (EEC), without consultation with local elites. Development policy as envisaged in the Treaty of Rome – and latterly in the postcolonial period under the Yaoundé Conventions (1963–1975) – is therefore seen as being inherently tied to the maintenance of European political dominance and economic relations characterised by dependency ties, as predicted by African luminaries such as Kwame Nkrumah (1965). In particular, the scholarly literature in the 1960s and 1970s not only pointed to instances of 'neo-colonialism' within Africa-Europe relations, but also specifically utilised the language and concepts of dependency theory to explain the underdevelopment of the African continent vis-à-vis the industrialised EEC metropole.

Within this critical tradition, this chapter explores EU development policy and discourse in terms of the legitimisation of asymmetric economic relations with ACP countries. It first explores the concept of the concept of 'dependency' (when married to the critique of external actors' political strategies vis-a-vis neo-colonialism) for making sense of ACP-EU economic relations. The second section then examines the historical foundations of Europe's development discourse and how it has moralised external interventions in former colonies. It also highlights Europe's political strategies within neo-colonial forms of ACP-EU relations. Drawing on Nkrumah, Fanon and Touré it particularly reflects on how European aid instruments (such as the EDF) have helped to lock-in economic dependency by strategically lubricating patronage networks of ACP countries' elites. The third section thereafter explores the continued relevance of the concept of 'dependency' in terms of contemporary ACP-EU relations under the Cotonou Agreement, as well as the current shift to a post-Cotonou treaty. The chapter indicates that paternalistic discourse and dependency relations are likely here to stay in the post-Cotonou phase.

The concept of dependency in north-south relations

The concept of dependency emerged in the context of the post-1945 World Order, particularly in relation to the anticolonial, independence, and national liberation movements in the Global South. Anti-colonial struggles and decolonisation brought transformations to the 20th century world system, and with this newly independent states created their own social histories and contributed to social sciences, producing a body of knowledge specific to its time and place (Pradella 2015, 3). This emergent literature developed in opposition to the dominant liberal theory of modernisation, which uncritically accepted the structure of relations between rich and poor states that resulted from capitalist development (Hoogvelt 1997, 35–36).

Modernisation theory presented a problem-solving and policy-oriented understanding of social change and economic development, which recommended prescribed programmes of development for the Global South. This all-encompassing theory of change was framed as a method for transformation – from traditional to advanced and modern societies, particularly through the transfer of economic and technological resources coupled with programmes of comprehensive social, cultural, and political reform (Hoogvelt 1997). This was both a normative and prescriptive programme of change based on a particular understanding of Western development which turned an abstracted, generalised history of European development into a necessary logic (Hoogvelt 1997).

Moreover, modernisation approaches presented a deeply ideological programme, rooted in the geopolitical desire to keep the Third World from falling to Communism, against the backdrop of the Cold War and burgeoning liberation movements (Hoogvelt 1997). It both reflected and propagated the widespread and routine view that the nation states of the Third World required 'global modernity' and development in order to 'catch up' to developed states (Berger and Weber 2014, 1). This rested on the illusion of independence and sovereignty of the national developmental state (Berger and Weber 2014), which reinforced a narrative that development is a quasi-natural, nationally organised process that can only be measured in terms of national economic growth (Berger and Weber 2014).

In this context, dependency theorists took aim at modernisation theory, arguing that it masked the imperialistic structures of the global order, which structured inequalities between rich and poor countries and placed limitations on the sovereignty and independence of 'peripheral' states. Dependency analysis of the international system showed the history of the 'periphery' could not be understood in isolation from the 'centre' and vice versa (Pradella 2015, 3).

The frame of analysis for dependency theorists therefore was not limited to national development programmes, nor to relations between notionally independent nation states but rather the capitalist system as a whole and the structures that produced and reproduced inequality within and between societies.

Dependency theory had its intellectual roots in classical theories of imperialism, such as the work of Hilferding, Bukharin, Lenin and Luxemburg. Early 20th-century debates of imperialism and uneven and combined development (UCD) had sought to expand the international dimensions of Marxist thought (Pradella 2015, 2–3). Namely, 'these debates attempted to integrate, develop or even correct Marx's analysis, also taking account of the growing importance of foreign investment, expansionism and anti-colonial struggles' (Pradella 2015). In particular, Trotsky's law of UCD sought to analyse the development of capitalism as a world system through the internationalisation of capital, through which states develop at uneven rates in relation to one another, and also within each other. The concept of UCD provided analytical focus on the impact of colonialism and imperialism on the Global South and helped to challenge the myth of modernisation theory's economic 'catch-up'. It laid analytical focus on the exploitative relations between the Global North and Global South, emphasising that poverty and deprivation are not accidental by-products of the global economic system but rather are contingent factors that enable ongoing economic exploitation of citizenries throughout the world.

The development of dependency theories by key figures such as Baran, Gunder Frank and Dos Santos were located in understandings of UCD and critiques of modernisation. Through positioning the Third World State within the dynamic and contradictory growth of the world capitalist system, dependency theorists sought to elucidate the concept of *underdevelopment* in contrast to *undevelopment*, within broader understandings of the historic processes in which developed countries had developed. The foundations of dependency theory therefore argued that a distorted economic and social structure had been created in colonised areas through the penetration of colonial capital, creating an international division of labour that rested on inequality. This distorted structure had two key implications. First, the subordination of the economy of the colonised areas to the structure of the advanced capitalist state. This relied on the reorganisation of the economy towards the production of raw materials in order to provide supplies for the colonising states (Hoogvelt 1997, 38–39). This organisation of production served to prevent local industrialisation and lock in primary production of raw materials and agricultural commodities within colonised areas, limiting the scope and diversity of their production (Hoogvelt 1997). The second core implication of the distorted economic and social structures of colonialism was the external orientation of economies, which were dependent on overseas markets for capital, sources of technology, and outlets for production. This dependency was exacerbated by the narrow range of relations and concentration of trade partners and aid partners (Hoogvelt 1997). Moreover, a 'comprador' class in the Third World State – an elite who benefit from donor-patron relationships within structures of dependency – would strive to maintain the status quo and to quell protest (Langan 2018, 13). Dependency theorists argued therefore that these distorted structures of colonialism created and reproduced structures of inequality, peripheralisation, and underdevelopment. It relied and reinforced the transfer of value from periphery to core, creating capital accumulation in the centre and stagnation and impoverisation in the periphery (Hoogvelt 1997, 4).

The focus on the structures of inequality between colonised and former metropolises has informed critical debates about EU relations with the Global South. Critical and materialist analyses understand the EU's external relations as embedding the unequal competitiveness of the EU commodities relative to those produced elsewhere. Development strategies offer the opportunity for the EU to lock partner states into uneven yet combined relations based on the

neo-colonial trading patterns through which developing countries supply primary products in exchange for manufactured goods and services (Price and Nunn 2017). Thus the reproduction of neo-colonial patterns of trade, in which development partners provide new markets for goods and supply raw materials. Importantly, however, Brown (2002) argues that it is vital to understand the relationship between 'western' and African states in a manner that both recognises the uneven nature of the relationship and the uneven and combined nature of the different forms of state-society relations within it.

The development of dependency critiques informed the articulation of political programmes that argued for a radical break from the World Capitalist system, particularly in terms of discourses of economic nationalism, de-linking, and collective self-reliance. Such strategies drew upon strong populist traditions at a national level which were extrapolated to a collective, international agenda. This was evident within the collectivism of Third World identity, formed in opposition to the identification of the First World of western capitalism and the Second World of the communist bloc. Third-Worldist perspectives on international trade and capital flows were translated into a political agenda for changing the structure of the global economy, evident in the United Nations (UN) 1974–1975 Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). This called for fundamental changes in the world market system, through policies to secure prices for traditional exports and preferential market access to domestic markets in advanced countries for Third World 'infant' industries. This was coupled with demands for reform in the monetary system, generous aid flows, and codes of conduct for multinational corporations (MNCs). As illustrated, below, these debates in fact impacted the structure of the Europe-ACP relationship, at least temporarily in the period of Lomé I (from 1975–1980). Notwithstanding this moment of apparent concessions to the demands of former colonies for a break with economic systems of neo-colonialism, the Association arrangements between the European project and former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific have historically been defined by UCD – much to the detriment of poorer citizens in the developing nations.

Eurafrican dependency from the Yaoundé Accords to the signing of the Cotonou agreement

The history of the European project's association with former colonies is marked by a consistent (or perhaps, at best, a briefly interrupted) pattern of Eurafican dependency. The Treaty of Rome in 1957 laid the foundations for the so-called Association of the European Economic Community (EEC) with overseas territories (that is, colonies). Given the founding membership of the supranational project, this involved mostly Francophone colonies of France and Belgium. It was not until British accession to the Common Market in 1973 that the possibility for the constitution of the wider ACP bloc became possible in relation to a wider Eurafican Association.

The Treaty of Rome, meanwhile, built upon the promises of the earlier Schuman Declaration in 1950 to realise a Eurafican Association to the mutual benefit of both the European and African continents (Kawasaki 2000, 17–20). This emphasised the importance of Africa to Europe – namely in terms of a continual supply of raw materials vital to the functioning of European manufacturing and industry. Meanwhile, it invoked the importance of Europe to Africa in terms of technical expertise, investment, and aid money. Both within the Schuman Declaration and the Treaty of Rome, this Eurafican dependency was posed as a moral obligation on the part of European civilisation to improve the material condition of impoverished subjects in the colonies (Rivkin 1958, 308). At no point was the mercantilist desire of the European states to maintain access to lucrative markets in the context of Cold War superpower competition openly raised

or acknowledged. Eurafrika, as a geopolitical entity, however, was envisaged as a potential super-power in its own right, ensuring that European states (collectively) could maintain political and economic mastery over the African continent, thus fending off encroachment from the growing influence of the United States or indeed the Soviet Union.

A key aspect within this newly forged Association arrangement was the creation of the European Development Fund (EDF). The EDF – a controversial component within the Treaty of Rome negotiations themselves – ensured that the EEC member states would take a collective approach to the financing of colonial possessions via aid delivery (Brown 2002). This would ostensibly bring about poverty reduction and modernisation through attention to infrastructure and economic growth in key sectors. However, critical scholars convincingly have pointed to the ways in which the EDF did more to cement European economic interests in the extraction of raw materials in the continent, rather than to genuinely bring about an improvement to the social condition of colonised peoples. The EDF – through the subsidisation of infrastructure links such as roads and ports central to extractive activities, in addition to the subsidisation of European corporate activity in key extractive sectors – provided a vital mechanism for the perpetuation of neo-colonial trade linkages, within relations characterised by dependency and UCD (Langan and Scott 2014).

Importantly, the EDF was rolled over as colonial possessions gained their independence into the early 1960s, resulting in the establishment of the Yaoundé Accords (1963–1975) between the EEC and newly independent former colonies – known as the Associated African States and Madagascar (AASM) (Robson 1965). The EDF continued to function in this period as a subsidy for dependency relations, not least in the political overtures this fund allowed to African elites within the comprador class in the immediate period of decolonisation. Notably, African luminaries such as Kwame Nkrumah, Frantz Fanon, and Sekou Touré all pointed to the political use of aid mechanisms to foster comprador elites – in a neo-colonial challenge to empirical sovereignty of newly created states – and to thus perpetuate economic subordination to Europe (Langan 2018). Namely, comprador elites in African countries would fall prey to the temptations of short-term aid in order to lubricate their own patronage networks in uncertain geopolitical times. In return for the EEC's provisioning of such aid monies, however, these elites would lose political autonomy and would acquiesce to economic forms of dependency, characterised by 'reciprocal' free trade links. Accordingly, African citizens, in the words of Sekou Touré, would remain as 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' (that is, suppliers of raw materials to Europe), while European processed goods entered into African territories – to the decimation of infant industry in those developing economies (Langan 2018).

With the accession of the UK to the EEC project in 1973, however, and with movements for a NIEO gaining traction in international fora, notably the UN, it appeared (albeit briefly) that Association might evolve into a more radical development partnership, geared towards the social needs of impoverished citizens in developing former colonies (Brown 2002). Namely, the negotiations for what became known as the Lomé Conventions had emboldened the newly formed ACP grouping – combining Anglophone and Francophone former colonies – to demand new concessions in their association with the EEC. Most importantly, the ACP negotiators won a concession for the respect for 'non-reciprocal' trade linkages between the blocs. This meant that there would no longer be an automatic expectation that ACP countries would themselves have to liberalise their economies – and dismantle their protective tariffs – if they were to maintain low tariff access to the EEC member states (Brown 2002). Ostensibly this non-reciprocity clause – present within all four of the routinely renewed Lomé Conventions (1975–2000) – meant that ACP economies would have the policy space to protect their own manufacturers and agro-processing industries from detrimental competition from European counterparts (Brown 2002).

ACP economies could thus diversify away from dependence upon export of raw materials to former colonisers and, via protectionist policies, could build up productive capacities in new industries geared towards value addition. Accordingly, Eurafrikan dependency would be replaced with a more equal economic (and political) standing between the blocs – as non-reciprocity would open up opportunities for economic prosperity in the periphery. Meanwhile, the EDF – alongside the newly created System for the Stabilisation of Export Earnings (Stabex) and System for the Stabilisation of Mineral Earnings (Sysmin) – would nominally be geared towards assistance to aspiring African industrialists and agro-processors (The Courier 1975, 7). In this vein, African and European commentators alike hailed the first Lomé Convention in 1975 as a revolutionary moment, marking a break from a neo-colonial system of economic dependency between the European metropole and its former colonial possessions (The Courier 1979, 4).

The Lomé Conventions, however, were soon seen to fall well short of their seemingly radical break with dependency relations in the attempt to usher in a more equal form of North-South relations. The ACP share of total EU imports fell from 6.7% in 1976 to only 2.8% in the final year of the Lomé Conventions (Dearden and Salama 2002, 905). This was in large part due to preference erosion, whereby European trade agreements with other non-ACP countries slowly whittled away the relative preference margin enjoyed by the associates. Moreover, apparently progressive vehicles like the Stabex programme found that between 1985 and 1995 less than half of the resources nominally committed to ACP countries under their auspices were actually delivered. Meanwhile, EEC per capita contributions to ACP countries fell in historical context from €62.9 under the 1st EDF to €23.6 under the 8th EDF at the close of the Lomé Conventions (upon the signing of the Cotonou Agreement in 2000) (Dearden and Salama 2002). Perhaps most worryingly in terms of the continuation of dependency relations, however, Lomé aid assistance to ACP former colonies became conditioned in the 1980s and 1990s upon elite acquiescence to structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in the broader context of Washington Consensus policies pursued by the Breton Woods institutions (Mailafia 1997).

This tying of ACP-EU aid resources to ACP countries' adherence to SAPs became most readily apparent in the timeframe of Lomé IV (1995–2000). In the case of Cameroon, for example, Stabex disbursements were made conditional upon that ACP country's acceptance of structural adjustment measures while also being used as a normative concession through which the liberalisation process could be presented as a socially just endeavour. For example, in the SAP restructuring of Cameroon's coffee and cocoa sectors, the allegedly socially responsible usages of tied Stabex aid was highlighted by the European Commission (1997, 25) in terms of supposedly humane 'redundancy payments' to staff once employed by the government bodies now made obsolete by free market reforms. Meanwhile, in the case of SAP reforms of Tanzania's coffee sector, the European Commission (1997, 27) pointed to the ostensibly ethical use of Stabex funds to provide humanitarian assistance to 410,000 farmers who had been given Stabex monies to 'purchase food, inputs for the coffee sector and to pay for school expenses'. Through such norm-laden concessions, the EEC presented free market liberalisation in ACP countries as aligning with the long-standing pro-poor 'development' norms of the ACP-EEC development partnership. In reality, however, dependency relations were locked-in as ACP governments committed to premature liberalisation and divested from parastatal industries quite contrary to the non-reciprocity and developmental state principles ostensibly embedded in the first Lomé Convention.

This turn to a free market orientation within ACP-EU relations was cemented, meanwhile, with the publication of the European Commission's (1996) *Green Paper on the Future of*

European Union relations with the ACP countries on the Eve of the 21st Century. This key document laid out the EU institutions' intention for any successor to the Lomé Conventions to be defined by the principle of trade reciprocity, meaning that ACP countries would have to 'reciprocate' market opening through tariff dismantling in order to maintain their existing levels of access to European consumers. The European Commission (1996), interestingly, framed this in terms of a post-colonial world order in which the responsibilities of both parties could be framed 'less ambiguously' with the fading of the colonial heritage of association. This was met with alarm on the part of the ACP governments, as articulated in the Libreville Declaration of ACP Heads of State and Government (1997). This collective statement outlined their concerns that premature trade liberalisation vis-à-vis the EU member states would spell disaster for infant industries that had already suffered upon earlier liberalisation measures associated with structural adjustment reforms. ACP governments queried the 'development' discourse of the EU in this context, and called for the respect of developing countries' policy space to protect their economies from import-flooding and to forestall free trade agreements (*ibid.*).

Significantly, however, EU negotiators were able to successfully push for the inclusion of free trade deals within the text of the Cotonou Agreement with ACP countries, signed in 2000. The Cotonou Agreement laid out a timeframe for the conclusion of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with sub-regions of the ACP bloc. Indeed, this was an important shift in and of itself, namely that the ACP group – hailed in the 1970s as a 'trade union of the poor' by Tanzania's Julius Nyerere – would no longer negotiate as a singular entity with the EU (cited in Whiteman 1998, 32). Instead, sub-Saharan African countries would negotiate separately in East African/West African/Central African/and Southern African regional economic communities. Meanwhile, Caribbean and Pacific nations would conclude their own EPAs within their respective regional blocs. Critical commentators pointed here to the EU's adoption of a 'hubs and spokes' or 'divide and conquer' strategy, undermining the unity of the ACP group that had been essential to the winning of concessions at the signing of the first Lomé Convention in 1975 (see for instance Hurt 2003 and Farrell 2005). Critical scholars also queried the EU's ostensible rationale for its insistence upon EPAs, namely that World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules meant that the non-reciprocity principle that had marked the original Lomé Conventions was now deemed discriminatory (in the sense of being disadvantageous to developing countries outside of the ACP bloc, such as Latin American states and India). Critical commentators here pointed to the history of neoliberal reform within the Lomé Conventions themselves and saw an ideological consistency from Lomé to Cotonou, as articulated within the 1996 *Green Paper* itself.

At the time of the signing of the Cotonou Agreement, therefore, both ACP governments, ACP civil society as well as critical commentators within EU academe and institutions including the European Parliament feared that this latest phase of association would merely perpetuate trade and economic relations characterised by dependency (see for instance Hurt 2003; Bilaterals.org 2005 and Traidcraft 2004). That is, that the EPAs would prolong a situation in which ACP economies were unable to meaningfully diversify away from neo-colonial systems of raw material exports and mineral extraction. With the imposition of tariff dismantling as part of the Cotonou Agreement's trade reciprocity principle, nascent infant industries in ACP countries would further suffer upon the conclusion of the EPAs. This would entrench conditions of poverty and lead to ACP countries' ongoing reliance upon EU aid monies as a succour in lieu of genuine economic growth and development. Eurafican visions of the continents being bound together in neo-colonial trade patterns therefore continued to dominate the minds of critical commentators, with many of their concerns being borne out in the years since the signing of Cotonou in 2000.

Development discourse and dependency relations from Cotonou to a post-Cotonou phase

The concerns expressed at the signing of the Cotonou Agreement, that the EU's focus on the 'smooth and gradual' integration of ACP countries into a globalised economy – via the EPAs – would fall foul of overarching development prerogatives have continued into the lifetime of this Association treaty. Notably, ACP countries – with the exception of the CARIFORUM (Caribbean) bloc – failed to sign EPAs by the original deadline of December 2007. Expressing concerns about the impact of tariff dismantling for vulnerable import-competing sectors such as beef, poultry, and textiles manufacturing, the regional economic communities of sub-Saharan Africa failed to agree terms for the implementation of EPAs within the period initially envisaged in the Cotonou Agreement. It is only at time of writing toward the end of the Cotonou Agreement that the EPAs are coming onstream with, for example, a process of ratification being completed in the individual West African parliaments in relation to the West Africa EPA – whose terms were provisionally agreed by West African Heads of Government back in 2014 (European Commission 2014).

One of the key means of breaking the EPA deadlock, meanwhile, has been the EU institutions' increasing reference to Aid for Trade monies to stimulate private sector development (PSD) in ACP economies. Nominally, Aid for Trade and PSD financing will allow former colonies to flourish in the context of EPA free trade deals (Langan 2016). Monies will be directed to import-competing sectors to help them cope with the pressures of tariff dismantling where ACP governments deem that such industries are a priority in terms of economic diversification and job creation. Moreover, Aid for Trade monies will apparently also be given towards export-oriented sectors, to ensure that ACP economies take advantage of the low tariff access to European consumers that they will secure for the long term upon the implementation of the EPAs. This will apparently deal with the supply-side issues which meant that ACP economies were unable to meaningfully take advantage of trade preferences previously bestowed upon them during the years of the Lomé Conventions (Langan 2016).

In West Africa, this EU promise of Aid for Trade in the context of Cotonou's push for EPAs was at the heart of their Heads of Governments' decision to endorse the terms of a regional trade agreement back in 2014. West African ACP countries – led by Nigeria – pushed successfully for the European Commission's agreeing to an EPA Development Programme (EPADP). Originally West African governments insisted that this would have to constitute €9.5 billion of *new* monies – that is, money not already committed to ACP states under the existing European Development Fund (EDF). Nevertheless, the final agreement between West African countries and the EU on the EPADP concluded upon a much reduced figure of €6.5 billion (Langan and Price 2015). Moreover, this money would in fact be drawn down from existing financial commitments in relation to the EDF. As a result, a plethora of West African civil society bodies queried whether or not the EPADP would be able to translate EPAs into a genuine 'development' opportunity for developing countries, as per official EU discourse under the premises of the Cotonou Agreement (Langan and Price 2015).

Notably, a number of West African civil society activists accused the EU of continuing with economic and trade relations marked by dependency (see for instance West African Civil Society Platform 2011). West African economies under the EPA – and insufficiently supported with the EPADP – would be unable to diversify away from neo-colonial patterns of raw material export and mineral extraction. Aid monies in this context would do more to lubricate the patronage networks of a comprador class political elite than to meaningfully support economic diversification. Key industries like the West African poultry sector, meanwhile, would be further jeopardised under an EPA as cheap frozen chicken from EU member states such as Germany

would continue to flood the domestic market. Local poultry farms that had already suffered upon earlier bouts of tariff liberalisation would be unable to cope with the conditions imposed by the EPA (Bagooro 2011). Interestingly, these civil society concerns persist despite the provision within the terms of the West African EPA for a 'sensitive goods basket' in which the principle of trade reciprocity need not apply. Poultry has been identified by West African governments as a commodity line that ought to be included within the sensitive goods basket, with these countries therefore being officially able to levy protective tariffs upon poultry products emanating from the EU member states (Langan 2018). Nevertheless, the West African Common External Tariff (CET) at around 35% is unable to meaningfully discourage EU producers' dumping of frozen chicken at below-production cost given the fractional pricing involved. Indeed, it is often cheaper for European poultry traders to dump 'brown meat' (those parts of the bird not usually consumed by European consumers) upon African markets than it is to dispose of the parts in a sustainable fashion (Langan 2018). Meanwhile, the terms of the EPA will mean that national parliaments in West Africa will be devoid of the policy competency to individually raise the tariff upon frozen chicken produce, and likewise will find it difficult to ban such cargoes (without falling foul of the terms of the free trade agreement with the EU institutions, unless safeguard clauses can be legally invoked).

In addition to the plight of the West African poultry sector, a number of Sustainability Impact Assessments (SIAs) commissioned by the EU institutions themselves to anticipate the impact of EPAs, also find that import-competing sectors in ACP economies will be unable to cope with enhanced flooding of their local markets by European agricultural and manufacturing produce (Patel 2007). As mentioned, key industries such as textiles, beef, confectionary, and carpet manufacturing will be severely affected by the imminent ratification and implementation of EPAs in the four respective regional economic blocs of sub-Saharan Africa (Patel 2007). Moreover, the EU's increasing focus on aid blending initiatives further queries whether aid monies are being utilised for poverty alleviation, or rather for the enhancement of EU corporate interests within asymmetric economic ties marked by dependency. For example, the activities of the European Investment Bank (EIB) in supporting environmentally damaging and labour-exploitative mining operations in countries such as Zambia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) undermine European Commission claims that the channelling of public aid monies to Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) as part of aid blending projects will result in poverty alleviation for vulnerable citizenries in former colonies (Langan 2018).

Worryingly, meanwhile, the negotiations for a successor to the Cotonou Agreement (due to expire in 2020) point to the continuation of economic dependency relations between the EU and its former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. Notwithstanding the EU's increasing interest in forging closer ties with the African Union (AU) itself, and doing away with the ACP Secretariat as a colonial vestige, it does appear likely that the ACP grouping will continue in a diminished form under new association arrangements. Nevertheless, the ACP Secretariat and the AU will be unable to meaningfully protect their members from the anticipated effects of premature trade liberalisation under the EPAs. Nor will they meaningfully be able to halt the European Commission's ongoing desire to marry its aid disbursements to corporate interests as embodied in the activities of the EIB under so-called 'aid blending initiatives' – often channelled to dirty extraction with little genuine benefit for poorly remunerated workers or polluted surrounding communities. Moreover, the EU institutions' increased focus on migration also has signalled that aid monies will be increasingly conditioned upon ACP governments' willingness to tackle the 'root causes of irregular migration' (see for instance Oxfam 2017). While industries suffer – and jobs are lost – under EPA implementation (providing a push factor for migration flows), ACP political elites will simultaneously be expected to increase surveillance

and policing of their own citizens, as well as citizens of neighbouring states resident in their territories, in order to prevent migratory attempts towards the EU member states. Already in Mali, this has seen the government there accused of human rights violations in the name of migration policy (Langan 2018).

Interestingly, however, African governments have recently advocated for macro-regional initiatives through the AU, in particular the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA). In so doing they have invoked ideas of (Nkrumah's) Pan Africanism as well as the concept of 'developmental regionalism' (UNCTAD 2016). Such plans rely on a normative acceptance of the benefits of trade liberalisation but nevertheless seek in part to diversify away from reliance upon traditional trade partners like the EU:

In order to multiply the benefits of the [A]CFTA and promote developmental regionalism in Africa, a comprehensive vision of trade and development needs to be in place. Expanded markets for African goods and services, unobstructed factor movements and the reallocation of resources should promote economic diversification, structural transformation, technological development and the enhancement of human capital. The CFTA must be ambitious in dismantling barriers and reducing costs to intra-African trade and in improving productivity and competitiveness. (UNCTAD 2016)

In this context, the AU predicts that the consolidation of free trade across the Continent will boost trade, benefit business and consumers, and support sustainable development (African Trade Policy Centre 2018). Nevertheless, in reality, the ACFTA is reliant not only on the liberalisation of trade across the continent but also on the establishment of a Continent to Continent Free Trade Agreement with the EU. The Africa-Europe Alliance for Sustainable Investment and Jobs, for example, has been created to support the development of the ACFTA:

...the final aim is to support regional economic integration in Africa, to achieve markets that are more integrated, promote intra-regional trade, develop Africa's investment and productive capacity, create decent jobs and improve inter-regional economic infrastructure. (European Commission 2018)

Questions thus remain about the capacity for these AU initiatives to bring about a genuine diversification of trade linkages away from Eurafrican dependency as embodied in the EPAs. Indeed, in the forthcoming post-Cotonou phase of EU relations with Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific it would seem mostly likely that aid monies and development discourse will continue to provide normative cover for the maintenance of economic ties characterised by former colonies' reliance upon neo-colonial patterns of trade – unless radical social movements should arise to challenge premature trade liberalisation and the tying of aid to comprador elites' political acquiescence to EU agendas.

Conclusion

EU development ties with the ACP countries have been characterised by both a normative discourse of poverty reduction and concern for the wellbeing of former colonies, as well as economic and trade relationships defined by dependency. From the time of the Schuman Declaration in the 1950s to the current state of negotiations for a successor to the Cotonou Agreement, EU relations with its former colonies has continued to be an uneasy marriage of development language to commercial prerogatives in the maintenance of neo-colonial trade

patterns. With a brief interruption upon the signing of the first Lomé Convention in 1975 (amidst the pressures of the Third World Movement for a NIEO), the history of Europe's development and trade ties with ACP states has been marked by the marrying of aid to inequitable economic arrangements and adjustment reforms. This is likely to remain the status quo upon the conclusion of the successor to Cotonou unless there is a renewed focus upon calls for alternatives to neoliberal free trade structures, as currently being promoted by the EU institutions and as currently acquiesced to by aid-dependent elites in regions such as West Africa. Pan-African economic alternatives – if they were bolstered by radical social movements focussed upon the breaking of dependency ties with the metropole EU states – would potentially augur change, although this of course would involve challenging local elites' acquiescence to EU policy demands (as lubricated by EU aid flows under instruments such as the EDF and EPADP). Critical commentators, disappointed in 2000 with the conclusion of Cotonou and its promotion of the EPAs, may find themselves equally disappointed with the realities of EU 'development' interventions beyond 2020.

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