

**ASSOCIATION, PARTNERSHIP, OR NEO-COLONIALISM?: DECOLONIZATION &
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION IN EUROPEAN-AFRICAN TRADE AND
DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENTS, 1957-2000**

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Abstract

This thesis shows how the processes of European integration and African decolonization intersected in the language of trade and development in three major treaties governing European-African cooperation: the 1963 Yaoundé Convention, the 1975 Lomé Convention, and the 2000 Cotonou Agreement. The purpose of this thesis is to evaluate the interpretation of European integration as being shaped by the decline of European colonial empires following the Second World War. My research finds that all three treaties' language reinforce the identity of a collective Europe through a mission of development, and that the changes in the language of the treaties reflect developments in the process of European integration. This thesis finds that the trend of decolonization manifests itself in the significance of "special" European-African relationship in the first two agreements: more emphasis is placed on equal sovereignty in the Yaoundé Convention and on a "New International Economic Order" in the Lomé Convention. However, in contrast, the Cotonou Agreement is notable for its *lack* of a special European-African relationship, which reflects the changes in the treaties' content motivated by shifting European political priorities. Overall, this thesis finds that European-African relationship was an important vehicle for early European integration during the origins of the European Community, but at the moment it is not a major factor except as a means of reinforcing a common European identity vis-à-vis the rest of the world.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

In October 2022, the European Union’s foreign policy chief Josep Borrell described Europe as a ‘garden’ and the rest of the world as a ‘jungle.’¹ Many non-European public officials around the world took umbrage with this statement because of its condescending ‘neo-colonial’ connotations, but Borrell defended his metaphor as his way of promoting positive engagement of the ‘gardeners’ with the outside world. He provides the migrant crisis of 2015 and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 as two examples of the ‘jungle’ invading the ‘garden.’ Borrell’s statement shows that the European Union’s self-perception as “the best combination of political freedom, economic prosperity and social cohesion that the humankind has been able to build” is tightly connected to its relationship to the rest of the world, the ‘jungle.’

The European Union exists not as a singular unified political institution per se, but rather as a *sui generis* complex of several institutions (the European Commission, the European Court of Justice, the European Parliament, the European Council, and the European Central Bank) that governs from above the affairs of its member-states. The European Union, one of the defining features of modern European political life, is the product of a historical process that began after the Second World War. Following the war, Western European elites diplomatically bound their countries together by creating several transnational cooperative organizations such as NATO and the European Coal and Steel Community. In the Schuman Declaration proposing the creation of the ECSC, French foreign minister Robert Schuman named one of the essential tasks of a united Europe to be “the development of the African continent.”² This statement shows that the relationship between Europe and the outside world, in particular Africa due to the

¹ Jorge Libreiro. “Josep Borrell apologises for controversial 'garden vs jungle' metaphor but defends speech.” *Euronews*, October 20, 2012, <https://www.euronews.com/>

² Robert Schuman, “Schuman Declaration,” (speech, Paris, May 9, 1950), European Union, https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/history-eu/1945-59/schuman-declaration-may-1950_en.

(de)colonization's legacy, has been important for collective European identity from the Union's origins.

Scholars have advanced several interpretations of the history of European integration, emphasizing different factors' importance in the process. One interpretation focuses on the connection between post-war decolonization and the origins of European integration. For scholars such as Peo Hansen, the formative years of European integration should be placed in the wider context of rapidly declining European power across the globe following WWII and the resulting process of decolonization. The United States and the Soviet Union were becoming superpowers while European empires (in particular those of Britain and France) struggled to maintain independent geopolitical relevance. The idea of "Eurafrica"—that of a special relationship between Europe and Africa—was the heart of the French-driven strategy of advancing European cooperation in the exploitation/development of Africa to establish a third pole of global power between Washington and Moscow.³ This special relationship between Europe and Africa was formalized politically through the French demand of the legal 'association' of its African overseas territories with the European Economic Community in the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Since then, the architecture for this European-African development and trade relationship has been substantially revised three times: first in the 1963 Yaoundé Convention, then in the 1975 Lomé Convention, and most recently in the 2000 Cotonou Agreement.

Research Question

This thesis seeks to build on this 'Eurafrican' interpretation of the history of European integration by analyzing the changes in the language of development between the aforementioned

³ Megan Brown, *The Seventh Member State: Algeria, France, and the European Community*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2022), 3. The general public was indifferent to negotiations for the early institutions of European integration, which leaves government officials and European political elites as the relevant actors in European integration.

three treaties: the 1963 Yaoundé Convention, the 1975 Lomé Convention, and the 2000 Cotonou Agreement. Through doing this, I aspire to uncover some of the ways in how the processes of European integration and African decolonization impacted each other through international negotiations. In order to understand the changes in the treaties' policies and of the goals of the treaties' drafters, the discursive analysis of the treaties themselves will be supplemented by statements and reports from legislative bodies, official letters, press releases, speeches, and newspaper articles.

This thesis finds that all three treaties reinforce the identity of a collective Europe through a mission of foreign development and that changes in the language of the treaties reflect the changing priorities of the European integration process. Furthermore, the process of decolonization manifests itself in the focus of the language of the equal sovereignty in the Yaoundé Convention and the discourse of a “New International Economic Order” in the Lomé Convention; however, there is no evidence suggesting any colonial legacy whatsoever in the Cotonou Agreement. The change in the language of the treaties— from a special, equal relationship between Europe and Africa in Yaoundé to one of several development agreements of the European Union with developing countries in Cotonou— follows from their changing history. The language of these treaties is part of the drafters' efforts to use European integration to redefine their relationship with Africa. This shift in focus results from the end of the Eurafrikan ideal of European power on the European side, with European elites now more concerned with the development of the European Union itself, its expansion, and dealing with globalization. The rest of this introductory chapter consists of an overview of African decolonization and development to provide context for the shifts between the various trade regimes of the treaties, the historiography of European integration

to place the ‘Eurafrican’ interpretation in the broader context of European integration, and an in-depth look at the literature for the ‘Eurafrican’ interpretation.

Post-war African Decolonization

‘Decolonization’ describes the process of the precipitous decline of European formal empires following the Second World War and the abandonment of most of their colonial possessions.⁴ Why did this happen? Historians have identified several important causes for the advancement of decolonization during this period.⁵ First, nationalist movements had developed across many European colonies across the world that demanded independence, growing within Africa across the 1950s. These movements were spurred on by the strain placed on the British and French empires during the First and Second World Wars and the creation of the United Nations as an avenue to condemn racism and colonialism on an international stage. Second, improvements in transportation technologies had intensified trade between industrialized countries and made direct control over colonial resources less necessary to make use of colonial resources. Third, the two post-war superpowers— the USA & USSR— promoted the self-determination ideologies of Wilson and Lenin respectively, and each supported the liquidation of formal European empires in the context of swaying postcolonial leaders into their sphere.

The term ‘formal empire’ is used in describing decolonization because many African leaders and intellectuals such as the Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah considered this decolonization to only mean the end of direct political domination, not of Western domination in general. “Neocolonialism,” a term often used by critics of the European development and trade

⁴ At the start of the twentieth century, almost the entirety of the African continent had been conquered by and incorporated into European empires; by the end of the 1960s, only the Portuguese colonies and independent settler-colonial states like apartheid South Africa remained under formal colonialism, and by the end of the twentieth century the only European territories left in Africa were the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla.

⁵ Giuliano Garavini, *After Empires: European Integration, Decolonization, and the Challenge from the Global South, 1957-1986* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 22; Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1994), 210-222.

agreements with Africa such as Nkrumah, is defined in his work *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* as the state of a seemingly sovereign nation having its “economic system and thus its political system directed from the outside.”⁶ Many African critics of the European-African trade relationship (including Nkrumah himself in reference to Yaoundé) considered it a tool of neo-colonialism. One other pertinent aspect of decolonization is the creation of the Bandung Movement and the Third World bloc by former colonies attempting to avoid obeisance to American or Soviet dictates for their political system. This occurred at the same time as the French and British Empires went through a ‘late colonial shift’: they attempted to revitalize their imperial projects through economic rationalization projects and politically reorganizing their colonial states. For this reason, these states created the French Union and the Commonwealth respectively as organizations to exert influence over these overseas territories. French officials believed the relationship to the overseas territories to be integral to French *grandeur* and its global political position.

The number one priority for the leaders of these newly independent countries was ‘development’ over questions of political ideology. ‘Development’ describes the policies aimed to achieve substantial economic growth of Third World (in the case of this thesis specifically African) countries. Two theories of development are of significance to this project because of their impact on international politics during the time of study. The “structuralist” or “dependence” theory of development, developed by Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch in the 1950s, placed the problem of the underdevelopment of the Third World as caused by a systemic inequality in international trade.⁷ According to this theory, innovation in the productivity of the commodity producing Third World countries led to their systemic impoverishment to the advantage of the industrialized Western nations where the opposite was true. The demand by African countries for an

⁶ Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1965), ix.

⁷ Garavini, *After Empires*, 25-26.

interventionist “New International Economic Order,” as discussed in chapter 3, was greatly informed by this theory. The establishment of the export income-stabilization mechanism STABEX and the sugar commodity protocol in the Lomé Convention were two examples of statist economic solutions negotiated by the African states in their trade relationship to alter the global balance of trade.

The other relevant theory of development for this thesis, the Washington Consensus, was inspired by increasingly popular neoliberal economic theory in the years following the oil shock and global economic downturn of the 1970s. The World Bank sponsored several reports, most notably the Berg Report, in response to the worsening African debt crisis of the 1980s. These reports articulated an alternative vision of development in light of the inability of the dependence theory-inspired interventionist methods to deal with the growing problem of African underdevelopment. This “counter-revolution in development theory” suggested that, in order to achieve economic development, Third World (African) countries should open up their economies to global competition, promote foreign business, and end their preferential state interventionist measures.⁸ The changes in the priorities of development in the Lomé Convention to Cotonou Agreement reflect the adoption by European governments of this theory of development in relation to their trade and development partnership with the African continent.

European integration

‘European integration’ describes the historical process of the intergovernmental agreements between European nation-states following the Second World War that created the institutions that would eventually become the European Union.⁹ These institutions expanded in

⁸ Giovanni Arrighi, “The African Crisis,” *New Left Review*, May/June 2002.

⁹ I’m being very careful in my word choice here, using the most common term among academic historians of ‘integration’ rather than the more politically charged terms for the process such as European ‘federation’, ‘construction’, ‘unification’, or ‘cooperation’. For more information on the nuances of the term, see Perry Anderson,

scope, from the 1951 Treaty of Paris establishing the European Coal and Steel Community concerned exclusively with creating a common market for coal and steel, to the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon currently serving as the constitutional basis for the European Union. Historians have notoriously complicated the traditional narrative of the history of European integration to the point of inscrutability for academic specialists, much less the general reader. This traditional ‘progressive’ interpretation, dominant in early scholarship but fallen out of favor among scholars excepting official EU rhetoric, claims that the leaders of Western Europe deliberately advanced European integration, step-by-step, out of a common federalist ideal that increased social and economic ties between European nations would be able to prevent future war between Europeans.¹⁰

According to Mark Gilbert, this interpretation understands the progress of European integration as a kind of Whig history, “a victory for the ‘sons of the light’ over the reticence, grousing and obtuse opposition put up by those who clung to the idea of supremacy of the nation-state and its traditional political prerogatives.”¹¹ These federalist ‘sons of the light’ were particularly concerned with managing the relationship between France and West Germany, and out of this concern they forged the European Coal and Steel Community, subsequently building upon it through several cumulative arrangements of increasing scope and power such as the 1957 Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community, culminating in the 1992 Maastricht Treaty establishing the European Union. This interpretation privileges the European Union’s self-image as a *sui generis* peace project, and as a result lends itself to be employed in

Ever Closer Union?: Europe in the West (New York: Verso, 2021), 144 & Luuk van Middelaar, *The Passage to Europe: How a Continent Became a Union*, trans. Liz Waters (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), xi & 5.

¹⁰ One notable recent variation of this interpretation comes from Dutch historian & former advisor to the European Council Luuk van Middelaar in his work *The Passage to Europe: How a Continent Became a Union*.

¹¹ Mark Gilbert, “Historicizing European Integration History,” *European Review of International Studies* 8, no. 2 (2021): 223. That label of ‘obtuse opposition’ referring to the notorious criticisms of the federalist European project by De Gaulle and Thatcher.

official EU rhetoric such as Borrell's reference to a 'garden' of Europe surrounded by a threatening 'jungle.' Furthermore, this interpretation is influential in popular discourse surrounding the EU, manifesting itself in events such as the Nobel Peace Prize being awarded to the EU in 2012.

Alan Milward contributed the first major turning point and most notorious work in European integration revisionism in his book *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*. He argues here that, from the beginning, European integration was pursued as a selfish means for nation-states to reinforce their own individual economic power.¹² The original six member states of the European Community (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, hereafter referred to as the Six) all saw it as within their economic self-interest to pursue integration and develop close arrangements of trade and exchange in order to develop their post-war welfare states, a motivation stemming from the demands of their respective electorates. Milward attributed one cause for the high economic growth rates of European economies during the 1950s and 1960s to the creation of the Common Market; the removal of trade barriers and promotion of the free movement of labor and capital enabled increasing economies of scales. In sum, these nation-states were always themselves the masters of the process, and the European Economic Community was purely born from the autonomous calculation of the potential mutual benefit that the customs union could bring to each nation-state's economy. For Milward, considerations of international diplomacy like the Cold War or the end of European empires are of secondary importance, and federalist visionaries such as Jean Monnet, such key figures in the traditional progressive interpretation of European integration, are irrelevant.

In turn, since 1992, Milward's 'neo-realist' interpretation of European integration itself has been subject to critique. For example, Perry Anderson criticizes Milward's interpretation for

¹² Alan Milward, *The European Rescue of the Nation-State* (London: Routledge, 1992).

downplaying the importance of events such as the Suez Crisis acting as catalysts for European integration and ignoring the influence of the European federalist circle centered on Jean Monnet had in giving power to institutions like the European Commission or the European Court of Justice.¹³ This is the context of the debate over the historiography of European integration within which the ‘Eurafrican’ theory of European integration should be placed.¹⁴

‘Eurafrica’

The ‘Eurafrican’ interpretation of European integration, advanced by scholars such as Peo Hansen and Megan Brown, argues that the origins and nature of European integration are tightly connected to the questions of post-war European empire and decolonization. There is a consensus among historians that the integration of European economic and political structures “offered ways for colonial powers to make up for and adjust to the changing political and economic circumstances brought about by decolonization.”¹⁵ The process of decolonization, through events such as Nasser’s successful nationalization of the Suez Canal diplomatically humiliating Britain and France, saw global power shift away from Western Europe and expedited the signing of Rome by convincing Europeans of the paucity of their remaining power. However, this specific interpretation argues that the creation of international groups like the EEC, rather than as purely the result of the end of colonialism, served to authorize its continuation for the purposes of certain actors. These states, in particular France, were not relinquishing their empires by participating in European integration: they saw integration as a vehicle to maintain them. For example, during the

¹³ Perry Anderson, “Under the Sign of the Interim,” *London Review of Books*, January 4, 1996.

¹⁴ For further reading, two recent landmark critical histories of the process of European integration consulted while researching this thesis, see Perry Anderson’s *Ever Closer Union?* and Kiran Patel’s *Project Europe*. However, for the purposes of this thesis in looking at the ‘Eurafrican’ interpretation in particular, the two most relevant interpretations, the ‘progressive’ and ‘neo-realist,’ are sufficient as an introduction to this historiographical labyrinth.

¹⁵ Peo Hansen, “European Integration, European Identity and the Colonial Connection.” *European Journal of Social Theory* 5, no. 4 (2002): 483-498.

negotiations for the Treaty of Rome, French officials insisted on the inclusion of the Algerian departments as a core part of the EEC as a means to juridically legitimate France's continued presence there in response to Third World criticisms through the UN of the Algerian War.¹⁶ The Treaty of Rome regulated the relationship between the EEC member states and their remaining colonial territories through 'association,' wherein tariffs were reciprocally lowered although not totally abolished and a common European Development Fund, to which contributions from member-states was obligatory, invested in development projects. With the additional import quotas of African goods into the common market, the common market economically integrated itself with the associated territories.

The ideology of 'Eurafrica,' advocated from the 1920s by notable European federalists such as Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, advocated for the geopolitical union among and between Europe and Africa. In the words of Coudenhove-Kalergi, "Africa could provide Europe with raw materials for its industry, nutritious for its population, land for its overpopulation, labor for its unemployed, and markets for its products."¹⁷ The European government for which the Eurafrican ideology played the most important role during the process of European integration was that of France, which played a unique role in driving the future European-African relationship. The Eurafrican ideology served well the purposes of French geopolitical strategy following the Second World War because it reconciled the need to reform the French Empire in response to the strains of decolonization and the desire of French officials to center an integrated third superpower Europe in France. France's political position as the most powerful state of the Six would be privileged through being the bridge between its colonies and the other European countries. French

¹⁶ Brown, *The Seventh Member State*, 144. Algeria's legal status as technically a core member of the Common Market was left alone by all parties until the European Community negotiated

¹⁷ Brown, *The Seventh Member State*, 34.

officials that negotiated European common market, such as the minister of overseas territory Gaston Defferre, conceived of the Common Market as a '*Eurafricain*' project that merged France's African vocation with its European vocation through special clauses governing the common market's relationship to remaining colonies.¹⁸

The following three chapters will provide a timeline between and analyze the three treaties of the European-African trade and relationship established following the independence of the associated territories in 1960s. Chapter 2, looking at the 1963 Yaoundé Convention, shows that the language of the treaty strongly emphasized the sovereign equality between Europe and Africa, the reciprocal nature of the association relationship, and the cohesive nature of the European Economic Community as an international actor. Chapter 3, looking at the 1975 Lomé Convention, gives an overview of the changes made to the association relationship caused by the British accession to the EEC and shows how the language of the treaty reflects the advance of decolonization. Chapter 4, looking at the 2000 Cotonou Agreement, gives an overview of the changes to the European-African relationship from Lomé to Cotonou and shows that the language of the treaty marks a significant rupture in how it de-emphasizes the special nature of the relationship. By looking at the language of these treaties, this thesis looks to examine how the European-African development relationship reflects changes in the European integration process and the evolution of European relations to their former colonies into the twenty-first century.

¹⁸ Letter from Gaston Defferre to Guy Mollet on the French Union and the Common Market, May 17, 1956, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe archive.

Chapter 2 – The Yaoundé Convention

This chapter focuses on analyzing the language of the Yaoundé Convention. First, I will look at the historical background for the ‘association’ between the African states party to the convention and the European Economic Community. Initially established through the Treaty of Rome when the African states were still European colonies, the rapid decolonization of the French and Belgian colonies in 1960 created an urgent need to reevaluate the association relationship on new terms influenced by the advancement of decolonization as a global force. Next, I will give my analysis of the Yaoundé Convention itself. There is a strong motif of a ‘reciprocal partnership’ in the treaty where the European-African relationship emphasizes cooperation and is underpinned by equality, a rhetorical break from previous colonial ideology.

From Rome to Yaoundé

Article 227 of the Treaty of Rome established ‘association,’ the legal infrastructure governing the economic relationship between the to-be-integrated European mainland economies and their remaining (mostly African) colonies, referred to as ‘overseas territories.’¹⁹ There was a broad consensus among the future member-states during the negotiations leading up to the European Economic Community that the remaining European colonial possessions must be brought into the fold, with the common market gaining access to investment in the colonies under equal terms.²⁰ French officials strongly pushed for the insertion of their African colonial possessions into an integrated Europe because of their conviction that this was the best path to

¹⁹ Not all European colonial territories fell under association. The French overseas departments, including the 3 Algerian departments, were integrated directly into the European Economic Community and thus the common market.

²⁰ Peo Hansen, “A Statue to Nasser? Eurafica, the Colonial Roots of European Integration, and the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize,” *Mediterranean Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (2013): 14. The specifics of how this integration would take place were hotly contested, but officials from all of the Six except the Netherlands agreed on the French-backed principle of strongly integrating the European and colonial economies for their own self-interested reasons.

establish an independent French-dominated European pole of global power.²¹ European critics of association claimed that a common market inclusive of the overseas territories would implicate all of the Six in French imperial strategy, but “for French officials, that was the point.”²² As Megan Brown shows in her book *The Seventh Member State*, the treaties of European integration served as useful diplomatic tools for the French government to diplomatically defend its imperial interests in Algeria and Africa from colonial nationalists and global critics at the United Nations. Continuously threatening to halt the process of European integration unless their demands for economic incorporation were met, French officials desired to balance the Common Market with the French Union without totally alienating the members of either group. Under Rome’s ‘association,’ these colonies would be economically integrated with the EEC as a whole through the means of the gradual reduction of customs tariffs for the non-metropolitan European economies as well as by the introduction of import quotas for certain African goods into the Common Market. In addition to this, the treaty established a common ‘European Development Fund’ with an endowment of 581 million dollars to be invested in the colonies by 1962.²³

The independence of France’s African colonies and of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by 1960 had created an urgent need for the European Economic Community to reevaluate its trade relationship with the African continent. Many Pan-Africanist leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana criticized Rome’s association as ‘collective colonialism’ that turned French Africa into Eurafrika. They regarded the provisions of Rome as neocolonial because association was mostly beneficial for European economic interests and frustrated independently organized

²¹ Brown, *The Seventh Member State*, 111.

²² Brown, *The Seventh Member State*, 118.

²³ Figure comes from 'Is Africa running away from the EEC?' from *Die Welt*, 2 June 1960, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe archive.

African integration projects.²⁴ The leaders of the former French colonies deemed their economic links with the EEC more important to deepen rather than engaging with pan-Africanist organizations such as the Organization of African Unity. It is in this context, partially as a response to these criticisms of an unequal partnership, that the Yaoundé Convention of 1963 was negotiated. The European trade relationship with the African associated states would have to be overhauled. The African territories covered by the Treaty of Rome were sovereign states in their own right, something that had not necessarily been anticipated on this timeframe during the treaty's drafting. The independence of the British African colonies during this period made the issue even more pressing, as the African continent was now in the process of being divided into post-colonial spheres of influence between the EEC and the Commonwealth.

The French government in particular urgently pressed for the revision of the constitutional structure governing the relationship between former overseas territories and the European metropole, though this was a priority secondary to the negotiations surrounding the establishment of the French Community for them. As stated by West German Bundestag member Walter Scheel, “not until the *Communauté Française* is firmly established can direct contact between the overseas territories and France's European Economic Community partners be further encouraged.”²⁵ Nevertheless, French officials retained the same motivations that had guided them in establishing the initial pattern of association under Rome. However, French imperial policy in Africa vis-à-vis the French attitude towards European integration became a key tension for negotiations among the EEC for the new agreement. Public opinion in the Netherlands and West Germany had turned against the French war effort in Algeria, and both governments increasingly advocated for

²⁴ Peo Hansen, “Eurafrica Incognita: The Colonial History of the European Union,” *History of the Present* 7, no. 1 (2017): 20-21.

²⁵ ‘Is Africa running away from the EEC?’ from *Die Welt*, 2 June 1960, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l’Europe archive.

abolishing the special relationship implied by association and including the former European African colonies in the context of the broader European trade and development relationship with the Global South.

The report produced by the European Parliamentary Conference in Strasbourg in 1961, produced during an intense period of debate within the Community about the necessity to transform the nature of association and published in the Luxembourg daily *Europe*, provides a useful perspective in understanding the contradictory point of views regarding association by contemporary European officials. European federationists dismissed African criticisms of association functioning as a tool of “neo-imperialism” by pointing out that the agreements drawn up between the Community and the associated states were merely replacing existing preferences of trade between metropolises and former colonies. Thus, criticisms of this nature should be directed at those nations rather than the EEC as a whole. Walter Scheel provides a further defense against this attack, claiming that “the Community has never intervened to maintain a sort of colonial statue in the associated countries,” and that, in reference to the Treaty of Rome, “there exists no link and no political obligation between the Community and the associated countries.”²⁶ The European Economic Community denied the existence of a direct historical link between the institution of the Community itself and political interference of Europeans in the African continent. Association as established by the Treaty of Rome was a purely economic relationship, and while ‘distinctive relationships’ were conceded to have existed between certain member states (i.e. France) and certain associated African countries, this was irrelevant regardless. However, a few pages later, Dutch representative van Naters points out in another section of the report, the status of Association

²⁶ "La conférence parlementaire euro-africaine de Strasbourg (19-24 juin 1961)" in *Europe*, June 12, 1961, 2, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe archive.

as conferred by the Treaty of Rome was permanent and could only be renounced by a specific denunciation of a successor state.²⁷

Analysis of the Yaoundé Convention

On July 23, 1963, a few days following the signing of the Yaoundé Convention, the president of the European Commission Walter Hallstein gave a speech commemorating this occasion in Brussels. For him, Yaoundé was above all a work of peace and progress, a remarkable achievement with none of its decisions as the result of one party imposing its will on the other, while keeping the door open for non-associated countries to join in. On the one hand, Hallstein recognized that, for the Associated African States, Yaoundé was their attempt to arrive at a level of economic security that would allow them to truly affirm their own sovereignty on the world stage. On the other hand, for the EEC, Yaoundé represented an opportunity to smooth the transition to the common market and congeal itself as the main institution of European integration.²⁸

Certainly, throughout the Yaoundé Convention, consistent reference is made to the European Economic Community as a common bloc, if with somewhat less frequency than mentions to the member states themselves. It is important that the title of the treaty itself emphasizes “between the **European Economic Community** and the **African and Malagasy States** associated with that Community.” Another example within the protocols, Protocol 5, specifies consistently that, with regards actions taken for financing the social investments and technical aid provided for by Yaoundé, all requests will be directed towards the European Commission to furnish it with further power. By inserting itself at the same level as, and sometimes beyond, the nation-states composing it within the context of international negotiations,

²⁷ "La conférence parlementaire euro-africaine de Strasbourg (19-24 juin 1961)" in *Europe*, June 12, 1961, 5, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe archive.

²⁸ "Discours de Walter Hallstein à l'occasion de la signature de la convention de Yaoundé." (speech, Yaoundé, July 20, 1963) accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe archive.

the European Economic Community laid the groundwork for a recognition of the increased role that a federalizing Europe might play in international relations. Of further note are the various ways that the language and choices of the treaty itself reflect the concern of using the Eurafrikan partnership to reify the process of European integration. The treaty was drawn up in a single original in the German, French, Italian, and Dutch languages, with Article 65 claiming that “each of these texts [in their version of the language] being equally authentic.”

The central focus of language in ‘The Convention of Association between the European Economic Community and the African and Malagasy States associated with that Community and Annexed Documents signed at Yaoundé on 20 July 1963’ (hereafter referred to as the Yaoundé Convention) is that the association between the EEC and its associated states was founded on a basis of ‘complete equality and friendly relations’ (Title I), and this relationship was fundamentally reciprocal. ‘*Le régime de tutelle*’ was over, and accusations of neocolonialism defended against. The goal of the Eurafrikan partnership in Yaoundé above all was the development and industrialization of the associated countries through deepening trade links and providing united European avenues to give aid to African economic projects. This is reiterated over and over across the treaty, for example in the preamble, Article 6.3, or Article 15. The EEC would assist the associated countries by providing financial and technical aid and intensifying trade relations between the two blocs. As stated in the preamble, association was redefined in the spirit of the United Nations Charter, as friendly and equal, for the purpose of encouraging the development of the African nations, the diversification of their economies, and the development of inter-African trade.

The institutions of the Yaoundé Convention set up in Title IV further underline the treaty’s rhetorical commitment to an equal partnership by providing a sort of legal equality between the

two parties. The first and most powerful institution of the convention, the Association Council, was to be composed of members from the EEC council & the European Commission with one member from the government of each associated state, and the position would alternate between a European and an African. The second institution, the Parliamentary Conference of the Association, would be composed of members in equal mass from parliaments of the EEC as a whole and each associated state. The third institution, the Court of Arbitration of the Association, was set up to solve disputes that are unable to be resolved by a consensus of the Associated Council. Here, two EEC judges, two African judges, and a president appointed by the Council would preside over the court.²⁹

The text of the Yaoundé Convention emphasizes the reciprocal nature of the relationship between the member states and associated states, as well as the respect for the sovereignty of each signatory state. Title I of the treaty provides a detailed overview of the process of the reciprocal breaking down of customs barriers placed on products being exchanged between the EEC and associated states. This reciprocity is an important pillar for the argument by its proponents that Yaoundé represents a new stage in European-African relations respecting the will of the latter. There are in fact concessions to the agency of the latter within the provisions of the text itself: Article 3 Section 2 permits associated states to introduce customs duties “corresponding to its development needs or its industrialization requirements or which are intended to contribute to its budget,” albeit with the caveat provided by Section 3.³⁰ Similar latitude of action is provided by Articles 8 and 9 that permit associated states to establish customs unions and free-trade areas

²⁹ These institutions were created in parallel to the existing institutions of European integration: EEC Council, the parliamentary assembly of the EEC, and the ECJ, which makes this instance an interesting reflection of how European integration reflected itself on the international stage.

³⁰ The caveat: At the objection of any Member State of the Community, a consultation with the Association Council will be convened regarding the conditions and applications of 3.2, and the Association Council is granted the judicial power to strike down these customs duties.

amongst themselves. Finally, the preamble to the treaty gives equal weight and respect to the heads of state of the six member states, the eighteen associated states, and the council of the European Economic Community.

Title I of the Convention, the section concerning trade, is of key relevance for the European Economic Community for the language used here to talk about the common market. The member states operate in this treaty as a whole common integrated market, rather than as individual states, and thus the provisions of Yaoundé work to standardize the trade among the member states to facilitate the implementation of European unity. It is concerned with normalizing the relationships between the associated states and member States. Article 3.1 specifies that associated states will accord identical tariff treatment to goods originating from any member state. Article 4.1 grants all member states most-favored nation status in each associated state and prohibits the latter from discrimination between the former in export duties.

Overall, the Yaoundé Convention functions both as a document claiming a new equal beginning for the European-African relationship and as a treaty arguing for the presence of a united Europe on the diplomatic world stage. However, the former claim was undermined by the imbalance of power that remained in the relationship on the favor of the European side. The contents of the treaty itself formalized this imbalance by imposing several restrictions on the ability of the African signatories to act economically; for example, Articles 35, 36, and 37 imposed an obligation on Associated States' monetary policies to prioritize the repayment of the loans provided by the convention. As the following chapter will discuss, changing global economic conditions permitted the Associated States a certain leverage to change the grounds of the European-African development relationship with the aim of creating a "New International Economic Order." However, the history of negotiations and the text of the 1975 Lomé Convention

reflects that the concerns of European officials— here, formalizing a relationship to former British colonies and continuing to use these treaties as a vehicle to present European unity on the world stage— still at the determined outcomes at the end of the day.

Chapter 3 – The Lomé Convention, 1975

This chapter focuses on analyzing the language of the Lomé Convention as it relates to the political and institutional changes from the Yaoundé Convention. First, I will summarize the negotiations leading up to the 1975 Lomé Convention. British accession to the European Community presented a significant problem for the existing European-African trade and development arrangement as established by Yaoundé. Thus, following British accession, the African associated states negotiated an entirely new agreement that conformed to a changing international context more in favor of a rebalancing of the North-South trade balance. Next, I will give my analysis of the language of the Lomé Convention itself to show how it reflects the discontinuities of content with the Yaoundé Convention. While continuing like Yaoundé the theme of development through trade and reinforcing European integration as a single actor with regards to foreign policy, the language of the convention matches the change in contents of the convention with regards to decolonization, in particular to the priority of the African states for a ‘New International Economic Order.’

Yaoundé to Lomé

In 1972, the United Kingdom acceded to the European Economic Community. The British prime minister, Edward Heath, gave a speech upon the occasion where he remarked that on this occasion “beyond doubt, we have all come to recognize our common European heritage, our mutual interests and our European destiny.” For the most part he continues the speech with statements such as this this lauding the Community’s self-image and celebrating the belated successful British accession to it, but the following section of the speech is worth quoting in its entirety:

Britain, with her Commonwealth links, has also much to contribute to the universal nature of Europe's responsibilities. The collective history of the countries represented here encompasses a large part of the history of the world itself over the centuries. **I am not thinking today of the Age of Imperialism, now past: but of the lasting and creative effects of the spread of language and of culture, of commerce and of administration by people from Europe across land and sea to the other continents of the world. These are the essential ties which today bind Europe in friendship with the rest of mankind.**³¹

Here, Heath claims in the bolded text that the European 'Age of Imperialism' was over, with its remaining relevant legacy being the political, social, and economic ties it has created between Europe and the other continents that from now on bind Europe with them in 'friendship.' The addition of the linkages of Britain to its former empire through the Commonwealth, however, was problematic for the Community's existing overseas arrangements, defined by the redefined links of France to its own former empire through the French Union and Yaoundé association. French president Charles de Gaulle's infamous 1963 veto of the first application by the UK to accede to the Common Market was partially inspired by this as well as a concern about the irreconcilability of the European and British free trade areas. Notably, this veto occurred in the middle of the Yaoundé negotiations.

The problem that British accession presented and why it necessitated the negotiation of a new European-African trade and developmental regime is obvious: association would have to be expanded from the francophone countries of Africa (plus Somalia) to include the African Commonwealth members. This is notwithstanding that the relationship of the rest of the Commonwealth to the Community would have to be hashed out as well. Marjorie Lister has described the Lomé Convention as the completion of the reconciliation of the UK's interest in the African and Caribbean Commonwealth states with the EEC's interest in the African Associated

³¹ Speech by Edward Heath, (speech, Brussels, January 22, 1972), accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe archive.

States.³² Throughout negotiations, Britain was concerned with maintaining its privileged links with the Commonwealth countries, although by the time of British accession, this relationship was declining in relative political and economic importance compared to that of Britain to the Community.³³ The existing framework of Yaoundé was not capable of handling the expected consequences of this expansion, so thus negotiations began for a totally new agreement rather than another extension of the Yaoundé provisions.

The members of the Community were concerned about the repercussions that adding more associated states, especially the giant Nigeria, would have for the nature of association. In a note produced by the Council of the European Community concerning the Commonwealth during negotiations for British accession, it was underlined that “it is advisable that the Six adopt a common position with regards to the problem of generalized preferences,” as well as pointing out that British accession would lead to an increase of the total of overseas responsibilities for the Community.³⁴ A note produced by secretary general of an EEC committee Jean-René Bernard quantified the problem: the entry of Commonwealth Africa into association would mean doubling the volume of the expenses of the EDF from \$1 billion to \$2 billion dollars, with the UK’s added contribution not making up for the extra costs for the other EEC members, in particular France and West Germany who would pay around \$200 million dollars more each.³⁵ In addition, the accession of the African Commonwealth didn’t only threaten the economic interests of the existing member

³² Marjorie Lister, *The European Union and the South: Relations with developing countries*. (London: Routledge, 1997) 109.

³³ In 1954, 48% of imports and 49% of exports went to the Commonwealth, but by 1972 this was down to 19% and 20% respectively.

³⁴ “Note du Conseil des CE sur les problèmes concernant les relations avec le Commonwealth”, Brussels, May 13, 1970, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l’Europe archive.

³⁵ “Note du SGCI sur l’Afrique noire francophone devant l’élargissement du Marché commun,” Paris, June 15 , 1970, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l’Europe archive. The note concludes by suggesting that the EC exclude Nigeria from a new agreement for a special agreement that was purely concerned with trade relations rather than development.

states: for the present associated states, mostly francophone and poorer than the Commonwealth members, the relative advantage of association in financial aid and technical cooperation vis-à-vis the former British colonies would be greatly diminished. Furthermore, the growing size of the area of association would provoke greater attacks on the special preferential relationship between the Community and associated states in multilateral organizations like UNCTAD and the GATT, especially from non-African developing Commonwealth states.

The first Yaoundé convention expired in 1969, and so a second agreement, Yaoundé II, negotiated that, including two more members, Madagascar and Mauritius. The initial results of the Yaoundé Convention were received positively by all parties, with exports from the associated states to the EEC growing 15% by 1968 while imports to them from the EEC grew much more modestly at 3%, reflecting a growth in the negative balance of trade of the EEC importing more from the African countries than it exported to them.³⁶ This period was also marked by a substantial increase in the share of non-French European investments in the former colonies. As outlined in chapter 2, this was a significant French goal for the European-African relationship. However, only a third of the EDF funds allocated by Yaoundé were successfully dispersed, and a majority of these were for the infrastructural projects, a figure critics of association used to claim that it was mirroring former practices of colonial investment and development. Despite being signed in July 1969, however, Yaoundé II had not yet been ratified by the Six at the Hague Summit that December. This gave the green light for the recommencement of negotiations for the accession of the UK, because following De Gaulle's second veto in 1967 to the British application to join, he was no longer president. The UK could now get past its primary obstacle in the process.

³⁶ "La convention de Yaoundé" in *Eurafrica*, March 1968, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe. Trade between Italy and Africa grew in particular with imports to Italy growing by 54% and exports by 43%.

In addition to these reasons necessitating a new trade and development regime, outside global factors would ensure that this new agreement would change the balance of power between the European and African states party to it. The Community on the whole remained in the driver's seat for negotiations, but the African states had more leverage into the 1970s than they had immediately following independence when they negotiated Yaoundé. One reason for this was the global commodity crisis of the 1970s. The Community was dependent on imports from the associated states for several commodities such as copper, uranium, coffee, and cocoa, and the rise in these commodity prices made the trade relationship even more important to increase trade and production.³⁷ The 1973 Oil Crisis presented another problem: the Community needed to invest in "friendly" oil production outside of OPEC to secure its supplies, and so partnership with African oil producing states as alternative sources of oil was made even more attractive.

Another factor shifting the grounds of negotiation was the intensification of the global Cold War with the spread of various proxy wars and anti-imperialist struggles across the Global South into the 70s, threatening many regions' stability. Following the decline in European colonial power following the failures of the Suez Crisis and the Algerian War, shoring up economic links with Africa in particular through trade and development mediated through these conventions was a greater priority as a method of preserving a sphere of influence and aligning these former colonies against communism. As this new agreement would also have to find a middle-ground between the British and European spheres of influence in Africa, Lomé would be prime ground for a renegotiation of several provisions of Yaoundé.

³⁷ "La convention de Yaoundé" in *Eurafrica*, March 1968, 6, accessed through the Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe. Copper in particular was the single most valuable commodity in terms of imports at 24% & \$314 millions at 1968 value, almost entirely sourced from the former Belgian Congo.

Three issues in particular were contested during negotiations, and this resulted in three changed concessions for Africa from Yaoundé to Lomé. The first was that this new treaty would not contain reciprocal market access like Yaoundé: rather, the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP) would be granted duty-free access to the EEC for all of their products except for the goods covered by the Common Agricultural Policy with their markets not offering the same treatment to Community goods. During the initial application of Yaoundé, the duty-free market access granted to EEC products from the ACP states was rather flexible, and in practice this amounted to granting the Community states MFN treatment for their products, which would replace this mandate in the writing of Lomé. The official united point of view of the ACP countries was against reciprocity as part of the wider struggle to further economic decolonization, seeing it as a prime example of European neocolonialism in Africa. The shift in the balance of power towards the ACP countries was assisted by the new point of view of the UK, which sided with Germany and the Netherlands in doubting the negligible economic benefits for Europe of this mostly symbolic gesture given that the European economy, much larger than the African, exported to them to it much less than it imported.³⁸

However, the Lomé regime would maintain the special relationship between Europe and Africa, so important for French interests, through the establishment of STABEX and the implementation of the sugar quota from the ACP states that would also aim to alter the terms of European-African trade in accordance with dependence theory. STABEX was an interventionist export-income stabilization aid mechanism that provided additional financial support to ACP states when export revenues related to specific products dropped below a certain threshold, guaranteeing their governments a steady stream of revenue from exports. A mechanism like this

³⁸ Lotte Drieghe, "The first Lomé Convention between the EEC and ACP group revisited: bringing geopolitics back in," *Journal of European Integration* 42, no.6 (2019): 793.

had been a key demand of ACP countries since Yaoundé to guarantee profitable commodity prices and secure development.³⁹

While most Community members were against an increase in the volume of aid commitments that a mechanism like STABEX would result in, France strongly supported its establishment following the abolition of reciprocity because it was a means of securing the nature of the special meaning of the relationship between Europe and Africa. This had been a goal of French officials since the very beginning of association in Rome. The UK's support would follow France because of the other provision that would make the EC partnership special: the fixed quota on a minimum of sugar to be imported to the EEC while simultaneously guaranteeing a minimum import price as established in protocol 3 of Lomé. The UK, as part of the Commonwealth agreements, had an existing deal like this with the sugar-producing nations of the Commonwealth; as part of the negotiations to merge the overseas economic interests of the UK & Europe and while maintaining the Commonwealth, the UK saw integrating this as the number one priority in negotiations. For these reasons, the UK & France further tipped the scales in the ACP states favor in producing innovative provisions for Lomé that were in line with decolonization activists' priorities in the Third World.

Analysis of the Lomé Convention

Much of the contemporary discourse and the secondary literature on the Lomé Convention focus on its ruptures and continuities from the existing African-EEC trade and development relationship, and I've seen prudent to focus on the analyzing the way that this language maintains continuities and breaks with the language of the Yaoundé Convention. In the first regard, the language of the Lomé Convention reflects the EEC's purpose of reinforcing the special

³⁹ Garavini, *After Empires*, 69 and 76.

relationship established by association and Yaoundé between an integrated Europe and the former African colonies. While many Africans celebrated the changes of Lomé conceding to their developmentalist demands, for many European leaders, the focus still remained on using the relationship simultaneously as a means of advancing the European integration project, maintaining former colonial spheres of influence, and enhancing the economic capacity of the African states through development. At the occasion of the signing of Lomé in 1975, the representative of the European Commission, Claude Cheysson, stated that, in addition to the agreement being “unique in the world and in history” (referring to the aforementioned innovations like STABEX being talked about as European goodwill), it marked “the first time in history that an entire continent has undertaken a collective commitment of this scale.”⁴⁰

The historical uniqueness of Lomé should not be overstated, especially given that the content of its provisions, besides the shift to non-reciprocity, STABEX, and the sugar quota, largely retained much of what Yaoundé had introduced. Two of the three institutions of the Convention itself set up in Title VI are identical in function to those of Yaoundé, and all of them continue the emphasis on the equality of the EEC and the ACP states. The Council of Ministers set up in Article 70 was composed of the same people who made up the Association Council of Yaoundé (members of the European council and Commission as well as a member from each of the ACP governments) and maintained its status as the most powerful of the convention’s institution. The Committee of Ambassadors is Yaoundé’s Parliamentary Conference of Association in another skin, identical in its advisory function to the convention’s Council although no longer requiring its representatives be parliamentary representatives as well. The provisions of

⁴⁰ Gerard McCann, Gerard. “The rise and fall of associationism: The Yaoundé and Lomé conventions,” *Studia z Polityki Publicznej* 7, no.3 (Oct 2020): 18.

development aid and support for increasing trade exchange between Europe and Africa, the vast majority of the provisions of the Convention, were unchanged in form as well.

The preamble of the Lomé Convention is one example of the continuation of the Yaoundé Convention's language's emphasis on equal and 'friendly' relations for the purpose of development. In the preamble, this relationship is still established on the principles of "complete equality between partners, close and continuing cooperation, in a spirit of international solidarity." Article 26 cites acknowledges the 'pressing need for the industrial development [of the ACP states]' as a justification for the treaty's measures of financial and technical aid. Article 40.2 provides a precise definition of what development is:

Such development shall consist in particular in the greater well-being of the population, improvement of the economic situation of the State, local authorities and firms, and the introduction of structures and factors whereby such improvement can be continued and extended by their own means.

The focus of this development is on correcting the structural imbalances in the ACP economies, maximizing trade opportunities while enhancing sustainable economic growth. In her analysis of the frequency of words in the corpus of the Lomé Convention, Kast-Aigner notes that the words 'customs,' 'goods,' 'originating,' 'exporting,' 'technical,' 'industrial,' 'economic,' and 'financial' are among the most frequently appearing words in the convention, implying that the main theme of it is trade and assistance of projects.⁴¹

Lomé also continues the pattern of the language of the convention reinforcing the strength of European identity and integration in its appearances in dealing with the rest of the world. Article 94 repeats the same detail as Yaoundé in that the treaty has been drawn up in copies in Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, and Italian, with "all texts being equally authentic." The addition

⁴¹ Judith Kast-Aigner, *A Corpus-Based Analysis of the Terminology of the European Union's Development Cooperation Policy*, 83.

of Danish and English reflects the accession of new members to the project, but this is a second instance of the Community emphasizing the united and equal status of its partners in a trade and development agreement with African nations. The European Community member states sign the treaty in their own right, but this is the only capacity they have here as individual states: the operations of the treaty continue to be a collective, integrated European enterprise, mostly through the vehicle of the European Development Fund.

The most important way that language of development in the Lomé Convention differs from the Yaoundé Convention is that it reflects the changing discourse in decolonization at the time, reflecting the high-water mark of Third World movements to reshape the international order. The full title of the Lomé Convention, ‘ACP-EEC Convention of Lomé’ places less emphasis on the association of individual African states than that of Yaoundé’s title.⁴² Instead, it removes mention of the word ‘association’ and places the ACP bloc as an equivalent partner to the EEC. This also reflects the expansion of the scope of the treaty to expand beyond Europe and Africa to include several Pacific and Caribbean island nations. The congealing of this bloc, according to McCann, reflects the way that Africans saw the potential of Lomé as a vehicle to accelerate regional unification in a model similar to the European common market. However, the ACP bloc was not a perfect equivalent to the EEC: in Article 58, the management and carrying out of the work is the responsibility of each individual ACP state themselves, a contrast to the collective European Development Fund.

The example of the change in title leads to the most obvious shift in the language of Lomé: the change in the nature of the relationship from ‘association’ as established in the Treaty of Rome to ‘partnership.’ The word ‘association’ is used once in the entire text of the Lomé Convention in

⁴² That is, “The Convention of Association between the European Economic Community and the African and Malagasy States associated with that Community.”

article 88, and this is not even in reference to the ACP-EEC relationship, but rather that which may potentially emerge between third parties and the EEC in the future. Rather, ‘partnership’ and ‘co-operation’ replace ‘association’ as the primary terms defining the relationship. The power imbalance and colonial baggage implied by association, where the African states are defined by their relationship to Europeans, is replaced by a term that places African states on a more level, voluntary playing field than before.

The Lomé Convention can be seen as a way, albeit limited, of repudiating Yaoundé’s model to satisfy demands for a “New International Economic Order” during the 1970s by while maintaining the historical ‘particular’ relationship between Europe (France and Britain mostly) and Africa. Two new additions to the preamble that were not in Yaoundé include:

“RESOLVED to establish a **new emphasis** mine to justify my initial claim] model for relations between developed and developing States, **compatible with the aspirations of the international community towards a more just and more balanced economic order**”

and

“DESIROUS of **safeguarding the interests** of the ACP States **whose economies depend to a considerable extent on the exportation of commodities** [emphasis mine to justify my second claim];”

The idea of a “new international economic order” came from the neocolonial experience of decolonization of African and other Third World nations where they acquired political sovereignty while not yet having obtained economic sovereignty: for them, decolonization as an incomplete process. There are more references to this new order in the document such as Article 47.1, which emphasizes that co-operation is “for attaining objectives which the ACP States set themselves.” These objectives include as accelerating economic cooperation between the ACP states, diversifying their economies into manufacturing, “reduc[ing] the economic dependence of the ACP States on imports by maximizing output of those products for which the ACP States in

question have real potential,” and maximizing the use of resources within each ACP State. Article 40 of Protocol 2 provides more examples of this new partnership and the NEIO, aiming to achieve objectives like the growth of each ACP state’s national income and the improvement of their populations’ standards of living.

Another point for this new relationship is the new term of the ‘LDC states’, defined in Article 24 as the “least developed, landlocked, or island ACP states” that necessitate a new category within the treaty as well as special treatment for their particular problems. For example, the threshold for the export ratio to qualify for STABEX assistance for the LDCs is much lower than that of the rest of the ACP states.⁴³ Despite genuine concessions in the balance of trade to the interests of the ACP parties in Lomé, however, on the whole the EEC still remained the most powerful party in the relationship and its power determined the final word. This remaining imbalance of power was a very important factor for the evolution of the European-African relationship for the revisions creating the Cotonou Agreement that will be discussed in the following chapter.

⁴³ See Lomé Article 17. The threshold STABEX activation percent of the product for earnings for exports to all destinations for the LDCs is 2.5%. Compare this to 7.5% for the rest.

Chapter 4 – The Cotonou Agreement, 2000

This chapter focuses on analyzing the language of the Cotonou Convention as it relates to the political and institutional changes from the Lomé Convention. First, I will look at the historical background for the shift from the Lomé to the Cotonou regime of the European-African partnership agreement. The 1993 GATT ruling and the establishment of the World Trade Organization in 1995 caused a crisis for the Lomé arrangement, leading to a renegotiation of the European-African relationship. This was now dominated by European interests, primarily defined by a declining interest in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP) partnership that was caused by shifting political circumstances and changed ideological priorities. Next, I will give my analysis of the language of the Cotonou Agreement itself and how it reflects the shifting goals of its drafters. The agreement is a significant rupture in the relationship, albeit with a few important continuities, because it de-emphasizes the special nature of the ACP-EU partnership—the legacy of decolonization—and changes the definition of African development.

Lomé to Cotonou

In the years following the Lomé Convention, the European Community expanded and transformed. In 1992, the Treaty of Maastricht was signed turning the European Community into the European Union. Across the 1980s, several new Mediterranean members were admitted into an integrated Europe. By end of the decade, the Iron Curtain had fallen, opening up potential future expansion of the supra-national European organization into the former communist countries of Eastern Europe. Much like how the expansion of the EEC to include Britain influenced the change in European priorities in its relationship with Africa between Yaoundé and Lomé, the expansion of the now European Union contributed to another shift in the ACP-EU relationship. A new geographic scope led to the Community prioritizing development programs around the rim of the

Mediterranean, both in new members as well as in North Africa, as well as in the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The geographic expansion of European integration during the 1980s and 1990s changed the European agenda for development cooperation with African countries, just as how the priorities of France and Britain affected Yaoundé and Lomé. The accession of Greece, Spain, and Portugal in the 80s contributed to an intensification of contacts between the EU and the Mediterranean due to concerns of security and migration. That of Austria, Finland, and Sweden in the 90s changed the balance of power in European development strategy towards a more globalized, general policy towards the third world, the strategy championed by West German and Dutch officials since the Yaoundé negotiations.⁴⁴ The prospect of Central and Eastern European expansion made the development of this nearby area a priority.

Thus, European elites had begun to view the necessity of a special ACP relationship with less and less interest. Furthermore, the end of the Cold War meant the end of a need to fight international communism, and this combined with the expansion of the Community into its margins to weaken the political relevance of the ACP-EU partnership in European elites' eyes. European geopolitical priorities shifted away from Africa. Shifts in the structure of the global economy during the 1980s and 1990s placed further pressure on the EU-ACP special relationship, shifting the balance of power away from the ACP countries. African countries slipped into underdevelopment as key development indicators in Africa increasingly diverged from the developed world. Developing countries in general suffered from falling commodity prices alongside an escalating debt crisis that tied their budgets and economies increasingly to World Bank and IMF loans. This situation was particularly acute in the ACP countries, weakening their bargaining power in trying to maintain their interests in these larger agreements. This 'African

⁴⁴ Karin Arts, "Changing interests in EU development cooperation: the impact of EU membership and advancing integration," 103.

Crisis' was blamed on the legacy of colonial exploitation, dependence on commodity exports, and falling terms of trade according to one theory popular with Africans. However, the IMF and World Bank institutions under sway of the Washington Consensus blamed this crisis on bad macroeconomic policy.

European leaders, for their part, increasingly questioned the efficacy of the provisions of Lomé to affect its goal of advancing African development by improving the ACP trade balance and helping ACP states diversify their products. Between 1967 and 1994, the ACP states share of total exports to the EU declined from 6.7% to 2.8% of total European trade.⁴⁵ Furthermore, between 1976 and 1994 the EEC's financial support to ACP states was \$30 billion (mostly through Lomé instruments), while during the same period the ACP countries had doubled their total debt from \$65 to \$130 billion. The first two revisions to the Lomé treaty, Lomé II in 1980 and Lomé III in 1985, responded to this obvious inadequacy towards the emerging problem of African underdevelopment by increasing financial investment and aid and expanding the ACP bloc. However, by the 1990s, European elites switched away from the interventionist development policy that defined Lomé towards the new neoliberal development ideology of the Washington Consensus. The Green Paper produced by the Commission in 1997 is one clear example of this trend of this shift during the lead-up to the revision of the Cotonou Agreement. This report argued that the Lomé regime as it existed was excessively bureaucratic and suggested rationalizing it by reducing the number of instruments for and volume of aid to Africa.⁴⁶

The European Community had several other trade and development relationships with the other regions of the developing world; however, none were as privileged as the ACP's, the heir to

⁴⁵ Stephen Hurt, "Co-operation and Coercion? The Cotonou Agreement between the European Union and ACP States and the End of the Lomé Convention," *Third World Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (Feb 2003), 163.

⁴⁶ European Commission, *Green Paper on relations between the European Union and the ACP countries on the eve of the 21st Century: Challenges and options for a new partnership*, 61.

the colonial links of four of the Community's members.⁴⁷ At the same time, this relationship had to comply with wider commitments to the multilateral global trade institutions of UNCTAD (the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) and GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). Article 12.2 of Yaoundé, for example, stated that the measures of Yaoundé that might affect third parties had to be made without prejudice to the membership and responsibilities of the contracting parties in the GATT. Provisions such as these existed because third parties, such as the USA and non-African third world countries, always viewed the special preferential trade relationship between Europe and Africa with disdain. The political significance of the Yaoundé and Lomé agreements was to imbue the Eurafrikan relationship with special meaning as part of the Anglo-French plan to keep their former colonies connected to the old metropole: it had to be stable and exclusive, which is precisely the issue that third parties had with it. However, one of the most significant exclusive provisions of Lomé, the non-reciprocal opening of the EEC market to ACP products, violated the rules of the GATT. The European Community invoked the UN Charter and resorted to legal loopholes to defend this provision to defend the ACP relationship against these third-party legal challenges until 1993.

The conclusion of the Uruguay Round of the GATT in 1993 and the subsequent creation of the World Trade Organization triggered a multilateral legal dispute that ended the Lomé Convention. The preamble of the Cotonou Agreement itself notes this, beginning with the phrase "RECALLING the commitments within the framework of the World Trade Organisation." In 1993, a GATT panel resolved a dispute started by several Latin American countries challenging

⁴⁷ Christopher Stevens, "Economic Partnership Agreements and Africa: losing friends and failing to influence." The ACP was considered the apex of the EEC's 'pyramid of privilege' during the late 70s when the spirit of Lomé was at its height: more ACP goods entered the common market at lower tariff rates than any other Third World regional trade partner. Most of these regional trade blocs used this mechanism created by UNCTAD in 1979 that required developed countries to offer lower tariffs on some of their imports from developing countries, it was only used by countries outside Lomé with relation to the EC.

the preferences granted on importing bananas given to ACP countries under Lomé. The panel ruled that not only was the banana regime illegal under GATT and WTO rules, but the entire system of trade preferences granted to the ACP countries by Lomé was as well: Lomé was now ‘collateral damage’ to this specific ruling.⁴⁸ There was now a legal impetus for a new treaty governing the European-African trade and development relationship, with the WTO’s waiver until 2000 acting as a deadline for new negotiations.

During the negotiations following the GATT ruling leading to the new treaty governing the EU-ACP relationship, Cotonou Agreement of 2000, the European negotiators sought to end the non-reciprocal trade preferences of Lomé, reform its commodity protocols such as the one for sugar, and to abolish STABEX.⁴⁹ A compromise was reached between European and African negotiators regarding the latter two items, but the legal necessity of the GATT and increased leverage of the European Union ensured that Cotonou would definitively end the non-reciprocal trade preferences. These were replaced by reciprocal region-based free trade agreements called Economic Partnership Agreements (or ‘EPAs’). The Cotonou Agreement marked an important threshold the transformation of European-African relations. The original principle of the European-African partnership for European elites— the special political and economic relationship between Europe and Africa (or ‘Eurafrika’) established by Rome that motivated Yaoundé and Lomé— was no longer important for Europe. The European Union now concerned itself with the advancing economic globalization of the 1990s and complying with demands by the WTO for removing market protections, and it prioritized remaining international development projects that were closer to home.

⁴⁸ Stevens, “Economic Partnership Agreements and Africa: losing friends and failing to influence,” 168.

⁴⁹ Jan Orbie, “The European Union & the Commodity Debate: From Trade to Aid,” *Review of African Political Economy* 34, no. 112 (Jun 2007): 301.

Analysis of the Cotonou Agreement

The special relationship between the EU and ACP that had been referred to as a common European mission, or in other euphemisms of the legacy of decolonization, is out of focus in Cotonou.⁵⁰ Rather, the central concern of the Cotonou Agreement is the integration of the African states' markets into the global economy through a modified cooperation and development policy. The Cotonou Agreement defines ACP-EU cooperation as now resting on three pillars: the political dimension, development cooperation, and trade cooperation, all of them working together for this objective. This institutional shift reflects the previously discussed transformation of European priorities regarding the ACP relationship.

With regards to trade cooperation, the Cotonou Agreement replaced the special non-reciprocal trade preferences of Lomé with the reciprocal trade regime of the EPAs. These aimed for trade reciprocity by creating free trade areas that would be more attractive to non-European foreign investment and conform to the regulations of the World Trade Organization. Under this regime, ACP markets must open up to EU products and remove barriers to trade with other countries to face increased competition in local markets. A brochure explaining the Cotonou Agreement, produced by an SDP-backed foundation for an African audience, claims a central objective for this shift is “promot[ing] the smooth and gradual integration of ACP economies into the world economy,” with only the LDCs having access to alternative trade agreement structures if they elect for them.⁵¹ This will accelerate economic linkages and development between ACP regions and promote the free movement of persons, goods, services, capital, and labor among ACP countries, simultaneously making them more attractive for foreign investment and allowing them

⁵⁰ There is an acknowledgement in the preamble with nothing else in the body of the treaty, contrast this with the many references throughout the body in Yaoundé and Lomé.

⁵¹ Sylvia Hangen-Riad. *Finding Your Way Through the Cotonou Agreement* (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2004), 10-13.

to more fully participate in international trade. However, critics of EPAs point out that they throw into disarray long-standing existing regional integration plans by placing non-African created groups on top of them and undermining their relevance.⁵² This shift of cooperation away from the African states themselves is further evidenced by the great priority placed on increasing the power and role of “non-state actors” (NSAs) in the African-European cooperation relationship. These are defined in the treaty as the private sector, “economic and social partners” such as trade unions, and “Civil Society in all its forms according to national characteristics.” The local African private sector is particularly singled out for the role it should play in the new partnership: Article 20 says that “the priority (of cooperation) is the development of a local private sector that can achieve rapid and sustained job-creating economic growth.”

Of the three pillars, development (albeit in a changed definition) remained the central element in the partnership’s rhetoric for justifying itself. This is evidenced by the myriad of references to this objective across the treaty. Article 1 clearly establishes the primary objective of the Cotonou agreement:

“to promote and expedite the economic, cultural, and social **development** of the ACP States, with a view to contributing to peace and security and to promoting a stable and democratic political environment.”

However, the terms of what this development was had changed considerably from Lomé, as the preamble specifies:

“their commitment to work together towards **the achievement of the objectives of poverty eradication, sustainable development, and the gradual integration of the ACP countries into the world economy,**”

The primary objective of development for Lomé, as discussed in chapter 3’s analysis, had been to correct the structural imbalances of the ACP economies through promoting industrialization and increasing trade between the ACP bloc and Europe. Now, “poverty reduction” and “sustainable

⁵² Fredrik Söderbaum, “The European Union as an actor in Africa: internal coherence and external legitimacy.”

development” had become key terms referenced over and over again in the text of the treaty, and the focus was now on integrating African markets into the *world* economy rather than strengthening European linkages. This latter point is an example of how the language of the treaty the growing influence of neoliberal development ideology for European negotiators. Further evidence of this trend is Article 22 of Cotonou which states that the agreement “shall support ACP efforts to implement macroeconomic growth and stabilization through disciplined fiscal and monetary policies that result in the reduction of inflation.” The prerequisite for accomplishing these structural reforms for “sound and sustainable economic policies” was “a stable political environment guaranteeing human rights, democracy, rule of law, and good governance,” introducing a political dimension to the EU-ACP partnership.

This political dimension tightly linked to the objective of development is an especially innovative element which had been absent in Yaoundé and Lomé. This novelty reflects the disappearing goal of these treaties to justify the project of a European-African relationship truly equal in sovereignty: these political conditionalities reinforced the dominant position of Europe in the relationship and established the hegemony of its vision for African development. The Cotonou Agreement has mechanisms in Articles 96 and 97 to suspend development and financial aid to countries that violate its political principles. Article 9 specifies that one of these political goals is ‘sustainable development’ as defined by the treaty to be development centered on “the human person, who is the main protagonist of and beneficiary of development... Respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms...[is] an integral part of sustainable development.” Other important political imperatives favored in cooperation include dealing with illegal migration, promoting womens’ rights, increasing environmental protections, fighting corruption, implementing macroeconomic reforms favoring economic growth, and assisting the public sector

in developing institutions necessary for the smooth operation of a market economy. This new framework is evidenced with statements like the preamble “ANXIOUS to respect basic labour rights, taking into account of the principles laid down in the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organisation” that introduce new elements to the concept of ‘development.’

In contrast to all these differences, one notable way that Cotonou maintains continuity with the previous development treaties is the way its language presents the European Union as an actor. The Cotonou Agreement continues the pattern of the treaties of ACP-EU cooperation functioning as documents reinforcing a common European identity vis-à-vis its agency as a singular, unified actor in its relationship to the rest of the world. Article 100 of the agreement repeats a familiar detail: the treaty has been drawn up in copies in Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish, “all texts being equally authentic,” the additional languages being another reference to the temporal expansion of European integration. The treaty continues to treat the EU as a unified bloc in all its provisions, reflecting Söderbaum’s argument of the EU making itself a strong and recognized economic actor in diplomacy through its common trade and development policy. This particularity of language is especially notable when compared against the treatment of the ACP bloc states. Under Cotonou, the responsibility for carrying out development projects is shared with NSAs and the EPAs who are consistently mentioned alongside the ACP states as agents for implementing European aid projects. This is an important shift away from the previous agreements’ rhetorical focus on the sovereign equality of the individual ACP states with the European Union.

The Cotonou Agreement entered into force on April 1, 2003 and is set to expire on June 30, 2023. Since 2018, the EU and the ACP states (now designated as an international organization the OACPS, or ‘the Organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States’) have been negotiating

a new partnership agreement. The European Union plans to deepen the shifts of Cotonou by increasing the political commitments of the treaty and following a ‘multi-stakeholder approach’ that further augments the importance of non-state actors as agents in the development relationship.⁵³ As this chapter makes clear, the EU-OACPS relationship is defined by a power imbalance between a giant and several dwarves. The nature of the partnership is likely to remain unchanged in this revision as European priorities remain focused on globalized non-interventionist development. Thus, the special relationship between Europe and Africa as an important fixture in the history of European integration is very unlikely to return.

⁵³ “Post-Cotonou OACPS-EU relations,” European Union, https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/european-development-policy/acp-eu-partnership_en.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

In this thesis, I have analyzed how the shifts in the processes of European integration and decolonization were reflected in the language of development across the three treaties that have governed the European-African development partnership since African independence: the 1963 Yaoundé Convention, the 1975 Lomé Convention, and the 2000 Cotonou Agreement. This thesis concludes that all of these treaties served as vehicles for the institutions of European integration to assert themselves as a unified whole on the post-war global diplomatic stage. These treaties reflect a transition in the priorities of European officials regarding their relationship to their African partners away from a 'Eurafrican' ideal of a joint European project of exploiting/developing the African continent towards enforcing adherence to the neoliberal Washington Consensus through the new political conditionality of aid and the shift in focus towards 'poverty reduction.' Reconciling the project of European integration with the legacy of particular European colonial empires, especially those of France and Britain, was an important goal for the presentation and construction of early European development policy in the Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions. However, following the expansion of the European Community into its margins in the Mediterranean and to the east, a significant rupture in the European-African development relationship emerged with the disavowal of any special historical significance to the relationship. Nevertheless, from the beginning, the language of development within these treaties continually changed as a reflection of mostly the changing goals of the European officials negotiating them.

Thus, with regard to the aim of this thesis in building upon the Eurafrican interpretation of European integration, these findings support the idea that the early stages of European integration were indeed deeply enmeshed with the unfolding colonial stories of its founding members. When officials of the European Union like Mr. Borrell talk about the division of the world between a

garden and a jungle, we would benefit from bearing in mind that the construction of this garden itself— the European Union— was tightly connected to the way its component parts determined their relationship towards the surrounding jungle.

There are several avenues that future research investigating the relationship between European integration and decolonization could pursue. For one, this study has been limited to the initial versions of the three EU-ACP treaties, but each version of each convention lasted only five years until it was subject to renewal. Thus, a future study could analyze the changes in language between the revisions of each treaty (and the initial language of the relevant articles in the Treaty of Rome) to draw a smoother timeline. In addition to this, while the European relationship to its African development partners was particular due to the history of postwar decolonization, a future study could examine the evolution of other Third World-European development agreements to see how they reflect changes in the European integration process. Finally, future research could investigate the timeline of the development in the institutions of European integration itself to see how this changed the European priorities of development that showed themselves as important in governing the EU-ACP relationship.

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