The impact of Brexit on Francophone Africa

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And if Brexit inspired Africa? [2]

Abstract: Whereas the impact of Brexit on Anglophone Africa was a major issue in the controversial British discussions on the pros and cons of Brexit, possible repercussions on French-speaking Africa have been rarely mentioned up to now. If at all, mostly indirect general effects were declared, both concerning the former British Empire in Africa and *a fortifori* for the former French colonies as well. Yet, the range of possible Brexit effect is impressive. It spreads from direct influence on farm-gate cocoa-prices in the CFA-currency regions and subsequent percussions on the state budget of these countries, over more indirect effects, e.g. on the cooperation between CEMAC, WAEMU and the EU concerning EDF-programs of which Great Britain has been a major contributor so far, as well as enforced re-negotiation of controversial EPAs, to the revival of progressive social networks in Francophone Africa. The latter are already demanding more political and economic sovereignty, for example with respect to the increasingly anachronistic F CFA currency. Yet, in view of the lack of countervailing power of Britain within the EU in the case of Brexit, the murky network of Françafrique could be re-vitalized and consolidated as well. Besides, there could develop also direct effects of the Brexit. For example, on coca-farmers in Francophone West Africa, because their product is traditionally traded in Pound Sterling. Thus, any fall in the value of the Pound Sterling against the Euro once Britain leaves the EU would have damaging consequences, not only for the producers but also for public finances, because cocoa is priced in Sterling and the CFA franc is linked to the Euro. This impacts also on the revival of the long-standing controversy on the ill-adapted and increasingly anachronistic F CFA. African activists already demand a genuine African debate and a referendum on these issues similar to the Brexit vote.

Keywords: Brexit, UK, EU, Françafrique, post-colonialism, development, international trade, ODA, security, partnership
JEL-Codes: F13, F2, F35, F54, F63, G15, G2, H26, N17, N47, N77, O17, P16, Z13

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[2] Source: Brexit & F CFA. *Jeune Afrique*, 24 June 2016. - Annick Kamgang, dite KAM, est une dessinatrice franco-camerounaise. - CPI = Cours Pénale Internationale (French: International Criminal Court),- CFA = F CFA, common currency of the former African French colonies

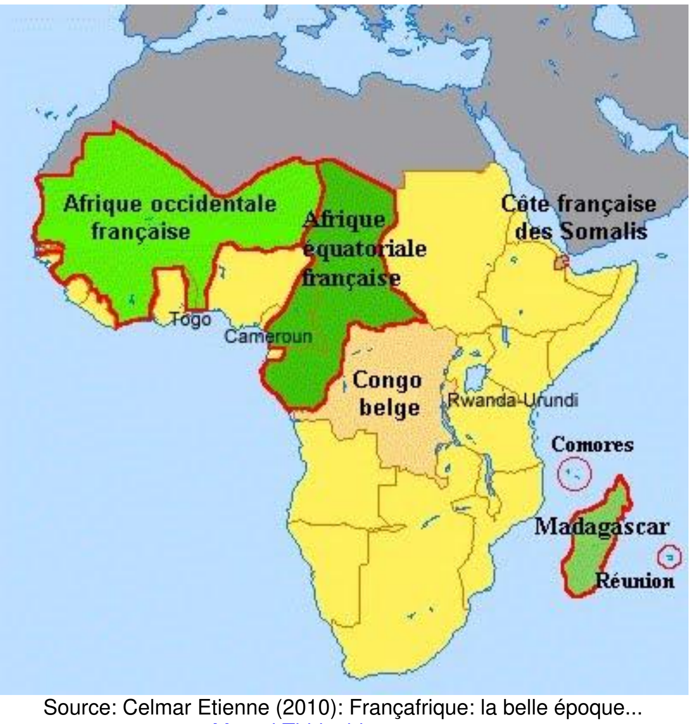
1. Introduction – General Implications of Brexit for Francophone Africa

Whereas the impact of Brexit on Anglophone Africa was a major issue in the controversial British discussions on the pros and cons of Brexit (Kohnert, 2018), possible repercussions on French-speaking Africa have been rarely mentioned up to now. If at all, mostly indirect general effects were declared, both concerning the former British Empire in Africa and *a fortifori* for the former French colonies as well. At least, this was asserted by Albert Zeufack, World Bank Chief Economist for West Africa, during a talk at the Chamber of Commerce of Côte d'Ivoire (CCI) on 29 June 2016 (Zeufack, 2016).

On the other hand, British Brexiteers were not tired of yearning for the re-establishment of the glory times of British Empire, conceivably based on a euphoric and over-ambitious multi-expert report of the Africa All Party Parliamentary Group, financed by the Royal Africa Society, on the post-Brexit Africa-UK trade and development cooperation relations (RAS-APPG-2017; Kohnert, 2018; 2018a). This the more so because the United Kingdom (UK) nowadays has already important economic relations with Angola, Ivory Coast and Senegal. Other members of the French *pré carée* in Africa, like Togo, want to enter the African Commonwealth too (RFI, 2016). According to Zeufack, the direct effects of the British exit from the European Union (EU) will be "negligible" for Africa while the indirect effects could be important. This, notably if Brexit would cause a slowdown in growth in the EU, with repercussions on African countries, their main partner is Europe. Indirect effects may seem especially noticeable at the level of international financing. One of the immediate consequences of Brexit would be to make international liquidity more expensive and less available. This could affect for instance those African countries that would like to raise funds on international markets, e.g. to finance their infrastructure. Moreover, the indirect effects could include lessons for regional integration that African states could draw from Brexit. This was confirmed implicitly during the African Union (AU) summit in Kigali in March 2018. The African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), approved by 44 African governments in Kigali envisages using their negotiating advantage as in-demand partners to press for more protection of their domestic markets and infant industries (Westcott 2018). Moreover, it could offer solutions concerning long-standing problems of economic integration, as the anachronistic multitude of eight currencies competing in West Africa, which is a real handicap for the economic performance of the region.

Britain's and France's rivalry for supremacy in (post-)colonial Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) has a long and conflictual history, notably in West Africa (Wesseling, 2004). Although the *chasse gardée* of the so-called *Françafrique* (Verschave, 1999; 2005; Boisbouvier, 2010, Haski, 2013), sustained by the post-colonial system of the *Messieurs Afrique* (Kohnert, 2005; Glaser & Smith, 1992;1997), has been out-matched by British dominance in Africa up-to-date, it is still very much alive. The term *Françafrique*, originally coined by Félix Houphouët-Boigny, first president of Ivory Coast in 1960, used to describe the post-colonial relationship between France and its former colonies. France wanted to continue, by all means, legal or not, to control its former African colonies. This clandestine system of self-interested parallel French foreign policy founded in the late 1950s was led by men in the shadows under the watchful eye of Jacques Foccart, the "Mr Africa" of the Elysee until his death in 1997. It was an integrated political, military, economic and financial system of venality in SSA by which French and African political and business elites scratched each other's backs at the expense of their fellow citizens. Its walling-off by a special currency, the CFA franc, assured restricted competition and extraordinary gains for all parties involved (Kohnert, 1994). The biggest losers in the WAEMU (UEMOA), were Niger, Togo, and Burkina Faso. In the BEAC zone (CEMAC), Cameroon was the biggest loser. Empirical evidence showed that there were more losers than gainers in the CFA Franc monetary cooperation system (M'Bet & Niamkey, 1994).

Map 1: Colonial origins of Francophone Africa



Source: Celmar Etienne (2010): Françafrique: la belle époque...
Marcel Thiriet.blogspot.com

Thus, post-colonial dependence continued in other forms, including the looting of raw materials, with the complicity of corrupt African heads of state, sometimes maintained at great expense, but also aware of their power over the former metropolis (Airault & Bat, 2016). Examples are the escapades of infamous "emperor" Bokassa of the Central African Republic, or the pillage of the resources of their countries over decades by late Omar Bongo (Gabun, succeeded after his death in 2009 by his son Ali Bongo) and general Eyadéma Ganssingbé of Togo, continued by the heir to his throne, Faure Gnassingbé up to date (Kohnert, 2019).

All this, despite repeated announcements of French presidents, form Nicolas Sarkozy, over François Hollande to Emmanuel Macron, of the departure from its established policy of *Françafrique* since the controversial Dakar-declaration of Sarkozy in 2007. Some experts even stated a degeneration of *Françafrique* to a mafia-like network of high ranking French and African politicians and businessmen (Verschave, 2005; Mbembe, 2010; Cailletet & Milot, 2010; Thorel, 2013).

In view of the lack of countervailing power of Britain within the EU in the case of Brexit, it is not to be excluded that the murky network of *Françafrique* or alternative shadily trans-boundary networks of corruption, trafficking and money-laundering in Francophone Africa, notably in the resource rich countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo, could even be re-vitalized and consolidated. The current Bolloré-affair, probed by the French justice in connection with the notorious French tycoon [Vincent Bolloré](#) and his network of corruption in collusion with African autocrats in French West-Africa, could be an indicator of things to happen [3].

Map 2: French military intervention in Sub-Sahara Africa

Source: Celmar Etienne (2010): Françafrique: la belle époque...
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British-African relations, on the contrary, are said to have been less ideologically charged than that of France, with the possible exception of its former settler colony Zimbabwe (Haefliger, 2019). In this respect, a look into the history of EU-African relations could be useful.

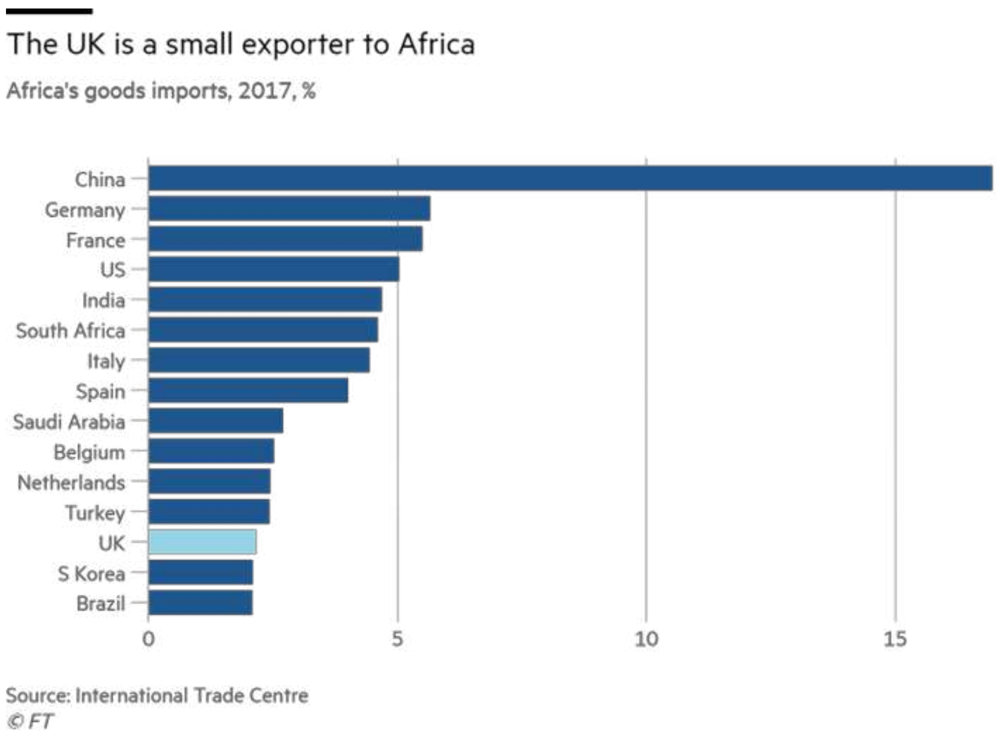
The creation of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) as a privileged partner of the EU, for example, was a direct result of Britain's accession to the European Economic Community (EEC) in 1973, i.e. 22 years after the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and 15 years of the formation of the EEC, the two predecessors of the EU. British application for EU membership had been vetoed two times by France in 1963 and November 1967, mainly because the than French president De Gaulle presumed that the UK would effectively act as American agent inside the European Common Market. He favoured an European Community dominated by France and steered by a Franco-German alliance (Connolly, 2017; Goldsmith & Farrell, 2017). London, on the other hand, wanted to preserve the UK's privileged economic and monetary relations with the Commonwealth countries and the imperial preference system (Deschamps, 2017). Therefore, in cannot be ruled out that France did not want an undue competitor in its post-

[3]Yet, others caution about the end of the glory days of *Françafrique* (Pilling, 2019). Nevertheless, the shadowy Françafrique network has aroused continuing attention and was only recently even aptly characterized by a graphic novel written by Harel & Sole (2018): *L'Argent fou de la Françafrique: L'Affaire des biens mal-acquis*. Paris: Glénat BD. Reviewed in *Le Monde Afrique*, by Mollon, Fabien (2018).

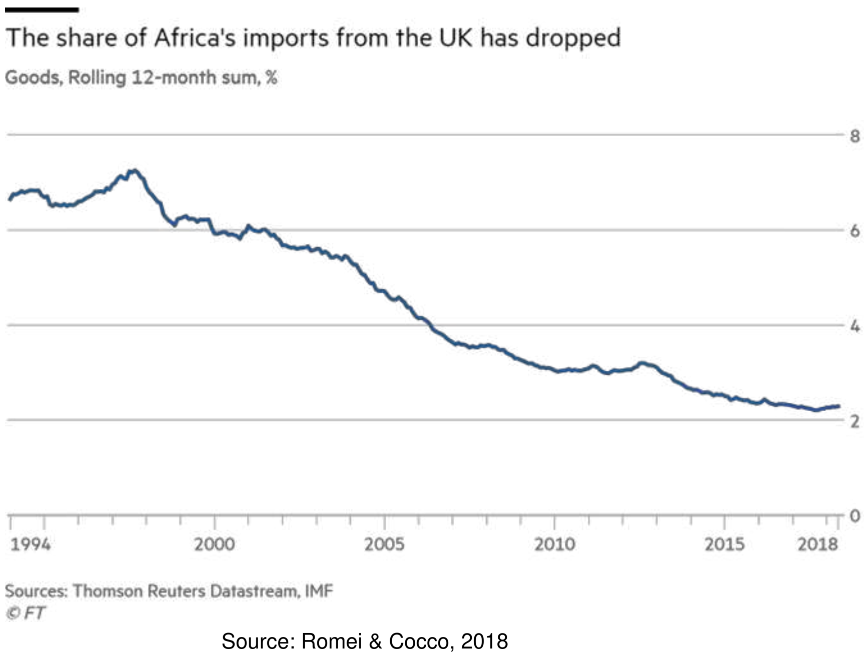
colonial dealings with Africa. The formation of the ACP resulted in the Lomé Convention, signed in 1975 between the EEC and 46 ACP countries. The adherence to the EEC offered the UK the chance to both collectivize its obligations to some of these ACP-states at the expense of the other European member states, while at the same time opening news prospects in Francophone Africa, which had previously been beyond its reach (Price, 2018). The UK Government itself stated in 2013 that through the collectivization of aid provision in the EU, the 'reach and magnitude of EU financial instruments' (which includes the EDF) 'outweighs those the UK could bring to bear bilaterally'. This allowed the UK to maximize the use of its resources, allowing it in times of austerity to focus 'scarce national resources on priorities elsewhere' (UK Government, 2013; Price, 2018). Already in 1958, the Rome Treaty had installed a close alliance between the EEC and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) of its founding member states, including a preferential trade regime as well as financial assistance through the first European Development Fund (EDF). France had been at that time the prominent driver of this association set up in order to push its particular political and economic interests in Africa (Kennes, 2018).

However, Africa especially was also a way for conservative British politicians to maintain global influence. Thus, most recently, Theresa May's Africa-tour to the African heavy-weights, South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria at the end of August 2018, was meant to consolidate and deepen economic ties between the UK and the African Commonwealth (Jennings, 2018). British companies control large areas of African land enclosing key mineral reserves including gold, copper, platinum, coal, and diamonds (Ansorg & Haastrup, 2016; Kabemba 2014). About 100 companies listed on the London Stock Exchange (LSE) - most of them British - have mining operations in 37 SSA countries. They collectively control over US $1 trillion worth of Africa's most valuable resources (Curtis 2016). British companies could be inclined to negotiate in the future independently of perceived or real EU ethical restrictions which would allow these inequalities to aggravate even more (Ansorg & Haastrup, 2016: 3).

However, Britain's competitiveness decreased substantially within the past decades, from 7% to 2% of Africa's imports. British trade with Africa is dominated by fuel, precious stones and fresh fruit that suffered, last but not least as a consequence of falling commodity prices. By comparison, trade with the EU is dominated by machinery and vehicles, either as finished goods or as parts and components." (Romei & Cocco, 2018). France, Germany and Italy export more than double the value of goods to Africa than the UK. Even Spain, which has an economy half the size of the UK's, exports more than Britain (Romei&Cocco, 2018).



Source: Romei & Cocco, 2018



Source: Romei & Cocco, 2018

On the other hand, in the case of Brexit, French self-centred dominance of EU-Africa policies would reign unrestricted of British countervailing powers. Despite the UK rarely being a constructive player in the European integration process, it has played an important role in counter-balancing the power of Germany and France. Thus, some experts see already positive developments caused by Brexit for countries like Libya and Zimbabwe, hitherto under EU sanctions supported by Britain. With Brexit, the EU-27 – motivated by France and Germany - might be encouraged to review these sanctions and possibly re-engage with these countries (Tan, 2018). The ability of small EU member states to have a say on the joint decision-making of the Franco-German axis will depend on the strength of EU institutions in continuing to balance the interests of all members, and the collaborative working of small states to influence decisions taken within them (Bishop & Clegg, 2018).

But Africa could also be looking for other partners if its ties with the UK and the EU-27 get complicated because of Brexit, according to the saying w*hen two people quarrel the third one rejoices*. In the past decade, China already out-manoeuvred the EU and became SSA most important export partner by 2013, accounting for 27% of the region's exports, compared with only 23% for the EU, and 21% of the USA (Tan, 2018). Moreover, Chinese goods exports to Africa are eight times larger than those of the UK and even bigger than the top three exporters, Germany, France and the US, combined (Romei & Cocco, 2018).

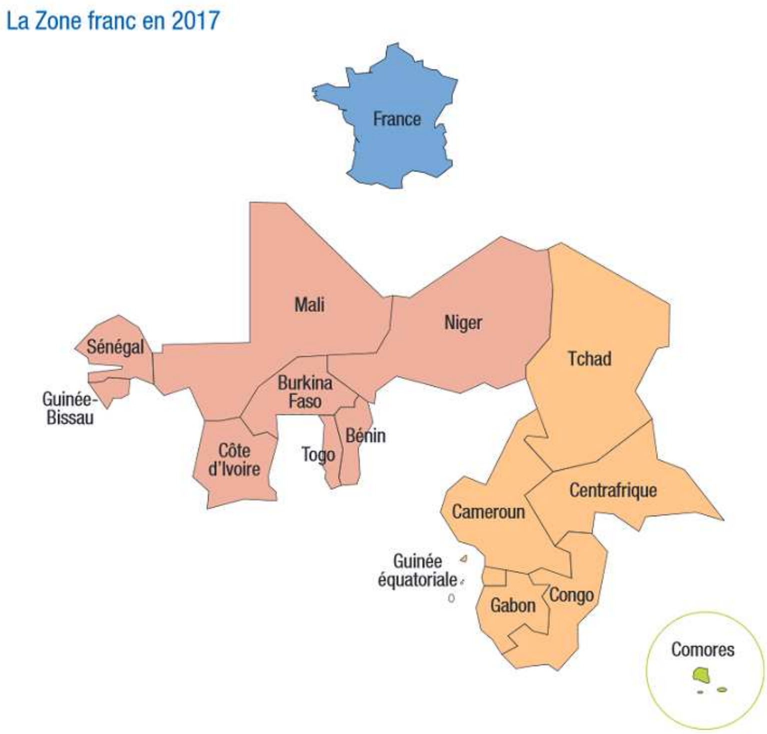
2. The impact of Brexit on the new scramble for Africa and the 'second liberation' of Francophone Africa

According to not a small number of 'influencers' of French-speaking social networks, like the Franco-Cameroonian female cartoonist Annick Kamgang (2016), the Brexit could also inspire Africa in re-launching a debate on its sovereignty, including judicial and monetary issues. Brexit could thus be used as a cause for a 'second liberation of Africa' from (post)- colonial domination. One prominent case in the realm of the judiciary is the controversy in African Media on supposedly biased rulings on African leaders by the International Criminal Court, The Hague. The trial of the former Chadian dictator Hissène Habré (1982-1990) was a case in point. Yet, his conviction by the Extraordinary African Chambers (EAC), which sentenced Hissène Habré to life imprisonment in 2015, showed that Africans themselves were able to judge their former leaders. The same holds for Rwanda's legal system that accused France of complicity in the 1994 genocide. Paris and Kigali are still trying to settle their legal disputes.

Another, even more important issue in the realm of economics of Francophone Africa is the long-standing controversy on the ill-adapted and increasingly anachronistic F CFA franc (Kohnert, 2005; 1994). Kampgang and others ask, when will there be a genuine African debate and a referendum on these issues similar to the Brexit vote?

In fact, the debate began already. In October 2016, a group of African and European economists published a book entitled *Liberate Africa from Monetary Slavery: Who Profits from the CFA Franc?* (Nubukpo et al, 2016, in French). In the wake of the public debate sparked by this and similar publications (see also: Pigeaud et al, 2018), people began to speak out (Sylla, 2018). They were assisted by internationally renowned (former) African officials and critics of the F CFA franc, including Togo's Kako Nubukpo (ex-BCEAO and former Togolese Minister), Senegal's Sanou Mbaye (ex-African Development Bank, and Guinea-Bissau's Carlos Lopez (ex-UN Economic Commission for Africa), as well as African bankers like Henri-Claude Oyima (President-Director General of BGFI Bank).

Graph 1: The Franc CFA zones (WAEMU/UEMOA & CEMAC) in 2017



Source: 'La Zone fanc en 2017'. Banque de France

Since some years, a social movement developed to demand the withdrawal of African states from the F CFA. On 7 January 2017, for example, an NGO set up and run by the activist Kemi Séba, backed by 'SOS Pan-Africa', anti-CFA demonstrations were organized in several African and European cities (Sylla, 2018). In Senegal, the *France Dégage* group has been campaigning for the "monetary sovereignty" of the CFA countries (Lottersberger, 2018). However, the Senegalese economist Ndongo Samba Sylla deplored that the debate over the CFA franc has been too often restricted to the general pros and cons, because in reality, these are extremely unevenly distributed between social strata. The F CFA benefits mainly a small political and economic elite, both in France and Francophone Africa, as well as the managers of central banks and French companies (Lottersberger, 2018). Increasing support by the general public in the African countries concerned was revealed recently by a survey of Afrobarometer, published on 7 February 2019. The survey revealed that two thirds of the Togolese population are in favour of leaving the F CFA because the currency would benefit France more than Togo and should be replaced (Akinocho, 2019). In the meantime, a task force for an exit by 2020 has been established, even though a majority of heads of state of WAEMU continue to give their support to the CFA franc (Akinocho, 2019). Yet, former Togolese Minister Kako Nubukpo, got disposed from his position as Director of the Francophonie in 2017 because of his opposition to the CFA franc.

Closely related with the question of independent monetary policy is the question of the impact of Brexit on African stock markets. Whereas some experts consider Brexit as stimulus For African growth, including liberating effect on stock markets (Bush, 2018). They are part and parcel of the CFA Zone. Apart from 29 stock exchanges in Africa, representing 38 nations' capital markets there are two regional exchanges, the Bourse Régionale des Valeurs

Mobilières (BRVM), in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, and the Bourse Régionale des Valeurs Mobilières d'Afrique Centrale (BVMAC), in Libreville, Gabon. These stock exchanges are still relatively small with limited companies listed. However, according to Bush, they would benefit dramatically if the shares are listed in a common currency which will allow cross-border capitalisations of African companies and projects. The BCEAO itself sounds less optimistic. In its monthly economic report for the UEMOA countries for November 2018 it cautioned about continued slow-down of economic activity in 2019 because of Brexit (BCEAO, 2019).

According to Alain Nkoyock, head of the Modeling and Technological Innovations Program in the United Nations for the fight against corruption and financial crime, holds that two lessons could be drawn from Brexit by pan-Africanists: The first lesson focuses on the intergenerational irresponsibility and inequity, as consequences of a crisis of political leadership in the EU. The second lesson concerns the age-old question of the limits of supra-nationality that occupied the minds of pan-African politicians already in the early days of independence. The controversy between Leopold Senghor's group of Monrovia and the partisans of federalism (Casablanca group), led by Kwame Nkrumah, resulted in the defeat of the pan-African idea and the victory of the vision of an “Africa of States ". According to Nkoyock (2016), “*Brexit makes it possible to understand that the analysis of the nature of the Union through the prism of the Pan-African State necessarily involves the study of competences (foreign policy, common security or monetary policy) and institutional structures*”. The Brexit will offer also Francophone Africa the chance of renewed negotiations both between the UK and Africa and as well between Africa and the remaining EU-27. In short, there will be change, but it will be long, negotiations will span over years to come.

Besides, there could be also more direct effects of the Brexit. For example, the Ivorian Prime Minister, Amadou Gon Coulibaly, cautioned about possible unintended consequences of Brexit on West African coca-farmers (Wheatley, 2017). Thus, any fall in the value of the Pound Sterling against the Euro once Britain leaves the EU would have damaging consequences for Ivorian public finances because cocoa is priced in Sterling and the CFA franc in West Africa is linked to the Euro. So when the pound falls it is a loss for the Ivory Coast. The development of the cocoa price in recent years fell already sharply since the Brexit vote of 2016, with the effect that also the value of Ivorian cocoa sales dropped. This provided a small foretaste of what else could be in the pipeline. Thus, Prime Minister Coulibaly explained: “*Ivory Coast produced an estimated 1.98m tonnes in 2016/17, or about 40 per cent of the world total, according to the International Cocoa Organization. But export prices fell 35 per cent between late 2016 and the first quarter of this year, hitting the economy and contributing to a budget deficit that is forecast to widen to 4.5 per cent of GDP.”* (Wheatley, 2017). Therefore, the former Ivorian Minister of Commerce Jean-Louis Billon maintained that it would become necessary to make the Ivorian currency independent and convertible to guarantee the country’s stability in trade. According to him, the farm-gate price of CFAF 700 / kg set for the 2017-2018 cocoa season was already not accepted by the producers and concluded: “*If another price reduction were to occur because of Brexit, it would be a real disaster for the industry that is going through an area of turbulence*” (Dreyfus polichinelle, 2017).

On the other hand, Brexit could offer also new opportunities in the long-run by allowing the Ivory Coast to restructure and improve its trade agreements. The UK is the fourth consumer of chocolate worldwide. Up to now, it imported most of its cacao products from the EU. If after Brexit the UK would impose duties on EU imports, it could mean that the price of chocolate will increase. Therefore, it would be stupid for Ivory Coast not to focus on establishing better relations with the UK (Intellivoire, 2016). This the more so, because the controversial Economic Partnership Arrangements (EPAs) of the EU oblige West Africa to open about 80% of its market for imports in exchange for royalty-free access to the European market for African products which constitutes a one-sided advantage for the EU and could undermine local industrialization efforts (Intellivoire, 2016; Kohnert, 2015).

Cameroon and other French-speaking countries such as Chad and Ivory Coast, where the UK holds important investments, have to bother in the event of Brexit as well (Anadolu Agency, 2016). As a direct result of Brexit, UK investments in these countries could fall, be interrupted or to a lesser extent renegotiated, as they were concluded under the French influence of the EU. For example in Chad, where Great Britain is the third largest investor (after China and France) in the infrastructure and exploration of oil sites, Niger and its uranium, Cameroon, with its oil sites, including many that are exploited by the British, will pay, too, the heavy toll of Brexit, estimates the Chadian economist Abdel Mamout (Anadolu Agency, 2016).

As for the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), including Cameroon, first lessons can already be drawn from a future Brexit according to Cemac Commission Vice-President Rosario Mbasogo Kung Nguidang (Andzongo, Sylvain, 2016). Cooperation between CEMAC and the EU could be impacted for example at the level of NIPs [National Indicative Program] and NIRs [Regional Indicative Program] of the European Development Fund (EDF) of which Great Britain is a major contributor. Also, the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) would have to be re-negotiated between the EU and Central Africa. The NIPs and NIRs are the EDF compass, the main instrument of EU aid. As a reminder, the exports of the CEMAC countries to Britain in 2015, represented € 355.098 m, and imports € 594.625 m (Andzongo, Sylvain, 2016).

As for the impact of Brexit on Senegal, 7.9% of imports and 5.5% of total EU-28 exports with Senegal were made by the United Kingdom (UK) (Berthelot, 2016). Yet, Senegal should not suffer large losses of customs duties (DD) in the event of Brexit because it is likely that the UK will maintain the EU's 'Everything but arms' status for all LDCs, including the AU, although it will tend to privilege commercial relations and external assistance with English-speaking countries.

Last, but not least, Brexit shall impact on migrants from French-speaking African countries living in the UK. An example is the relatively new, but already considerable Congolese diaspora in Britain that had been attracted by steady growth, a stable currency and high living standards in the past decades. Many of them came via other EU countries like France, Belgium, Germany, Sweden and Greece. Although the Congolese community is also structured along social status, they are said to be less "tribal" than other Africans living in the UK, like the Zimbabweans, Nigerians or natives of Congo Brazzaville (Badila, 2019). When it is said that their national identity is more important than their "tribal" affiliation that is to say that Congolese migrant developed stronger networks between fellow communities in the EU like Belgium and France, two countries frequently visited by Congolese migrants living in the UK, where also a large population of the Congolese community are concentrated. For them, Brexit would mean that Congolese would probably be forced to obtain a visa to travel or work in the rest of the EU-27 countries. The British government could even impose restrictions on their work permit and residence card (Badila, 2019).

3. Conclusion

Contrary to a widespread opinion, available evidence suggests that the Brexit will impact considerably not only on the English speaking African Commonwealth but on Francophone Africa too. The range of possible effect is impressive. It spreads from direct influence on farm-gate cocoa-prices in the CFA-currency regions and subsequent percussions on the state budget of these countries, over more indirect effects, e.g. on the cooperation between CEMAC, WAEMU and the EU concerning EDF-programs of which Great Britain has been a major contributor so far, as well as enforced re-negotiation of controversial EPAs, up to the point of the revival of progressive social networks in Francophone Africa. The latter are already demanding more political and economic sovereignty, for example with respect to the increasingly anachronistic F CFA currency. Moreover, the remix of cards caused by Brexit could offer new chances, both for those Francophone governments that flirt with the idea of joining the African Commonwealth and the 'remainers' in Francophone Africa, to use old-established see-saw policy of cold-war times. This would allow for renewed negotiations between African governments on the one side and the UK, EU and other global players in the run for African resources and markets, like China, India, Brazil and Turkey on the other, in order to open up new doors for increasing economic and political power.

On the other hand, the revival of already written-off murky socio-political networks like that of *Françafrique* or alternative new networks of transboundary corruption, trafficking and money-laundering in view of lacking British counter-balance within the EU to the detriment of the ordinary tax-payer cannot be ruled out either. The lesson of frustrated high-flying hopes for increased grass-roots political democratization in the wake of the 'second wind of liberation', stimulated by the Sovereign National Conferences in Francophone Africa in the early 1990s (Robinson, 1994), may alert for prudence in the prevision of enhanced political participation in Francophone Africa and elsewhere. Increasing nationalism and populism, stoked by mounting migration-pressure all over SSA, including dire effects on the EU, as confirmed during the most recent 32. AU summit in Addis Ababa (11 February 2019) focusing on refugees and migration (UN-SA, 2019; DW, 2019), would be another option. This, not only for African autocrats, despite all rhetoric about fresh initiatives for 'economic pan-Africanism' by the new chairperson of the African Union, the Egyptian president Abdel Fatta el-Sissi, and the acceleration of intra-African trade by the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), launched one year before under his predecessor, Paul Kagame, that has been signed by some 50 countries, but ratified up to now only by around 20 others.

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