

CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN
POLITICAL ECONOMY

NEO-COLONIALISM
AND THE POVERTY OF
'DEVELOPMENT' IN AFRICA



MARK LANGAN



Contemporary African Political Economy

Series Editor

Eunice N. Sahle

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

USA

Contemporary African Political Economy (CAPE) publishes social science research that examines the intersection of political, social, and economic processes in contemporary Africa. The series is distinguished especially by its focus on the spatial, gendered, and cultural dimensions of these processes, as well as its emphasis on promoting empirically situated research. As consultancy-driven work has emerged in the last two decades as the dominant model of knowledge production about African politics and economy, CAPE offers an alternate intellectual space for scholarship that challenges theoretical and empirical orthodoxies and locates political and economic processes within their structural, historical, global, and local contexts. As an interdisciplinary series, CAPE broadens the field of traditional political economy by welcoming contributions from the fields of Anthropology, Development Studies, Geography, Health, Law, Political Science, Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies. The Series Editor and Advisory Board particularly invite submissions focusing on the following thematic areas: urban processes; democracy and citizenship; agrarian structures, food security, and global commodity chains; health, education, and development; environment and climate change; social movements; immigration and African diaspora formations; natural resources, extractive industries, and global economy; media and socio-political processes; development and globalization; and conflict, displacement, and refugees.

Advisory Board

Bertha O. Koda, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Brij Maharaj, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

Thandika Mkandawire, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

James Murombedzi, Council for the Development of Social Research in Africa, Senegal

John Pickles, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA

Wisdom J. Tettey, University of British Columbia, Canada

More information about this series at
<http://www.springer.com/series/14915>

Mark Langan

Neo-Colonialism
and the Poverty of
‘Development’ in
Africa

palgrave
macmillan

Mark Langan
Newcastle University
Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Contemporary African Political Economy
ISBN 978-3-319-58570-3 ISBN 978-3-319-58571-0 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-58571-0>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017940603

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2018

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover image: © PeskyMonkey/gettyimages

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*For Drs. Michelle and Charles Langan (Mum and Dad) for your love and
support*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Sophia Price for your encouragement and advice. Thank you also to Leon Cameron, Chris McMinn, Chet Bundia, Andrew Futter and Jon Moran for your friendship and support which helped me to complete this work. I thank and acknowledge Taylor and Francis for giving permission for use of some of my earlier work on Turkey's entry into Africa in the second half of Chap. 3. The article is due for publication later this year: M. Langan (2017) 'Virtuous Power Turkey in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Neo-Ottoman Challenge to the European Union', *Third World Quarterly*. An early view edition of the article can be found on www.taylorandfrancis.com.

CONTENTS

1	Neo-Colonialism and Nkrumah: Recovering a Critical Concept	1
2	Neo-Colonialism and Foreign Corporations in Africa	33
3	Neo-Colonialism and Donor Interventions: Western Aid Mechanisms	61
4	Emerging Powers and Neo-Colonialism in Africa	89
5	Trade and Neo-Colonialism: The Case of Africa–EU Ties	119
6	Security, Development, and Neo-Colonialism	149
7	The UN Sustainable Development Goals and Neo-Colonialism	177
8	Agency, Sovereignty, and Neo-Colonialism	207
	Index	237

ACRONYMS

AASM	Associated African States and Madagascar
ACEP	African Centre for Energy Policy
AFD	Agence Francaise de Developpement
AIF	Africa Investment Facility
AKP	Justice and Development Party (Turkish)
AOPIG	African Oil Policy Initiative Group
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDC	Commonwealth Development Corporation
CFA	Cooperative Framework Agreements
CIF	Chinese Investment Fund
CNMC	China Nonferrous Mining Co. Group
COVEs	Corporate Village Enterprises
DDA	Doha Development Agenda
DFID	Department for International Development
DFIs	Development Finance Institutions
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ECGD	Export Credit Guarantee Department
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EDF	European Development Fund
EIB	European Investment Bank
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EPADP	Economic Partnership Agreement Development Programme
EPAs	Economic Partnership Agreements
EPZ	Export Processing Zone
EU	European Union

EU-AITF	EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FOCAC	Forum on Chinese and African Cooperation
FTAs	Free Trade Agreements
GIGs	Ghana Institute of Governance and Security
GNPC	Ghanaian National Petroleum Company
GOGIG	Ghana Oil and Gas for Inclusive Gas
GPC	Ghana Petroleum Commission
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HLP	High Level Partnership
ICAI	Independent Commission for Aid Impact
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
IR	International Relations
MDBS	Multi-Donor Budget Support
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MFEZ	Multi-Facility Economic Zone
MSD	Mines Safety Department
NANTS	National Association of Nigerian Traders
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for African Development
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NRGI	Natural Resource Governance Institute (NRGI)
NTBs	Non-Tariff Barriers
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OWG	Open Working Group
PAF	Performance Assessment Framework
PANiDMR	Pan African Network for the Defense of Migrants' Rights
PF	Patriotic Front
POME	Palm Oil Mill Effluent
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSA	Production Sharing Agreement
PSD	Private Sector Development
PSIs	President's Special Initiatives
PSP	Private Sector Participation
ROC	Republic of China
RSPO	Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil

SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SCTIP	International Technical Policy Cooperation Department (French)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIAs	Sustainability Impact Assessments
SMEs	Small and Medium Enterprises
STABEX	System for the Stabilisation of Export Earnings
SYSMIN	System for the Stabilisation of Mineral Earnings
TIKA	Turkish Co-operation and Co-ordination Agency
UK	United Kingdom
UKTI	UK Department for Trade and Industry
UN	United Nations
USA	United States of America
WAOM	West African Observatory on Migrations

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1	Sino-African trade by key tradeable goods and commodities from 2014–2015	94
Table 7.1	EU-AITF and priority sectors (2015 report)	193

Neo-Colonialism and Nkrumah: Recovering a Critical Concept

INTRODUCTION

Walter Rodney (1972: xi) remarked in *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* that the ‘phenomenon of neo-colonialism cries out for extensive investigation in order to formulate the strategy and tactics of African emancipation and development’. Unfortunately, in 2017, 60 years after Ghanaian independence (the first African state to liberate itself from formal Empire), the phenomenon of neo-colonialism still cries out for extensive investigation.

Neo-colonialism—a situation of infringed national sovereignty and intrusive influence by external elements—is now often regarded as an outmoded concept in International Relations (IR), and in Development Studies. Many scholars are decidedly squeamish when the term is invoked.¹ Additionally, many are squeamish about discussions of ‘Africa’ as a whole—rather than about individual African states. Of course, there is analytical danger when speaking bluntly of either ‘neo-colonialism’ or ‘Africa’. Equally, however, there is analytical danger when trends affecting a collection of states are ignored. Brown (2012: 1891), invoking Harrison, states that ‘there are at least three senses in which speaking of “Africa” as a whole might be justified... as a collective international actor; as a collection of states with (in the ‘broadest of sweeps’) a shared history; and as a discursive presence, used by both Africans and outsiders, in international politics and policy’. Moreover, from the pan-Africanist perspective of Nkrumah, speaking of Africa as a whole is not merely an analytical necessity, but a vital discursive move aimed at consciousness building and unity.

This book examines whether the concept does help us to analyse certain problems associated with current ‘development’ interventions by foreign actors in Africa. Engaging Kwame Nkrumah who fully developed the concept in his treatise *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (1965), the book argues that Nkrumah’s insights remain valid in many respects.² Several passages of Nkrumah’s (1963, 1965) work appear as pertinent today to an understanding of interventions in Africa as they were in the 1960s. That is not to say that Nkrumah’s work is beyond critique. His relative failure to contend with ideational aspects of external influence over African states is something which, for instance, requires redress in any modern application of the concept of neo-colonialism. From a critical constructivist standpoint concerned with the analysis of language and power, it is necessary to assess the interplay between material forces and ideas as it relates to donor/corporate power in Africa (Fairclough 2009; Van Dijk 2009).³ Namely, it is important to examine ‘development’ discourse and how interventions in the internal affairs of African countries by foreign elements is legitimised as a moral endeavour for ‘progress’. Many interventions are in fact undertaken on the basis of a donor (and at times, corporate) language of altruism, despite the fact that the tangible consequences of such action more often than not exacerbate conditions of ill-being and poverty.

This chapter examines Nkrumah’s contribution to critical understandings of North–South relations and his focus upon the difficulties facing nominally sovereign African countries in attaining industrialisation and development. It highlights the neo-Marxist contours of Nkrumah’s work before addressing his relative omission of ideational factors in the analysis of external influences. It also highlights the work of Fanon (1961) among other writers who expressed similar views on the neo-colonial situation in alignment with Nkrumah. The chapter then explores parallels between Nkrumah’s contributions (and these wider works on neo-colonialism) and the *dependency school* that gained intellectual traction in the 1960s and 1970s. It makes clear that there were overlaps in thought between the concept of neo-colonialism and the dependency school. This is not surprising given their mutual neo-Marxist heritage. The concept of neo-colonialism is seen as distinct, however, in that it places heavier emphasis on political agency, as opposed to the apparent economic determinism of many dependency theorists.

The chapter then acknowledges the contemporary influence of the neo-patrimonialism school as perhaps the most popular lens for

examining Africa's relations with donors today. It demonstrates how neo-patrimonialism has gained both academic and policy credibility in explaining the apparent failure of African 'development' when compared to former colonial states in other regions, particularly those of East Asia. The chapter explains that the neo-patrimonialism literature is in some ways the obverse of the literature on neo-colonialism, and it is certainly more popular in today's academic circles. It argues, however, that the conclusions of the neo-patrimonialism literature are flawed, and fail to fully grasp how external forces bring about certain aspects of apparent 'neo-patrimonial' rule. The neo-patrimonialism school, moreover, is seen to make essentialist assumptions that sometimes denigrate African culture and African personhood. Nevertheless, Jean-Francois Bayart (within the neo-patrimonial literature) is deemed to hold certain weight in an understanding of African elite relations with external parties. Bayart's (2010) concept of extraversion—when stripped of essentialism—is seen as a useful device for making sense of certain social relations between African elites and their benefactors within the neo-colonial situation. The chapter then concludes by reiterating the need to engage the concept of neo-colonialism in a modern understanding of African 'development'.

Following on from this chapter, the book then explores the concept of neo-colonialism in terms of contemporary African relations with external 'development' actors. Specifically, the ensuing chapters examine neo-colonialism in terms of corporate activities (Chap. 2); Western aid programmes (Chap. 3); 'new' development aid actors (Chap. 4); Africa-EU free trade agreements (Chap. 5); security and development (Chap. 6); the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Chap. 7); and strategies for emancipatory forms of African agency (Chap. 8). In so doing, the book seeks to practically demonstrate the on-going utility of the concept of neo-colonialism in contemporary studies of Africa's situation in the globalised economy, and within donor aid architectures.

NEO-COLONIALISM: THE CONTINUING RELEVANCE OF KWAME NKRUMAH

Kwame Nkrumah stands as a potent figurehead in African history, having led Ghana to independence in 1957—the first African colony to emerge as a 'sovereign' state from formal Empire. Nevertheless, his intellectual contribution to the analysis of North–South relations via the

lens of neo-colonialism has lost currency in modern academic circles. As mentioned, many scholars are decidedly squeamish about discussions of the concept in academic conferences, and in leading journals. For many, it is associated with vulgar forms of Marxism, deemed unfashionable in the post-Cold War era. For some, it is seen to deny any form of meaningful African agency, reducing Africans to mere ‘victims’ in the global arena. For others, it is negatively associated with modern tyrants such as Robert Mugabe who have invoked the concept in their political discourse. And for many, it is seen as a brash polemical device that unduly blames ‘the West’ for the continuing mal-governance of certain African elites.

Nevertheless, a modern reading of Nkrumah’s (1965) *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*, and his earlier work *Africa Must Unite* (1963), is surprisingly relevant in terms of an analysis of certain aspects of development interventions in Africa by external elements, both corporate and donor. Whether assessing current donor budget support to African treasuries, the activities of the European Investment Bank, the impact of free trade arrangements, or the role of mining companies—Nkrumah’s analysis appears both relevant and emancipatory. His work, although controversial, deserves much closer scrutiny. It is therefore important to highlight the contours of Nkrumah’s thought, as well as that of scholars who expressed similar concerns about Africa’s external relations, notably Fanon (1961). Nkrumah himself defined neo-colonialism as the continuation of external control over African territories by newer and more subtle methods than that exercised under formal Empire. He viewed conditions of neo-colonialism as those in which African countries (which had attained *legal* independence) were penetrated by external influences to such a degree that they were not genuinely self-governing. Moreover, states under the sway of neo-colonialism could not attain meaningful economic or social development for their peoples, since policy was directed more towards the material interests of foreign elements than towards the needs of the local citizenry. African elites who took part in relations of neo-colonialism would govern on behalf of foreign benefactors and would in effect ‘betray’ the economic interests of their own people. This radical perspective is eloquently stated by Nkrumah in several passages of *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. In his main definition of the concept, he highlighted the economic influence of external forces and how this in turn diminished the political freedoms of African countries:

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the state which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed by outside. (Nkrumah 1965: ix)

African countries then might enjoy legal or juridical sovereignty in the international system after acceptance of their formal declarations of independence. However, they would not enjoy the fruits of a popular, empirical sovereignty, in terms of the ability to realise and to enact self-determination based upon the social and economic needs of the local citizenry (c.f. Ndlouy-Gatsheni 2013: 72).⁴

In this vein, Nkrumah notably underscored the co-optive role of foreign governments as aid donors, as well as the role of foreign corporations investing capital into African economies. Aid payments made by foreign governments (for Nkrumah's purposes—European countries and the USA) were not seen as altruistic endeavours aimed at the wellbeing of African societies. Rather, donors' aid-giving was viewed as a means of ensuring the compliance of certain African elites and in lubricating forms of corporate economic penetration detrimental to African populations.⁵ Aid in this sense was not a 'gift' but rather a short-term payment that would denude African empirical sovereignty:

Control over government policy in the neo-colonial state may be secured by payments towards the costs of running the state, by the provision of civil servants in positions where they can dictate policy, and by monetary control over foreign exchange through the imposition of a banking system controlled by the imperialist power. (1965: ix)

Moreover, aid monies would soon be recouped by the donor, according to Nkrumah, in terms of the economic gains that they secured under conditions of neo-colonialism:

"Aid" therefore to a neo-colonial state is merely a revolving credit, paid by the neo-colonial master, passing through the neo-colonial state and returning to the neo-colonial master in the form of increased profits. (1965: xv)

Thus, for Nkrumah, aid monies would help to reinstall foreign control over African territories, even after formal Empire had been dissolved:

[the] hesitancy [of African states to cut ties to former colonisers] is fostered by the sugared water of aid; which is the stop-gap between avid hunger and the hoped-for greater nourishment that never comes. As a result, we find that imperialism, having quickly adapted its outlook to the loss of direct political control, has retained and extended its economic grip. (1965: 33)

In addition to foreign aid, Nkrumah highlighted—and condemned—foreign corporate involvement in Africa where enterprises sought to exploit local labour power and natural resources without appropriately contributing to government revenues, jobs, or industrialisation. Notably, he pointed to the role of certain foreign companies in supporting corrupt African governments, and in financing alternative political elites when those already in power were deemed insufficiently pliable. This situation was seen to perpetuate colonial patterns of trade and commodity exchange between newly ‘sovereign’ African states and the West: ‘[our raw materials and produce] goes to feed the industries and factories of Europe and America, to the impoverishment of the countries of origin’ (1965: 1).

Crucially, Nkrumah also highlighted the decisions and *agency* of African politicians themselves, particularly those who succumbed to neo-colonial influences from external corporations and donors. He saw that co-opted elites would have little interest in fostering industrialisation and genuine development, but would instead direct their efforts to the maintenance of the external linkages which kept them in power. African leaders—in the neo-colonial situation—would do less to serve the interests of their own citizenries than to assist foreign patrons in a bid to maintain their financial and political support:

The rulers of the neo-colonial states derive their authority to govern... from the support which they obtain from their neo-colonialist masters. They have therefore little interest in developing education, strengthening the bargaining power of their workers employed by expatriate firms, or indeed of taking any step which would challenge the colonial pattern of commerce... [which] is the object of neo-colonialism to preserve. (1965: 1)

Nkrumah’s analysis clearly invoked a two-way *relationship* between the external and the internal forces at play in the perpetuation of neo-colonial systems. He did not merely focus on the role of foreign corporations

and donors in a top-down process of power imposition. He instead fully *recognised the agency of certain African elites* and their political preference to engage the external as a means of maintaining convenient power structures.⁶

Interestingly, Nkrumah also took pains to indicate that the movement against neo-colonialism should not seek to isolate African economies from the global economy. He explicitly stated that investment from Western powers, in particular, could be welcomed if it was directed to appropriate sites of industrialisation, and if it was regulated by an African government that exercised empirical sovereignty in the pursuit of value-addition and (thus) greater economic parity between North and South (in what we would today describe as a developmental state).⁷ He did not endorse autarky, reject industrialisation or condemn international trade. Rather, he sought to ensure that economic forces could be harnessed in such a manner as to equally benefit Africans as it did their foreign ‘partners’. In order to do this, moreover, he emphasised the need for pan-African co-operation. Rather than pursue limited development in a ‘Balkanised’ continent, he called for the creation of economies of scale through pan-African integration. A federal government of an eventual United States of Africa was seen as a necessity to realise the full economic potential of the continent and its resource abundance. This would also guard against neo-colonial pressures, since a unified federal government could negotiate as an equal with donors and foreign corporations. No longer would external elements be able to utilise ‘divide and rule’ strategies in the maintenance of neo-colonial elites to the detriment of pan-Africanist leaders (such as himself) who sought to genuinely build developmental structures across the continent.

NEO-COLONIALISM AND AFRICAN SOCIALISM: FANON AND OTHER KEY CONTRIBUTORS

This radical stance adopted by Nkrumah clearly owes an intellectual debt to Marxism. The title of his treatise in fact explicitly echoes the work of Vladimir Lenin (2010 [1917]) on ‘imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism’. However, Nkrumah’s focus on pan-Africanism owes a separate intellectual debt to African liberation leaders such as Marcus Garvey (1923). This duality—between (neo)Marxism, on the one hand, and African liberation ideology, on the other—is found within the wider

literature on neo-colonialism. Those who aligned with Nkrumah's analysis equally saw the struggle for genuine African liberation as a movement *against* foreign manipulation, and *for* African unity. Moreover, these authors often advanced African socialism, a form of socialist theory which called for Afrocentric approaches to economic development. Specifically, this encouraged the embrace of traditional 'African values', and resistance against foreign interference in African sovereign affairs. Perhaps most notably, Frantz Fanon (1961) articulately expressed this African socialist perspective. Fanon concurred with Nkrumah that former colonial powers would seek to retain economic, and hence political, influence over their erstwhile territories in Africa. Writing in the aftermath of the Congo Crisis and the murder of President Patrice Lumumba, Fanon (1961) stressed that ex-colonial powers would have little sympathy towards African states that sought to exercise genuine autonomy:

you may see colonialism withdrawing its capital and its technicians and setting up around the young state the apparatus of economic pressure. The apotheosis of independence is transformed into the curse of independence, and the colonial power through its immense resources of coercion condemns the young nation to regression. In plain words, the colonial power says '*Since you want independence, take it and starve*'. (1961: 76)

African leaders that sought to exercise genuine economic and political autonomy would thus be forced to impose austerity regimes upon their peoples in the short term, as the ex-colonial power worked to debilitate African polities in their infancy:

the nationalist leaders have no other choice but to turn to their people and ask for them a gigantic effort. A regime of austerity is imposed on these starving men... an autarkic regime is set up and each state, with the miserable resources it has in hand, tries to find an answer to the nation's great hunger and poverty. We see the mobilization of a people which toils to exhaustion in front of a suspicious and bloated Europe (ibid.)

Importantly, in terms of *neo-colonialism*, Fanon also argued that certain African elites would pursue the path-of-least-resistance and collaborate with (ex)colonial centres. These leaders would maintain asymmetric aid and trade networks with the metropole, even at the expense of genuine

sovereignty. In fact, Fanon saw the emergence of neo-colonialism as a phenomenon which would affect countries throughout the Third World even after formal declarations of independence had been achieved:

other countries of the Third World refuse to undergo this ordeal [austerity regimes] and agree to get over it by accepting the conditions of the former guardian power... The former dominated country becomes an economically dependent country. The ex-colonial power, which has kept intact and sometimes even reinforced its colonialist trade channels agrees to provision the budget of the independent national by small injections (ibid.)

Fanon foresaw that these political—and economic—compromises would keep African countries in a position of subordination and ill-being as compared to the wealth of Europe and the USA.

While Fanon's work is arguably less detailed than Nkrumah on the practical workings of neo-colonialism, nevertheless, his writings do more to highlight the psychological—and ideational—aspects of external influence. Fanon explained clearly how African citizenries—and their leaderships—often imagined themselves as belonging to an inferior civilization. Having been subjected to the racialized world views of their erstwhile European 'masters', African peoples had lost sight of their own cultural worth. As a result, certain Africans perceived Europeans as 'superior' on an ontological level. This ideational barrier to genuine African liberty had material consequences, according to Fanon. Namely, it helped to make possible the capitulations of certain African elites to the political and economic pressures of neo-colonialism. Having been educated in Paris or Oxford, collaborationist African leaders saw European (and more broadly Western) culture as evidence of a superior civilizational model. Hence, they were more willing to align themselves to external forces. Accordingly, Fanon emphasised that African peoples must tackle the ideational root of their subordination by consciously rejecting narratives and mental images of European cultural superiority:

Let us waste no time in sterile litanies and nauseating mimicry. Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them, at the corner of every one of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe. For centuries they have stifled almost the whole of humanity in the name of a so-called spiritual existence. Look at them today swaying between atomic and spiritual disintegration. (1961: 251)

For Fanon, therefore, neo-colonialism might be avoided—or overcome—through processes of ideational liberation. This would inoculate elites, in particular, from collaboration with external elements who sought to maintain African polities in economic and political subordination.

Furthermore, a number of other prominent critics of African relations with erstwhile colonial powers allied themselves to an analytical focus on neo-colonialism. Julius Nyerere and Sekou Touré (then Presidents of Tanzania and Guinea, respectively) concurred with their fellow African socialist, Nkrumah, that foreign powers would continue to seek economic—and thus political—control over African countries. Nyerere—as late as 1978, towards the end of his presidency—argued that neo-colonialism had not yet been thwarted: ‘sooner or later, and for as long as necessary, Africa will fight against neo-colonialism as it had fought against colonialism. And eventually it will win’ (1978: 11–12).⁸ Touré, meanwhile, emphasised the need for a cultural awakening in Africa—echoing Fanon on the evils of colonialism upon African self-confidence. He additionally pointed to the role of foreign corporations in denuding African sovereignty even after *de jure* independence had been obtained:

The direct colonial exploitation of former days is being succeeded by international monopolies, and this has a tendency to remain permanent. Paradoxically, it is the underdeveloped nations, exporting raw materials and crude products, which contribute an important share of the costs and social improvements from which workers in the fully developed countries benefit. (1962: 148)

Touré (1962) emphasised, moreover, that European powers might embroil African countries in trade and aid arrangements that would retard genuine development. In particular, he noted the then European Economic Community’s (EEC) attempts to form ‘Association’ arrangements entailing free trade between European members and African ‘Associates’.⁹ Trade liberalisation on the part of newly independent African states, for Touré, would perpetuate economic asymmetries in the form of colonial patterns of exchange. He explained that African countries’ ‘unconditional integration into a multinational market negates the possibility of industrial development in advance; it could only be the association of the rider and the horse’ (1962: 149). Nkrumah (1965: 19) echoed these concerns, warning about the ‘collective neo-colonialism of

the European Common Market' with regards to its emerging trade and aid 'Association' with Africa. In the words of Segal (1964: 87) writing during the early years of EEC-Africa Association:

President Nkrumah's objections to associated status are both economic and ideological. According to him, associated states will perpetuate neo-colonialism and provide a fundamental obstacle to the achievement of African political and economic unity, which is the sole means whereby African states can overcome their lack of development.

Interestingly, certain Western writers including Jack Woddis, a prominent British Communist, contributed to the development of the concept of neo-colonialism. In a succinct monograph, *Introduction to Neo-Colonialism*, Woddis critiqued the economic penetration of African countries and subsequent foreign pressures on empirical sovereignty. In this, he saw a deliberate alliance of Western corporate and political elites in the diminution of African countries' policy autonomy:

At the centre of all the activities of neo-colonialism lies its economic policies. These are directed to assisting the profit-making functions of the big monopolies, to providing the Western powers with the necessary economic powers in the new states so as to be able to wield political influence over the governments there. (1967: 86)

In a critique of comparative advantage theories promoted by Western advocates of free trade between African states and Europe/USA, he also emphasised how African leaders were (wrongly) encouraged not to pursue industrialisation:

The [African] peoples are constantly told that they need "Western know-how", that they "cannot do without foreign capital", that they should not nationalise foreign enterprises, and that they should base themselves on agriculture and tourism rather than industry, which is something dismissed as mere "prestige building". (1967: 84)

In this context of unequal patterns of trade and commodity exchange, Woddis (1967: 89) underscored that Western 'development' interventions were designed to maintain the economic status quo:

Western investments, loans, trading policies and “aid” schemes are all directed to the aim of keeping these territories as primary-producing hinterlands of imperialism which import the bulk of their machinery and manufactured goods from the metropolitan countries.

To illustrate this point, Woddis (1967: 101)—with parallels to both Nkrumah and Touré—pointed to EEC Association arrangements with African states under the Yaoundé Conventions (1963–1975). Woddis (1967: 101) noted EEC tariffs of 5.4% on raw cocoa beans from Africa, compared with a tariff of 22% on processed powdered cocoa—as evidence that European powers sought to maintain African states in a subordinate position as providers of raw materials (rather than as industrial competitors).

It is important to note, also, that a number of international conferences also sought to define the concept of neo-colonialism, particularly in the 1960s at the zenith of debates surrounding neo-colonial interventions. The All-African People’s Conference, held in Cairo, Egypt in March 1961, notably defined the concept in the following terms:

the survival of the colonial system in spite of formal recognition of political independence in emerging countries which become the victims of an indirect and subtle form of domination by political economic, social, military or technical means. (cited in Martin 1982: 227)

Similarly to Nkrumah, the Conference viewed that such impositions upon Africa could be overcome through pan-African political mobilisation and consciousness raising. These authors (and conferences) helped to delineate neo-colonialism as political concept. They emphasised the ways in which external control was maintained in Africa even after the formal end of Empire. Imperialism—in the Marxist terminology—continued in a new guise, facilitated by foreign aid and corporate activities.

DEPENDENCY THEORIES AND THE CONCEPT OF NEO-COLONIALISM

It is important to highlight here that dependency theories, which became popular in the 1960s and 1970s in the critique of North-South relations, at times overlapped with the claims of African socialists with regards to the concept of neo-colonialism. Dependency theorists sought

to emphasise the global economic structures and international trading dynamics that prevented newly independent countries from attaining full industrialisation and economic progress. In particular, dependency theorists pointed to the technological advantages of Western countries in maintaining their economic hegemony over developing states within the world economy (Tausch 2010). In this context, they criticised the diminishing returns of developing states' over-reliance on the export of raw commodities such as cocoa and timber at the expense of industrialisation. As such, many dependency theorists (if they did not avow full autarky) emphasised the need for import substitution industrialisation (ISI) in the Third World. That is, they underscored the need for developing country governments to diversify their economies away from colonial patterns of production and exchange, and to instead build an industrial base capable of generating skilled jobs and prosperity. These industries would be fed by the rural and agricultural hinterlands—thus backward linkages would be established for the benefit of primary producers too. Notably, however, they underscored that industrialisation would not generate meaningful development if foreign companies (and interests) remained dominant (Dos Santos and Randall 1998: 57). Developing states would have to challenge the technological and financial hegemony of Western countries in order to carve out sufficient economic space for themselves, and to resist dependency.

Moreover, from a neo-Marxist position, the dependency theorists underscored how class alliances would hinder this shift to autonomous industrialisation on the part of the newly emergent nations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (the last of these being the region in which dependency theories originated). Just as inequalities existed at the global level between developed and underdeveloped states, so too did class inequalities exist *within* developing countries. Many dependency theorists therefore pointed to the potential function of a 'comprador class' within developing countries which would align itself to the economic interests of external capitalist interests. This comprador class would welcome skewed forms of foreign direct investment (FDI), and would support iniquitous trade frameworks, as long as they personally benefited from asymmetric North-South ties. A local bourgeoisie, for instance, involved in import businesses would have an incentive to continue dependency relations between their own nation (in the 'Third World') and a foreign nation in the developed West. Andre Gunder Frank, one of the most prominent dependency theorists, explained that:

This colonial and class structure establishes very well defined class interests for the dominant sector of the [Third World] bourgeoisie. Using government cabinets and other instruments of the state, the bourgeoisie produces a policy of underdevelopment. (cited in Brewer 2002: 196)

This class analysis was taken further by Cardoso and Faletto who pointed to varieties of distinct class formations in individual developing countries (and these classes' interactions with the metropole) as an explanatory variable for degrees of success vis-à-vis 'development' (cited in Kapoor 2002: 649–649). They admitted that certain forms of 'dependent development' might take place in individual Third World countries. There could be the semblance of economic growth and certain sectors might prosper, albeit as an adjunct of the needs of the metropole states in the West. Structural inequalities would remain at a global level, but certain dividends might accrue to poorer nations in Latin America, Asia and Africa—albeit within constrained, limited forms of (unequal) development (Kapoor 2002: 649).

This admission of the possibility of dependent development signalled (for critics of dependency theory) that the school was losing traction in the 'battle of ideas', particularly as Washington Consensus policies prevailed in the 1980s and early 1990s. Cardoso (1977), meanwhile, began in the late 1970s to voice disquiet with rigid forms of dependency theory that failed to acknowledge progress within certain developing countries. He signalled that a progressive reformism might usefully prevail along social-democratic lines, and harness economic industrialisation for the benefits of poorer peoples even within a capitalist global economy (1977: 20). Dependency theorists' insistence that the economic hegemony of the Western metropole 'doomed' poorer states to a perpetual and unyielding underdevelopment appeared less convincing, particularly in light of the successes of the East Asian Tigers in the late 1970s. Accordingly, dependency theories lost a certain degree of intellectual credibility. Indeed, certain figures such as Cardoso (2009) have somewhat repudiated their own earlier work and acknowledged that the dependency school (while valuable in stimulating the sociological imagination) had at times been guilty of a myopic economic reductionism.

It is important to underscore, however, that the concept of neo-colonialism and the dependency school approach should be seen as distinct entities. The dependency school—while acknowledging the role of the 'comprador' local bourgeoisie—largely focussed upon economic factors

in the explanation of continuing North-South inequalities. The role of technology, the unequal exchange value of raw materials versus industrial commodities, and the dominance of Western countries in lucrative tertiary services sectors (such as banking and finance) were largely deemed as the root cause of on-going dependency relations. While there was a partial focus upon internal class configurations and the role of comprador elites, there was relatively little focus upon the *political* interventions of external donor officials and foreign corporate actors in exacerbating unequal relationships. By contrast, the literature on neo-colonialism is explicitly *political* and avoids forms of economic determinism—by focusing resolutely on the interplay between local ‘comprador’ elites in developing countries *and* elite officials/corporate actors in the Global North. Accordingly, it pays much greater attention to the role of aid and ‘development’ interventions in maintaining the economic *and political* structures that perpetuate poverty. It does not deny the potential for certain forms of (limited) growth. Rather it questions whether African states (in particular) are able to exercise policy sovereignty, or whether or not their state institutions are ‘captured’ to such a degree that they do more to serve foreign interests than that of their own citizenries.

The decline of dependency theories as a popular lens within IR and Development Studies, therefore, does not necessarily signal the irrelevance of the concept of neo-colonialism. Nkrumah’s analysis—as illustrated in subsequent chapters—appears prescient when we assess contemporary ‘development’ phenomenon such as EU budget support or ‘pro-poor’ trade negotiations. The dependency school did overlap with the literature on neo-colonialism in terms of highlighting North-South inequalities and the role of comprador elites. Nevertheless, a certain form of economic determinism found within dependency approaches is not replicated within the literature on neo-colonialism. The major alleged ‘flaw’, therefore, of the dependency school—namely its focus on economic forces—is not found within Nkrumah’s own framework. Nkrumah memorably noted that African patriots should ‘seek ye first the political kingdom and all things shall be added to it’. Moreover, Nkrumah (as the main theorist of neo-colonialism) welcomed certain forms of North-South trade and FDI—so long as it supported the growth of the productive capacity of African economies. What he objected to—and critiqued—was the subversion of African state sovereignty by external elements since this would retard opportunities for industrialisation and social prosperity for African peoples. His analytical contribution therefore