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Mechanisms of Neo-colonialism

Current French and British influence
in Cameroon and Ghana

Diana Haag

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ABSTRACT

Over the past 50 years, the concept of neo-colonialism has become central to the debate of politicians and activists in order to explain ongoing dependences of former colonies, yet without a consensus on its exact meaning and its measurement being developed. This working paper aims at operationalising the concept of neo-colonialism in order to enable an approximate measurement of its existence in a given country. To do so, a conceptual framework covering criteria of economic, political, financial and military influence of the former colonial power on its ex-colony is established and applied to two case studies - Cameroon and Ghana. The paper finds that France does preserve a neo-colonial relationship with Cameroon in all terms, while Britain only maintains economic influence and a slight financial control over Ghana. It more generally identifies a trend towards a multilateralisation and privatisation of the relations and considers the conceptual framework as reasonably functional.

Key words: Imperialism, Colonies, Politic Dependency, France, Britain, Cameroon, Ghana

RESUMEN

A lo largo de los últimos 50 años, el concepto de neocolonialismo ha adquirido una importancia central en los debates entre políticos y activistas sobre las dependencias que todavía atenazan a las antiguas colonias. Este *working paper* tiene el objetivo de operativizar el concepto de neocolonialismo para permitirnos medir si este fenómeno tiene presencia en un país determinado. Con este propósito, se plantea un marco conceptual que incluye indicadores sobre la influencia económica, política, financiera y militar de las antiguas potencias coloniales sobre sus excolonias, y que se aplica a Camerún y Ghana. El artículo descubre que Francia conserva con Camerún una relación neocolonial en todos los sentidos, mientras que el Reino Unido solamente mantiene sobre Ghana una influencia económica y un ligero control financiero. En general, este *paper* identifica una tendencia hacia la multilateralización y la privatización de las relaciones, y estima que el marco conceptual resulta razonablemente funcional.

Palabras clave: Imperialismo, Colonias, Dependencia política, Francia, Inglaterra, Camerún, Ghana

RESUM

Al llarg dels últims 50 anys, el concepte de neocolonialisme ha adquirit una importància central en el debats entre polítics i activistes sobre les dependències que encara afecten les antigues colònies. Aquest *working paper* té l'objectiu d'operativitzar el concepte de neocolonialisme per permetre'ns mesurar si aquest fenomen és present en un país determinat. Per fer-ho es planteja un marc conceptual que inclou indicadors sobre la influència econòmica, política, financera i militar de les antigues potències colonials sobre les excolònies, i que s'aplica al Camerun i Ghana. L'article descobreix que França conserva una relació neocolonial amb el Camerun en tots els sentits, mentre que el Regne Unit només manté sobre Ghana una influència econòmica i un lleuger control financer. En general, aquest *paper* identifica una tendència cap a la multilateralització i la privatització de les relacions, i estima que el marc conceptual és raonablement funcional.

Paraules clau: Imperialisme, Colònies, Dependència política, França, Anglaterra, Camerun, Ghana

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INTRODUCTION

In the 60's, when the majority of African countries achieved independence, the continent's future seemed prosperous in the long term. The newly independent countries disposed over huge reserves of all kind of raw materials, favourable natural and geographical conditions and a population looking forward to finally be its own master. However, despite all efforts, 50 years later the continent's situation is not significantly better and the Western development aid failed to achieve positive results on a big scale (Nkrumah, 1965). Over the past decades, an increasing number of writers and activists have started to denounce what through Ghana's first president Kwame Nkrumah became known as neo-colonialism; the existence of ongoing influence of the former colonial powers, which persists after independence and in many cases is responsible for the excessive exploitation of African resources and inhibits an independent political policy (Martin, 1985).

Since then, the concept of neo-colonialism has enjoyed much political attention coming to denounce a multitude of different forms of dependence and interference. However, no consensus on its definition and particularly on its measurement has been developed.

The aim of this dissertation is thus to explore the possibility of operationalising the concept of neo-colonialism academically in order to attempt measuring its presence in different countries at different times. The dissertation departs from the hypothesis that it is possible to create a model which allows measuring the presence of neo-colonialism in a given country to a reasonable degree.

The methodology of the analysis will consist in establishing a conceptual framework with criteria which, if fulfilled, significantly restrict a country's independence in an economic and political dimension, and in applying it to two case studies. This, in order to analyse and compare the two cases with regard to their current economic, political, financial and military dependence, as well as to evaluate the functionality of the framework.

The analysis will focus on the influence of the major former colonial powers in Africa, namely France and Britain. The two chosen cases are

Cameroon and Ghana due to their lasting political and economical stability and their similarity in size, location, geography, presence of raw materials, time of independence, size of population and GDP/capita. Moreover, Ghana constitutes an interesting case study as it was the first African country to reach independence and its first president was one of the leading figures in denouncing neo-colonialism. Cameroon on the other hand is among the francophone countries which maintain the closest relations with France, and further constitutes a good example of the past competition between France and Britain in Africa.

The study will focus on the current presence of neo-colonialism, analysing the period of 2004 until 2011, which corresponds to the past and the current political terms in Ghana (4 year terms) and the current term in Cameroon (7 year term).

The dissertation will first provide a brief theoretical background reviewing the main meaning and evolution of the concept of neo-colonialism and establishing the conceptual framework that will serve to analyse the two cases. The second chapter will propose a short historical background of the two countries' past. The third part will apply the conceptual framework to the two case studies, providing an analysis of the current neo-colonial practises in Cameroon and Ghana since 2004. Finally, the fourth part will compare the French and the British neo-colonial strategies and provide conclusions about the functionality of the elaborated conceptual framework.

1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In order to introduce the concept of neo-colonialism, the most important understandings and the evolution of the concept are briefly reviewed. Subsequently the conceptual framework, that will serve to analyse the two case studies, is proposed.

1.1 THE CONCEPT OF NEO-COLONIALISM

Despite its frequent use over the past fifty years, there is no general definition or a clearly identifiable origin of the concept of neo-colonialism. Some authors attribute its coinage to Jean-Paul Sartre, a leading figure in the francophone anti-colonial activist circles, who firstly used it in 1956 in one of his writings (Sartre, 1964; Ardant, 1965).

Others see its origins in Leninism, where it was used to describe a new form of domination applied after the colonial period in independent states (Crozier, 1964; Kabunda Badi, 1991). In this understanding, the western capitalist economies fully rely on the resources and the manpower of their colonies, reason why they need to preserve their dependence throughout independence (Crozier, 1964). Indeed, Vasili Vajrushev defined neo-colonialism as a colonial policy performed by the imperialist powers with new hidden mechanisms in order to reinforce capitalism, maximise profit and maintain the economic, political, ideological and military influence of colonial times (Vajrushev, 1974).

A first official definition was provided by the All-African People's Conference in the 1961 Resolution on Neo-colonialism, defining it as "The survival of the colonial system in spite of formal recognition of political independence in emerging countries, which become victims of an indirect and subtle form of domination by political, economic, social, military, or technical means" (Martin, 1985 p.191).

However, the term only got international attention with the publication of Kwame Nkrumah's book on neo-colonialism, which firstly denounced and documented the existence of an ongoing dependence of the newly independent countries. According to Nkrumah, the essence of neo-colonialism consists in that the state subject to it is officially independent and sovereign, while its economy and political policy are controlled from outside (Nkrumah, 1965). Like in the Leninist understanding, neo-colonialism is seen as an adapted form of colonialism, which takes advantage of the weakness of the newly decolonised states in order to achieve economic, political and cultural benefits (Ardant, 1965), mostly through relinquishing political power to favourable elites (Martin, 1985). The goal is the same as during colonialism; to

maintain the former colonies in a dependent position which allows economic exploitation (Kabunda Badi, 1991; Ardant, 1965).

What changes are the mechanisms applied to ensure dependence. These are subtle, multiple and vary according to the situation and the understanding of the essence of neo-colonialism (Ardant, 1965). Depending on the author, the neo-colonial mechanisms can include the control of the prices of primary and manufactured goods by the neo-colonial ruler, the obligation to buy certain amounts of manufactured and uncompetitive products from the former colonial master and to sell a determined quantity of raw materials in exchange, the monopoly of the metropolis on the transport of goods, the conditionality of aid sustaining commercial interests of the donor country (such as the lowering of trade barriers, the obligation to use part of the aid to buy goods or to favour companies of the donor country), the control of capital through imposed foreign exchange rates and banking systems, the imposed right to influence internal financial decisions, foreign influence in policy making through bribery of the local administration or instalment of civil servants in high positions, assistance in political coups, the presence and interventions of the military of the neo-colonial ruler (Nkrumah, 1965; Vajrushev, 1974), defence agreements, the financial support to favourable governments, technical assistance etc (Crozier, 1964).

Furthermore, according to several authors, neo-colonial domination also embraces cultural and educational influence, exercised through the expatriation of teachers and cultural ambassadors (Nkrumah, 1965), as well as through the education of the African elite in the former colonial metropolis which promotes its adoption of western values and thought patterns (Kabunda Badi, 1991). In this sense, neo-colonialism is based on the same superiority cult that already determined the interactions during colonialism. Moreover, the inferiority complex induced in many Africans during the colonial period, as well as the diffused conviction in the metropolis of Africa's dependence on its former colonial ruler, provide important ground for neo-colonial domination (Martin, 1985).

Likewise, the fact that neo-colonial methods are less direct and less visible renders neo-colonialism more dangerous than colonialism

since it implies power without the need for justification for the master, and exploitation without protection for the country subject to it. Also, it post-pones the facing of social matters in the former colonies because the rulers derive their authority from the neo-colonial master rather than from their own population, which reduces their inclination to promote education, worker's rights or anything that would challenge the dominance of the neo-colonial master (Nkrumah, 1965).

In certain understandings, the decolonisation process was already designed to perpetuate the dependency of African countries after their independence (Martin, 1985), on the one hand through the establishment of several privileges which infringe the sovereignty of the African states, and on the other through their integration into economic blocs like the French franc zone or the British Sterling Area (Crozier, 1964). The established privileges include the preservation of military bases and troops, the concession of land and entitlements for raw materials, the right to carry out the administration, the exemption of certain multinational companies from taxes etc (Nkrumah, 1965).

Moreover, according to several authors, a part of the neo-colonial strategy in West Africa consisted in the so-called balkanisation, meaning the breaking up of the former colonial territories into small, unviable states which are incapable of independent development (Martin, 1985; Nkrumah, 1965; Ardant, 1965; Amin, 1971.) This fragmentation into units which are economically too small and politically segregated inhibits proper local economic development thereby increasing dependence from foreign capital and debilitating the country's commercial bargaining position. It further foments internal conflicts augmenting the need for external military support (Nkrumah, 1965; Amin, 1971).

Likewise, in many colonies the heavy colonial exploitation was responsible for a deficit in public finances prior to independence, reason why the economic stagnation and the inefficient administration are often direct legacies of the colonial period (Amin, 1971).

Originally the concept of neo-colonialism was only applied to describe the practises of former colonial rulers like France and England (Ardant, 1965; Nkrumah, 1965). However, it slowly came to define as

well the economic domination exercised by other great powers like the USA, the Soviet Union and China. Moreover, in recent times, also the exploitation by multinational companies and the cooperation programmes of international organisations in developing countries have increasingly being classified as neo-colonialism (Ardant, 1965; Kabunda Badi, 1991). This diffusion and amplification, as well as the overuse and misuse, are mainly responsible for the abstraction and the loss of credibility the concept of neo-colonialism experienced over the past fifty years (Ardant, 1965).

It is important to bear in mind, that neo-colonialism has not only served to denounce practises which indeed can be classified as it, but has also been a powerful tool to African leaders in order to mobilise and unite their people after independence, to turn away the focus from internal problems and to excuse own failures (Ardant, 1965).

1.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Since there is no official definition of the concept of neo-colonialism, and the different authors diverge on the mechanisms that constitute it, the analysis of the current presence of neo-colonialism in Cameroon and Ghana will be based on an own understanding which only accounts for the core mechanisms of neo-colonial domination.

As Guy Martin states, neo-colonialism is a system that results out of an alliance of the former colonial power with the ruling elite of the ex-colony with the aim of defending economic interests, generally to the disadvantage of the African population. This alliance is often maintained through military and financial means which preserve, reinstall and control favourable leaders (Martin, 1985).

On the basis of this description, neo-colonialism is here defined as: a retro-alimenting system of domination and exploitation installed and preserved by the former colonial ruler in its ex-colony, in which economic, financial and military means serve to keep in power favourable leaders and impose favourable policies which again secure economic and financial benefits.

In accordance with this definition, four criteria and the way to

measure them are established in order to analyse the current presence of neo-colonialism in the two selected case studies. Since neo-colonialism supposes a combination of dependence in different terms, the presence of neo-colonialism is determined as given only if at least three of the following four criteria are present:

1. Economic influence:

- presence of at least one important trade agreement which perpetuates the colonial trade patterns by maintaining:
 - import and export prices determined one-sided by France/Britain
 - import and export quantities determined one-sided by France/Britain
 - monopolistic access for French/British companies
 - French/British monopoly on transport

OR

- documentation of at least one important case of favourable treatment to French/British corporations, such as:
 - the provision of better conditions for the French/British company than for the local ones
 - legal infractions of the French/British company without judicial consequences

2. Political interference:

- support of the political leader by French/British institutions or corporations in the elections through:
 - direct payments to the winning party
 - manipulation of the population in favour of the winning party
 - manipulation of the election itself in favour of the winning party

OR

- presence of at least one important case of direct French/British intervention in internal policy, such as:
 - bribery of local politicians resulting in deciding, favourable policy

- presence of French/British personnel in deciding administrative positions

3. Financial dependence:

- presence of monetary control, through:
 - exchange rates fixed by France/Britain
 - French/British influence in the financial policy-making of the former colony
 - monetary reserves of the former colony controlled by France/Britain

OR

- cases of abuse of development aid for:
 - investment in French/British military structures
 - investment in infrastructure benefitting French/British corporations

4. Military presence:

- presence of defence agreements between France/Britain and the ex-colony guaranteeing security to its leadership in exchange for favourable economic conditions, such as:
 - favourable or exclusive access to resources
 - fixed amount of goods to be imported by the African country

OR

- cases of military interventions carried out with the aim of:
 - containing uprisings and protecting the current leadership
 - defending the French/British population before the local one
 - supporting French/British corporations

The criteria established in the conceptual framework aim at focusing on a direct and interventionist form of neo-colonialism practised by the former colonial powers. They exclude what can be understood as legacies of the colonial system, such as the consequences of the balkanisation of the area and the political and social structures inherited from the colonial period. The criteria do further not account for the imperialistic practices of multinational companies per se, understand-

ing them as a deplorable part of the general interactions between industrialised and developing countries and therefore as a global phenomenon which is not considered as neo-colonial if it is not directly linked to political interests of the former colonial ruler. In the same way, the role of international organisations and of tax havens, which can support neo-colonial practises, will generally not be considered in the two case studies. Equally, the conditionality linked to bilateral and multilateral aid will not be considered as a neo-colonial tool. This based on the understanding of aid as being guided by interests at all times and part of more general relations between borrowing and lending countries.

These limitations result in a rather restricted understanding of neo-colonialism which might fail to consider certain more subtle aspects of neo-colonial practises. Yet, this facilitates focusing on the core substance of neo-colonialism and will allow measuring its presence in current times.

However, due to time and space constraints, the analysis will only provide a minimal amount of important cases of political, economic, financial or military influence in order to prove the presence of neo-colonialism. It will not account for all the infractions that happened during the analysed period.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The way in which France and Cameroon, as well as Britain and Ghana interacted in the past has a significant impact on the presence of neo-colonialism nowadays, reason why a short review of Cameroon's and Ghana's recent history and the involvement of France and Britain will be provided subsequently.

2.1 FRANCE AND CAMEROON

Cameroon, originally a German colony, was taken over by France and Britain during the First World War. The annexation was confirmed in

the Treaty of Versailles and by the League of Nations, assigning about two thirds of the former territory to French administration and the south-western highlands and the north to British rule. After a period of insurgency the French Cameroon reached independence in 1960. It was joined in 1961 by the southern British Cameroon through a plebiscite organised by the United Nations (UN), while the northern British Cameroon chose to join Nigeria (Historyworld, 2000; Encyclopedia Britannica, 2000; Somalipress, 2009; Encyclopedia of the Nations, 2011). The transition to independence was linked to the negotiation of bilateral treaties with France, determining defence, foreign policy, economic and financial matters, as well as technical assistance. The concession of sovereignty not only required the adoption of the constitutional model of the French 5th Republic, but also institutionalised the French political, economic, monetary and cultural pre-eminence over the new Cameroonian state (Martin, 1985).

The first president, Ahmadou Ahidjo, established a repressive authoritarian single-party regime with a liberal market economy, which was taken over in 1982 by the current president Paul Biya. In response to the increasing pressure for constitutional changes, the country held its first multi-party elections in 1992 with Biya emerging victorious. His election in 1992 and the one in 1997 were both accused of fraud by several local and international bodies. During the 1980s, Cameroon experienced a severe economic crisis, which was answered with Structural Adjustment Programmes conducted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) without significant success (Historyworld, 2000; Encyclopedia of the Nations, 2011).

For France, Cameroon constituted a vital source of raw materials, especially oil, bauxite and aluminium, as well as an important market for manufactured goods and an outlet for capital investment (Martin, 1985.) About 70% of all the oil extracted by French companies used to come from Cameroon, Angola, Congo and Gabon alone (Martin, 1995). According to several authors and NGOs, in the past France maintained a strong control over Cameroon which ensured a stable and favourable environment for French business (Survie, 2009). Indeed, Cameroon was considered as a centre piece of French interest in

Africa, together with Senegal, Ivory Coast and Gabon. Its partly British past further alimented French political intervention in several occasions with the purpose of inhibiting an expansion of British interest (Schraeder, 1997).

The French influence used to work on the basis of a tight network of formal and informal institutions which enabled an indirect control over the local elite and bureaucracy. In this network the major political decisions regarding Africa lied almost exclusively with the French President and his advisor for African Affairs and included regular encounters with African leaders and the organisation of biannual Franco-African summits (Martin, 1985; Schraeder, 1997).

Cooperation and defence agreements guaranteed France exclusive or privileged access to raw materials and facilitated the preservation of asymmetric trade relations. Indeed, Cameroon's role was largely restricted to the provision of primary goods, while trading, marketing and shipping activities were monopolised by French companies, resulting regularly in a positive trade balance for France (Martin, 1985; Goldsborough, 1979).

In 1947 the French franc zone was created establishing the franc CFA as general currency shared by all francophone West-African states and tied in a fixed parity of 50:1 to the French franc¹ (Schraeder, 1997; Goldsborough, 1979). The monetary zone implied French control over the issuance of the currency and all financial activities and budgetary policies, as well as the administration of profits in the French Treasury, making all decision-making dependent on the consent of France (Nkrumah, 1965). Following the pressure of African states for more monetary autonomy, France was forced to concede reforms in 1955, 1967 and 1973, which consented among others the free convertibility of the CFA outside the franc zone, the possibility of borrowing funds and investing outside the CFA area, and the Africanisation of the directory boards (Mensah, 1979). In 1994 the CFA was devaluated by 50% in response to its overvaluation and the increasing cross-boarder smuggling. Although constituting a reasonable rational

1 After the 1994 devaluation the parity was fixed at 100:1.

decision for France, the devaluation had devastating short-term consequences for the population of the CFA zone (Martin, 1995).

France equally preserved its military presence after independence, establishing defence and military assistance agreements which could account for simple military presence, as well as for official and secret direct interventions, provision of arms and protection from and assistance to political coups (Waulthier, 1972). In Cameroon the stationing of French troops has always been limited compared to countries like Gabon, Senegal or Ivory Coast and no official direct interventions have taken place (Ministère de la Défense, 2006).

The institutionalisation of linguistic and cultural links with all its former colonies under the heading of “La Francophonie” constituted a further centre piece of French influence, reinforcing the assimilation of French culture and ideology in the local elites (Martin, 1985).

2.2 BRITAIN AND GHANA

During colonialism Ghana was for a long time Britain’s richest colony, principally due to the large-scale commercial gold mining. With the increasing drive for independence, Britain chose to concede independence to Ghana as first African country in 1957, mainly in order to avoid a colonial war which would have damaged its economic interests (Nkrumah, 1965; Mongabay, 1994). In the first years after independence, Ghana continued following a liberal economic policy, yet establishing new local companies which would compete with the foreign ones, especially in the export of cocoa, gold and timber, which constitute the country’s most important markets. However, little nationalisation was achieved, the foreign companies continued to dominate and the economic activity of the state increased the national deficit (Esseks, 1971; Amin, 1971).

The first democratic election in 1961 put Kwame Nkrumah into power whose policy aimed at achieving as well economic independence through numerous governmental interventions (Mongabay, 1994). By gradually expanding state companies and restricting foreign private enterprises, Ghana was able to nationalise several economic

branches and to enhance local industrialisation, the industrial production doubling in four years. However, this positive development was linked to a huge increase of the debt burden and of corruption, as well as the loss of political support among the local business elite and isolation by the international community (Amin, 1971; Esseks, 1971). The additional decrease of living standards resulting from inflation and the fall of cocoa-prices finally led to the 1966 military coup which overthrew Nkrumah. The following period was characterised by recurring coups and power changes and a return to liberal pro-western policies (Amin, 1971).

From 1981 on, under the Rawlings government, strongly liberal policies were applied, following the guidelines of the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes in order to stimulate private investment and economic growth, which indeed did reverse the down-trend of the production. However, the people's living standard was not improved since the infrastructure came to benefit mainly industrial purposes, the increased export of the conventional primary goods (cocoa, gold and timber) reinforced the colonial trade patterns inhibiting industrialisation and social expenditures were cut. In 1992 the establishment of a new constitution reintroduced political elections and a multi-party system, granting a certain political stability (Mongabay, 1994).

For Britain, Ghana constitutes an important supplier of raw materials such as gold, wood, oil, diamonds, manganese and other minerals, and a market for manufactured goods and capital. In return, Britain is Ghana's most important trading partner (British High Commission, 2009). While minerals and diamonds are commercialised by at least partly Ghanaian-owned companies such as AngloGold Ashanti or the Precious Minerals Marketing Company, the exploitation of oil is almost entirely controlled by foreign multinationals (Kraus, 2002; Mongabay, 1994). The British Trade and Investment Department has been the main responsible for the coordination of business interests in Ghana, offering market reports, potential partners and personal contacts, regarding especially the commerce of hi-tech defence and security equipment and training, computer software and power generation technology (British High Commission, 2011).

Since Ghana's independence, Britain has been exercising economic influence through a strong presence of multinational corporations. However, due to the fomentation of local industries in early years under Nkrumah, the country has been in a comparatively stronger bargaining position with these foreign companies than other African countries (Nkrumah, 1965). The majority of the export of manganese and diamonds happened through the national companies Ghana National Manganese Corporation and Ghana Consolidated Diamonds. Moreover part of the transport was controlled by the Ghanaian merchant marine service which disposed over six cargo ships. Yet, the timber export which constitutes a considerable part of the GDP was largely controlled by foreign companies and presented much malpractice like smuggling, corruption and theft. Moreover, the gold mining was mostly controlled by foreign firms. The exploitation experienced a significant decline under Nkrumah and was only fuelled again in 1986 with the Minerals and Mining Law, which increased capital allowances, lowered taxes and permitted the use of offshore bank accounts. In more recent days, the Ghanaian government only retained about 25% of the most important mining company AngloGold Ashanti (Mongabay, 1994).

However, politically Ghana has been largely independent, partly thanks to its position of non-aligned country. There have been rumours that the 1966 military coup was supported by Britain, but no proofs have been presented (Mongabay, 1994). Moreover, Ghana early secured its financial independence by leaving the West African Currency Board which was part of the British Sterling zone and establishing its own central bank and currency already in 1957 (Mensah, 1979).

Britain has maintained a strong military presence in Ghana until 1971 through the Joint Services Training Team Agreement which provided training and advisory support to the Ghanaian army. In the aftermath Ghana diversified its sources of foreign military assistance, Britain still being one of the main powers involved (Mongabay, 1994; British High Commission, 2011).

2.3 FRANCE AND BRITAIN

Since colonial times, France and Britain nurtured an important rivalry on the African continent. After the independence of their colonies, both countries sustained the attempts to increase their area of influence through the establishment of monetary zones, trade and defence agreements and institutions like La Francophonie and the Commonwealth (Diouf, 2001). Especially France used to nourish a deep animosity towards Britain, fearing that small francophone countries would turn to Britain. In the past Cameroon has been a good example for the French suspicion towards Britain. Indeed, France regularly supported French candidates for presidency in order to ensure ongoing supremacy of the French language and culture in Cameroon (Wauthier, 1972). However, over the past decades this competition has decreased significantly, especially regarding the political influence (Diouf, 2001).

3. THE CURRENT PRESENCE OF NEO-COLONIALISM

Once reviewed the past relationships, the established conceptual framework will be applied to the determined period of analysis of 2004 to 2011.

3.1 CAMEROON

In order to provide evidence about the existence of ongoing French neo-colonial influence in Cameroon, cases of economic dependence, political interference, financial dependence and military presence are analysed in accordance with the conceptual framework.

3.1.1 ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

Perpetuation of the colonial trade patterns:

France is Cameroon's first trading partner with a commercial exchange of about 860 million Euros in 2009. However, the trading balance is negative for Cameroon with 597 million Euros of imports from France and only 263 million Euros of Cameroonian exports (France Diplomatie, 2011).

Over the past decades the multitude of trade agreements between France and Cameroon have increasingly given way to multilateral agreements between the European Economic Community (EEC) and the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of states (ACP), the most recent one being the 2000 Cotonou agreement, which largely maintains the ACP states in the role of primary good suppliers. Moreover, many monopolistic practices which were facilitated by the ancient bilateral agreements are still ongoing. For instance, the French company Bolloré has largely monopolised the Cameroonian transport system, controlling the Cameroonian railway Camrail, the transport per truck, the majority of the port in Douala, as well as the shipping to Europe (Survie, 2009).

Favourable treatment to French corporations:

There are innumerable cases of favourable treatment of foreign and particularly French companies, especially regarding the non-suing of legal infractions. Some of the most important cases concern the illegal exploitation of wood. Almost a third of all Cameroonian logging areas are controlled by French firms such as Thanry, Bolloré, Coron and Rougier, which according to the World Bank and Britain's Department for International Development to a majority act wholly or partly illegally and without being sued (Global Forest Watch, 2000; Transparency International, 2003). Through the introduction of the Cameroonian Ministry of Environment and Forests, the transparency in the handling of concessions and in the follow-up of illegal acts has been increased (FAO, 2005). Yet, much corruption is still present in the administration, resulting in a restricted access to relevant documents

and consequently difficulties with the judicial follow-through (Global Witness, 2003). Apart from having devastating consequences for the environment and the local communities, the impunity of illegal logging also leads to an estimate tax evasion loss of about 5-10 million dollars a year (FAO, 2005).

Further examples of legal infractions without consequences are the illegal take-over of land for sugar cane plantations though the expropriation of the local population by the French multinational Somdiaa (Primo, 2011) and the expropriation and human rights violations registered on the Bolloré Socapalm plantations (Mujongue, 2011).

Moreover, companies like Bolloré, Rougier and Elf appear to employ mercenaries of the company Africa Security Cameroun SARL, which regularly answer worker's protests with violence without facing judicial consequences (Primo, 2011; Mujongue, 2011).

3.1.2 POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

Support to the political leader:

Cameroon's 2004 presidential elections were won by Paul Biya with 70.92% of the votes (African Elections Database, 2011) and according to many sources clear irregularities in the electoral process, such as the limitation in registration of voters and the use of ink that could be wiped off (Laurean, 2005; Commonwealth Observer Group, 2004; Cameroononline, 2011; Somalipress, 2009b).

In all past elections, Biya's campaign was mainly sponsored by the French oil-company Elf Aquitaine. In a statement about the Elf corruption process Alfred Sirven, ex-manager of Elf affirmed that:

“Un jour, j'étais reçu à la présidence camerounaise par le président Paul Biya. Il avait besoin de 45 millions pour sa campagne. J'étais seul avec lui, ces gars-là, ils ne font confiance à personne. Ils ont besoin de cash et ils ont besoin que ce cash échappe à leur ministre des Finances. C'est pour cela que le group Elf monte des offshore qui échappent à tout contrôle, y compris au contrôle des autorités locales qu'ils ne sont pas sûrs de tenir [...]” (Survie, 2009 p.104).

There are no proofs that the same practice was used in the 2004 election campaign. However, the oil revenues are still not included into the national budget and offshore accounts established by Elf persist. Moreover, in an official statement the former Elf President Loïk Le Floch-Pringent allowed that without the support of Elf Biya would probably no longer be in power (The Frontier Telegraph, 2007).

Intervention in internal policy:

Regarding the presence of French personnel in decision-making positions of the Cameroonian administration, all high posts like the secretary to the presidency, the secretary general, the head of state's personal secretary etc. which used to be occupied by Frenchmen during the 1980s and 1990s are nowadays taken by Cameroonians (Martin, 1985; Republic of Cameroon, 2011).

However, corruption is a major problem. According to Transparency International and the World Bank's Governance Indicators, Cameroon is one of the most corrupt countries in the world with low government accountability, low respect of the rule of law and about 50% of the Cameroonians admitting to regularly pay bribes. This situation highly foments malpractices by foreign multinationals, and diminishes the knowledge about cases of bribery (Transparency International, 2010; Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2010; Somalipress, 2009b).

3.1.3 FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE

Monetary control:

France still exercises a very far-reaching monetary control over its former colonies. When the Euro was introduced in 1999, the CFA franc was tied in a fixed parity to it, as it was before to the French franc (Banque de France, a). France still largely maintains the decision-making about the CFA area and according to the agreement of the European Commission only needs to consult the Commission for far-reaching changes that would affect the whole Euro-area (Rat der Europäischen Union, 1998).

The conventions established with the African countries of the CFA area, including Cameroon, give far-reaching competencies to France. Indeed almost all decisions regarding the monetary policy of the whole area cannot be taken without the consent of France (Banque de France, b; Banque de France, c). Although the administrative council of the central bank for the CFA zone is composed only by a minority of Frenchmen, the fact that all important decisions need to be approved either unanimously or with a vast majority gives France a de-facto veto power (Nabakwe, 2002). Moreover, the conventions stipulate conditions reaching far into the internal financial policy of the countries, including conditions on the countries' fiscal policy (Banque de France, b; Banque de France, c). Furthermore, as before with the French franc, the CFA is only directly convertible to the Euro through the Banque de France, as well as the CFA franc of the west-African area and the one of the central-African area are not directly exchangeable without the permission of the French Central Bank. Likewise, all CFA countries are forced to deposit 65% of their monetary reserves in the French Treasury, which implies an enormous capital flight (PNB Paribas, 2001).

Abuses of development aid:

There are several cases of abuse of development aid for French economic interests. According to Survie most of the French aid goes back to France in the form of purchased French goods and services or provides infrastructure that mainly serves French corporations (Survie, 2009). For earlier years this return rate of official aid has been estimated at over 50% (Martin, 1985). Current numbers are not available, partly because over the past decades aid has increasingly been multi-lateralised and channelled through International Financial Institutions (IFIs) (Alliance Sud, 2011).

One of the most controversial development projects implemented in Cameroon with partial funding of the World Bank is the Chad-Cameroon pipeline which was completed in 2003/2004. The project was a joint venture of several foreign oil companies under the leadership of Exxon Mobil and was mainly implemented thanks to the World Bank funds, and despite much resistance from the local civil society and in-

volved NGOs. Indeed, many civil society groups called for a moratorium until the government capacity would be improved and democratic institutions strengthened in order to make sure that the project would benefit the whole population (SIPA; BIC, 2011).

3.1.4 MILITARY PRESENCE

Defence agreements:

According to the official doctrine, French military interventions are conducted only on request of the African government and within the framework of a defence agreement, reason why these agreements constitute the centre piece of French military relations with its former African colonies (Martin, 1985). The defence agreements generally originate from colonial times and represent a deal between France and the African ruler in that they provide military protection in exchange for favourable access to raw materials. Their content is not publicly accessible (Survie, 2010).

In France the military decisions about Africa are the sole decision of the president and according to the French Constitution do not need the approval of the parliament. In 2008 President Sarkozy started the renegotiation of the defence agreements and their reformation into “accords de partenariat de défense”, the agreement with Cameroon being concluded in 2009 (France Diplomatie, 2011). The new agreements were supposed to be published, but are not yet available, reason why the renegotiation is suspected to have a rather limited and symbolic outcome (Survie, 2010).

However, the reality of interventions does often not correspond to the agreements. There have been past cases of interventions without agreements, as well as non-interventions despite the presence of agreements. Indeed, France disposes over rapid-deployment forces (FAR) which are able to intervene at short notice in all African countries from a base in France (Martin, 1985; Grey, 1990).

Moreover, several minor military agreements exist, which are even less accessible. Likewise, mercenaries and a part of the Cameroonian forces are financed by the French military or French corporations (Survie, 2010). For instance the oil-company Total seems to be finan-

cing six out of ten divisions of the Cameroonian marine in order to be granted protection of its oil platforms (Survie, 2009b).

Military interventions:

France considers Cameroun as its first partner for military cooperation in Africa (France Diplomatie, 2011) even if only 50 soldiers are stationed permanently, compared with up to 2900 in Djibouti (Deshayes, 2008). This is most likely due to the strong military commercial relation that is exemplified by the constant rise of the Cameroonian defence budget (155.203 Billion CFA in 2008) and the provision of the military material by French companies (Survie, 2009).

However, over the analysed period there have been no direct interventions of the French military. The protests of February 2008 in Douala against the degradation of living standards and the envisaged constitutional changes to allow an unlimited number of presidential terms were violently contested by the Cameroonian army, causing over 139 deaths and innumerable severe human rights violations. Yet, no direct intervention of the French military has been reported (Essoh, 2009; Observatoire National des Droits de l'Homme, 2008).

3.1.5 OUTCOME

France clearly preserves a strong economic influence on Cameroon, on the one hand through bilateral and multilateral agreements which sustain the colonial trade patterns by disincentivising diversification and inhibiting proper industrialisation, and on the other hand through the presence of multinational corporations which undermine the state's judicial capacity by enjoying favourable treatment in many terms.

There is also a rather strong political interference in the 2004-2011 period manifested through the financial support provided to Paul Biya keeping him in power after nearly thirty years of leadership. However, the political influence clearly diminished with regard to the 1980s and 1990s since the important administrative positions are now all occupied by Cameroonians. Yet, the high degree of corruption is likely to benefit French interests.

The financial influence is most probably the one factor which most determines Cameroon's dependence from France. The strong monetary control largely inhibits an independent Cameroonian financial policy and budgeting. Moreover, there are cases of abuse of multilateral development aid for purposes serving French corporations in the country.

Even if no direct military interventions have been reported for the analysed period, France also maintains a strong military control over Cameroon, especially through the preservation of defence agreements with the Cameroonian leadership.

France consequently clearly upholds economic influence, political interference, financial dependence and military presence, reason why in accordance with the established criteria its relationship with Cameroon can be classified as neo-colonialism.

3.2 GHANA

Once analysed the current relation between France and Cameroon, the conceptual framework will be applied to the presence of Britain in Ghana.

3.2.1 ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE

Perpetuation of the colonial trade patterns:

Ghana and Britain are as well part of the 2000 Cotonou agreement, which follows the 1964 and 1971 Yaoundé Conventions that established prices and quantities for the exchange of raw materials and manufactured goods and the 1975, 1979, 1984 and 1989 Lomé Conventions signed between the EEC and the ACP countries (Martin, 1984; Cortés, 1987; Diouf, 2001). The Lomé Conventions introduced insurance mechanisms (Stabex and Sysmin) which would protect the ACP countries from loss of revenue in difficult economic or environmental situations (Martin, 1984). However, the various conditions linked to the financial support largely contributed to perpetuate colonial trade patterns disincentivising diversification and inhibiting industrialisation, as well as they ensured ongoing access to primary

goods for the EEC countries (Merinero, 2001; Cortés, 1987). The 2000 Cotonou agreement supposedly replaced the Stabex and Sysmin mechanisms by conventions of free exchange. Nevertheless, the unequal trade regime continues in place, with the EEC commission controlling most of the decision-making and maintaining protectionisms in the EEC countries while opening the ACP markets (Diouf, 2001).

There is further a clear monopolistic access to resources for foreign corporations. However, British firms constitute only a part of the present companies (Mongabay, 1994).

Concerning the transport monopoly, Ghana does dispose over a small governmental shipping company with cargo ships (Mongabay, 1994).

Favourable treatment to British companies:

Cases of favourable treatment of British companies during the analysed period have been reported, mainly concerning the presence of legal infractions missing judicial follow-up. AngloGold Ashanti², which is the one of the world's largest mining companies, has repeatedly been accused of pollution and destruction of living space in the Obuasi mine. Ongoing water and land contamination resulting in illness and food insecurity have been reported without entailing court cases or appropriate compensation for the local population (Action-Aid, 2006).

3.2.2 POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

Support to the political leader:

In the 2004 presidential election J. Kufour was re-elected for a second term with 52.45% of the votes (African Elections Database, 2009). The elections and the campaigns were declared as free and fair by the International Community, the monitoring team of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Coalition of Do-

2 AngloGold Ashanti is a South African subsidiary of Anglo American which is based in London

mestic Election Observers (CODEO) and the Ghanaian people (Guri, 2005). In the 2008 presidential election J. Atta Mills was elected with 50.23% in the second round (African Elections Database, 2009). According to the European Union Election Observation Mission and The Carter Centre the elections were conducted in an open, transparent and competitive way respecting fundamental rights and meeting international and regional standards (EUEOM, 2009; The Carter Centre, 2011). However, according to CODEO, the high turn-out was questionable in view of the widespread irregularities and violence during the voter's registration, and the absence of in-depth investigations. Moreover, the constitutional and legal provisions to prevent ethnic block voting were judged insufficient, as well as the consideration of informal institutions and procedures. Yet, since none of the big parties insisted on investigations, the election result and the campaigns are generally considered as correct (Jockers, 2009).

Intervention in internal policy:

No important cases of direct British intervention in the Ghanaian internal policy have been reported. However, in view of the high presence of corruption (rank 69 in the Transparency International 2009 report with 37% of corruption) the bribery of local politicians for economic benefits cannot be excluded. As for the presence of British personnel, all the higher administrative positions seem to be occupied by local personnel (GIMPA, 2011).

3.2.3 FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE

Monetary control:

In the case of Ghana there is no monetary control through Britain. Ghana early established own banks and introduced its own currency which was tied to the sterling until 1961 and to the US dollar until 1986. Since then the currency, as well as the financial policy are independent. The monetary reserves are mainly in the country's hand, yet there is a high presence of British banks (Amin, 1971; Mongabay, 1994).

Abuse of development aid:

There have been important cases of abuse of development aid to support British companies. Especially in recent years, cooperation has increasingly focused on the private sector, using aid to promote economic interests and facilitate the access of own companies to raw materials and markets. This practice has become more common particularly through the multilateralisation of development aid which channels governmental aid through the IFIs. Some studies show that the International Finance Corporation (IFC), which is part of the World Bank Group, issues more than one third of all the loans used to promote the private sector, designating 65% of them to big multinationals (Alliance Sud, 2011).

In the case of Ghana, in 2008 the British company Vodafone took over 70% of Ghana Telecom, the Ghanaian national telecommunications company, with a 300 million dollar loan from IFC, which covered over a third of the cost (Alliance Sud, 2011).

3.2.4 MILITARY PRESENCE

Defence agreements:

There is no information publicly available about the existence and the contents of current defence agreements between Britain and Ghana.

Nkrumah clearly opposed the concept of defence pacts and criticised any British military intervention on the continent, reason why under his leadership the Ghanaian army was very rapidly Africanised and defence agreements with Britain avoided (Omoigui, 2006; Mongabay, 1994). The later, generally pro-western leaderships diversified military assistance in order to obtain support from various countries (Mongabay, 1994).

According to the British High Commission, Britain's military presence in Ghana has been reduced in recent years. However, a "strong programme of military assistance and cooperation" is still maintained with Ghanaian forces attending trainings in the UK and British military personnel providing instruction in Ghana, mostly funded by Britain (British High Commission, 2010).

Military interventions:

In the analysed period of 2004 until 2011 no official British military interventions have been carried out in Ghana.

3.2.5 OUTCOME

Britain does maintain an important economic influence in Ghana, through the Cotonou agreement which reinforces Ghana's role of supplier of raw materials, as well as through the high presence of British multinationals which often enjoy favourable treatments.

There seems to be no political interference in the sense that no British intervention in the past two elections could be identified and no British personnel occupy important positions in Ghana's administration. However, Ghana shows rather high rates of corruption, which can benefit British interests in a way that is hardly measurable.

There is a slight financial dependence, not in terms of monetary control, but in terms of development aid being used to sustain the presence of British multinational corporations in Ghana.

British military presence is not given according to the established criteria. Britain is maintaining military cooperation with Ghana, but there is no evidence about the existence of defence agreements which would guarantee military support to the current leadership in exchange for favourable economic treatment, and no direct military interventions have been registered during the analysed time.

In sum, Britain is preserving economic influence and a slight financial dependence. However there is no evidence about political interference or military presence, reason why according to the established criteria the relationship between Ghana and Britain cannot be considered as neo-colonial.

4. PATTERNS OF FRENCH AND BRITISH INFLUENCE

The results of the two analysed case studies can be resumed with Mahtar Diouf, according to whom; while France tries to keep tight relations with its former colonies in economic, political, financial and military terms, Britain seems to limit its intervention to the economic sphere, providing technical assistance and securing markets for its corporations (Diouf, 2001). Indeed, according to the established framework, France results to exercise a clear neo-colonial control over Cameroon, while Britain's relation with Ghana appears to be more independent and limited to economic influence and minor financial dependence.

Apart from establishing the presence of neo-colonialism in Cameroon and Ghana, the comparison of the two cases also allows a few conclusions regarding the French and the British strategy in general, revealing certain differences and similarities.

4.1 DIFFERENCES

Politically France is still quite involved in Cameroon, as it is in other former colonies. Despite the political retirement that was announced on the occasion of the 1990 summit in La Baule, where the promotion of democracy was set as new hallmark of French African policy, the current French political elite appears to maintain its involvement in African political matters (Schraeder, 1997). In contrast to this, Britain largely withdrew its political control over Ghana.

The same difference is observable in the financial sphere. While Britain's financial influence is limited to the use of parts of development aid for its own economic interests, France maintains a strong control on all the financial decisions of Cameroon, mainly through the CFA monetary union. Indeed, the monetary zones used to constitute an important mean to maintain control over former colonies and were applied by all major former colonial powers in Africa. However, only the French franc

zone has been able to preserve its influence. Contrary to the expectations which understood the 1994 devaluation of the CFA franc as the beginning of the French financial disengagement, the French franc zone is still largely intact and even expanded due to the recent linkage to the euro (Faes, 2001). The restrictive financial policies imposed by France result in a considerable monetary dependence which, according to some authors, deliberately keeps African countries poor and inhibits their industrialisation and proper development (Kohnert, 1998). The sterling area on the other hand has been much looser since the beginning, and Ghana successfully established its own national banks and currency short after independence (Nkrumah, 1965).

In military terms, the British presence is equally less visible. However, this might partly depend on the very discreet British military policy due to which only a limited amount of information is publicly accessible. Moreover, the fact that Ghana has largely been applying a liberal policy which does not hinder British economic influence might have contributed to decrease the need for British military presence. Contrary to this, the French military policy continues largely unchanged. According to different authors, the recent reformation of the defence agreements will not entail a real retirement of France in military terms, but will rather result in a change of the means applied, in the sense that an increasing amount of French interventions will seek for international support and a mandate of the UN (Grey, 1990; Survie, 2010). Moreover, the ongoing military presence and the existence of the rapid-deployment forces alone appear to reduce the probability of internal uprisings (Grey, 1990).

A further important difference concerns the mediatisation of the French and British influence in Africa. While Britain's interests in Ghana are largely unknown and do not penetrate the media, the French African policy has regularly been publicly announced and denounced. Since the British influence happens almost exclusively through the presence of multinational corporations, very little evidence about the British policy in Ghana is publicly available. On the other hand, the French African policy has been followed closely by civil society groups and NGOs since the 1990s when François-Xavier

Verschave's book on the so-called 'Françafrique' firstly documented and denounced French neo-colonialism in Africa (Verschave, 1998; Faes, 2001). However, while in early years French politicians used to be quite vocal about their intentions in Africa³, the political discourse has become much more discreet in recent years (Chafer, 1992). Indeed, at the 1990 Franco-African summit of La Baule, Mitterrand insisted on the fact that French aid would in future be concentrated on democratic regimes. However, a country breakdown of the provided aid shows that a majority of French financial aid is still proportioned to corrupt regimes (Martin, 1995).

In sum, the two major former colonial powers are pursuing very different strategies regarding their ex-colonies in Africa. Most likely these distinct current relations originate at least partly in the different models of colonisation that were applied by France and Britain respectively. While Britain's colonisation was sustained mainly through strong institutions, the French colonisation reached much deeper requiring a proper assimilation of French culture and structures by the country subject to it.

4.2 SIMILARITIES

The French and British influence in Cameroon and Ghana present similarities in economic terms in that both countries maintain terms of trade which do perpetuate the role of Ghana and Cameroon as suppliers of primary goods and buyers of manufactured products. Moreover, both are present through several multinational corporations which monopolise certain economic fields, such as the mining and telecommunication sectors in Ghana and the domains of wood logging and transport in Cameroon.

The two case studies further exemplify two trends that have been commented by Makhtar Diouf and Géraldine Faes, namely the trends

3 Statements like François Mitterrand's «Sans l'Afrique il n'y aura pas d'histoire de France au 21ème siècle» (Chafer, 1992 p.40), or the state's secretary for cooperation Alain Joyandet's «the implantation of French corporations in Africa is a priority» used to be common (Survie, 2009 p.7).

towards a multilateralisation and a privatisation of the relations between the former colonial powers and their ex-colonies (Diouf, 2001; Faes, 2001).

Trend towards a multilateralisation of the relations

Over the past decades, a clear progression from bilateralism to multilateralism is perceivable, concerning trade agreements, development aid and military interventions. Through the four Lomé Conventions and the recent Cotonou agreement, the originally bilateral trade agreements have been largely replaced by a multilateral practise including all the EEC and the ACP countries. Similarly, development aid and private investment have increasingly been channelled through IFIs like the IMF and the World Bank. Likewise, military interventions have come to increasingly involve several powers and require the approval of the UN. According to Tony Chafer and Guy Martin this gradual multilateralisation already started in the 1980s, and has generally been of no advantage to the African countries (Chafer, 1992; Martin, 1985). Especially the multilateralisation of trade agreements contributed to opening up African markets, rendering them more accessible for all EEC member states, same as the financial dependence maintained by France came to benefit all members of the European Union through the linkage of the CFA to the Euro. Furthermore, also the flows of development aid have become less controllable through their multilateralisation.

Trend towards a privatisation of the relations

The multilateralisation has been accompanied by a privatisation of the relations, in the sense that business circles have increasingly taken over the existing political networks and transformed them into economic lobbies, where multinational companies directly interact with favourable political leaders in order to preserve their economic benefits⁴ (Verschave, 1994; Faes, 2001; Diouf, 2001b). This development

4 There are several examples for the linkage of business and politics that the privatisation of the relation with African countries entailed. For instance Jean-Cristophe Mitterrand, son of the former French president, used to be counsellor for African Affairs while also

appears to stem mainly from globalisation and from the rise of the IFIs and their promotion of liberalism, which both contributed to increase the power of multinational corporations vis-à-vis the states (Diouf, 2001b). However, this increased power position and the resulting monopolistic practices, constitute one of the most important obstacles to the emergence of local markets and to a proper industrialisation. Furthermore, they are a source of pollution, corruption, over-exploitation of resources and social negligence (Survie, 2009).

Likewise, there has been a privatisation of the use of violence, visible in the recurrent deployment of mercenary forces for private interests (Goldsborough, 1979).

5. CONCLUSION

The aim of the dissertation consisted in operationalising the concept of neo-colonialism by providing a framework of criteria which allow measuring the presence of neo-colonialism in a country and by applying it to two case studies, departing from the hypothesis that the presence of neo-colonialism is measurable to a reasonable degree.

The application of the conceptual framework to the two case studies has resulted in that France does preserve a neo-colonial relation with Cameroon in all terms in the analysed period of 2004 to 2011, while Britain's presence in Ghana is limited to economic influence and a slight financial dependence that cannot be classified as neo-colonialism in accordance to the established criteria. The analysis further allowed identifying general trends towards a multilateralisation and a privatisation of the relations between the former colonial powers and the ex-colonies, the multilateralisation concerning trade relations, the provision of aid and military interventions, and the privatisation regarding mainly the relations between foreign multinational compa-

being one of the major shareholders of the Cameroonian logging company SFID. Likewise, Michel Roussin, vice-president of Bolloré used to contemporarily be minister of cooperation, and the former IMF director Dominique Strauss-Kahn was one of the main leaders in negotiating the linkage of the CFA to the Euro. (Survie 2009; EconFin 1999)

nies and the local government and the use of violence by multinational corporations.

Through the provision of these results, the established framework has proven to be functional and the presence of neo-colonialism in a country reasonably measurable. Moreover, the outcomes were clear and the criteria showed to be applicable in most cases.

However, there are some evident limitations to the analysis. Firstly, the definition of neo-colonialism and the established criteria to measure it are based on a very restricted understanding, reason why the results only account for a rather interventionist form of neo-colonialism and do not respond for more subtle forms of influence. Secondly, only two case studies have been analysed, which does not confer much weight to the discussed patterns. Moreover, the two analysed countries are not precisely in the same position, with Cameroon probably being of more interest to France than Ghana to Britain. Thirdly, certain documents that would provide important information such as defence agreements, are not publicly accessible, which has a considerable limiting impact on the results. Also, in the case of Britain much more secrecy is maintained regarding its interests in former colonies than in France, resulting in a situation of asymmetrical information that is likely to reinforce the result of France being much more involved in Cameroon than Britain in Ghana. Finally, taking into consideration the variety of understandings of the concept of neo-colonialism, the attempt to establish a limited amount of pertinent criteria to measure it inevitably entails a certain degree of subjectivity.

However, the limitations of the presented research give space for additional research possibilities. For instance, the proposed conceptual framework could be applied to more case studies in order to broaden the results and give more weight to general conclusions. Likewise, the framework could be amplified in order to consider more criteria. Also, a deeper research on the found trends towards a multilateralisation and privatisation of the relations between former colonial powers and their ex-colonies might be of interest. Equally, the influence of other big power like China and the USA in newly independent countries could be analysed.

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