

The Distinctiveness of the European Union's Influence on Latin America:
European Values, Governance, and Integration

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ABSTRACT

BARBARA KOSNY: The Distinctiveness of the European Union's Influence on Latin America: European Values, Governance, and Integration

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The European Union's priorities and capabilities in international relations and security have changed considerably since the end of communism. They did not only develop as a consequence of internal policy developments but also from external opportunities and expectations. Overtime, it has become evident that the EU exerts substantial influence over world politics even though it has limited military power at its disposal. Instead, it relies on other tools that help build the attractiveness and success of its norms and values. By examining the case studies of Honduras and Cuba I argue that the European Union has a new opportunity to be a leading political player in Latin America and to promote itself as a more imperative actor in world politics. The EU's normative power, gives it sufficient leverage to positively influence Latin America through: European norms and values, good governance, and regional integration.

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INTRODUCTION

Since the end of the Cold War and the beginning of a new world order, the European Union has grown to have a new, unique, and powerful presence in Latin America. The global power struggle during the Cold War was ideological, particularly contingent upon military power as opposed to normative influence. The end of the Soviet era halted the global arms race, and prompted a change in the EU's foreign policy goals and strategic vision. This global power shift allowed the EU to expand its influence beyond economic ties on the European continent and into previously politically inaccessible regions such as Latin American countries. As a result of the newly enlarged scope of influence, the EU's power and capabilities were able to develop through a combination of new opportunities and expectations.

The end of the Soviet era provided the window that the EU needed to expand its political influence into regions that had been historically under U.S. patronage. It also meant the end of the global dominance of military persuasion, a brand of power exercised by the U.S. over regions like Latin America. As the EU realized the importance of speaking with one voice, it broadened its position within the international setting into becoming a more relevant and influential power. Economic integration was already a priority in EU foreign relations, but the EU needed to expand its influence. However, Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) lacked sufficient cohesion and support from EU's members, making it difficult to consider the EU a viable military power. As a result of this lack of common position, the EU focused its power on other priorities. In

addition, with the introduction of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) in 1997 and the declaration of the European Security Strategy in 2000, it was evident that the EU was strengthening its influence.¹ Accordingly, the EU's global influence began to augment, and has since further increased, permitting it to be a new and distinctive actor in foreign relations.

Although its military capabilities are minimal, the EU seeks to augment its role on the world stage by using 'soft' instruments that can be best explained through the lens of social constructivist theory. Here I will agree with John McCormick's stance that, "if hard power rests on the use of military or economic resources to force or coerce an outcome, then soft power rests on a state working to achieve its goals through the appeal of its ideals."² Building on this stance, I will measure influence in world politics through the ability to enact and leverage change through the appeal of certain ideals. According to Franck Debié³, the EU now has the capacity to influence individual nation states—as a normative power and as a new kind of international actor.⁴ The EU's distinctiveness is composed of its use of normative power in three distinct areas: the propagation of European norms and values, good governance, and regional integration.

In order to provide evidence for the nature and scope of the EU's normative influence in Latin America, I have chosen to concentrate on case studies of recent events in Cuba and Honduras. According to social constructivist theory, both Cuba and Honduras will eventually assimilate towards EU values and norms if the presence of the

¹ McCormick, *Understanding the European Union* 2005

² McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 14

³ The Executive Director of the Chirac Foundation

⁴ Debié 18 September 2009

EU as a 'social actor' in the region remains consistent. If the EU had not been consistent in its policies and assertive in its guidance, then domestic and foreign policy in Cuba and Honduras would have been different in two ways. First, open dialogue between rogue states and democratic states would be primarily focused on U.S. hegemonic presence. Second, the influence of social actors would not be of as great of an importance, preventing the gains in democratic building that those actors have made possible.

EU's distinct foreign policy initiatives reflect three core policy ideas: European values and principles, global governance, and regional integration. These three concepts are essential to the EU's growing influence in Latin America. Firstly, the EU goal of 'social cohesion' guides EU foreign policy. This EU policy goal includes norms of 'liberty/freedom', 'democracy', 'human rights', and 'rule of law,' and the primary external reference points for these norms are the Council of Europe's 1950 ECHR, the CoE's 1997 Convention on Human Rights, and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Secondly, the 'Civil Society Dialogue' guides EU policy. The details of what constitutes good governance include the participation of civil society in order to encourage openness and transparency, as well as to facilitate democratic participation. Lastly the concept of regional integration has become prominent in EU foreign policy, specifically goals managed under EU trade relations and economic integration goals.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. In the first chapter, I will discuss how international relations scholars treat power, along with a discussion of how social constructivist theory defines power and thereby influences the international system. In the second chapter I will discuss the EU historically as a global actor, including relations during and after the Cold War. In the third chapter, I will provide evidence for how the

EU has successfully asserted its influence in Latin America. I will explore three areas where the EU has had a significant impact: European norms and values, good governance, and regional integration. This will show how the EU has exerted its normative power to influence the outcomes of recent events in Honduras and Cuba.

CHAPTER I: POWER WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Before further expanding on the EU's power abilities as a world leader, I will discuss power in the international system itself. The idea that power is the capacity of a state to enact change is relevant to the post-modern international system. Secondly, I will use the theoretical framework of social constructivism to highlight my claim of the EU as a distinctive power and new kind of international actor in the global context.

1.1 Theoretical conceptualization of power

My focus is to demonstrate how the EU is a distinctive progenitor of change in power relations and a new kind of international actor. I will expand on John McCormick's claims that the most powerful of actors will be those that create opportunities. Therefore, instead of the original military-centric bi-polar, world system, there is less emphasis today on military and ideological competition and more on economic and political competition. Accordingly, I will introduce a new and distinctive way of viewing power: a 'normative' way based on European values and principles. These values and principles begin with the EU's post-modern attitudes to government, society and economic structure contrasting with the U.S. preference for coercion and unilateralism.⁵

Previously, power was determined through a sizeable military that was able and willing to provide protection worldwide.⁶ Presently, power is correlated to influence. The traditional understanding of power is vital to understanding Europe's growing influence. First, according to Kenneth Waltz, power in the international system is a reflection of the

⁵ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 12

⁶ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 10

capacity of a state to affect the behavior of another state.⁷ Previously, power was measured through a large military that was capable and willing to provide protection at every corner of the globe.⁸ Power was defined as the capacity of a state to affect behavior, relying upon the use of force. It was attained when policy goals had effects that were observable and measurable. Specifically, power included a superior firepower, a large and productive economy, political and cultural influence, and the ability to pursue policy goals on a global scale.⁹

The idea that power is the capacity of a state to enact change is relevant also to the post-modern international system. John McCormick's explains this accordingly: "the post-modern international system emphasizes markets, trade, and technology, all bound together in a new system of interdependence in which force has lost much of its utility, and may even be counterproductive: it only sends a provocative message to potential adversaries."¹⁰ This post-modern view of the international system gained prominence after the fall of communism. During the Cold War period, while Americans were investing in weapons, Europeans were investing in education, healthcare, and infrastructure. In short, the traditional view of power being comprised of massive military spending - routinely quoted as evidence of U.S. power - became more of indication of a considerable lack of influence elsewhere.¹¹ New approaches to the modern political world order allow the EU to pursue effective and 'normative' power approaches to dealing with economic and political issues abroad, making it a distinctive and influential

⁷ Waltz 2000

⁸ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 10

⁹ Risse 2004

¹⁰ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 10

¹¹ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 26

global power.

1.2 Introducing power through social constructivism

Political theorist Alexander Wendt innovated the theoretical understanding that all interactions within the international system are socially constructed.¹² He challenges anarchy as the main instigator of behavior in international actors, stating that actors are not simply governed by a self-help system, but their identities and interests are important in analyzing how they behave. This profound conceptualization of constructivism claims that choices are both historically and socially contingent, questioning original issues of identity and interest understood in neoliberalist and neorealist terms.¹³ In short, norms and values are socially constructed as they constitute actor identities and interests, they do not simply regulate behavior.¹⁴ The social construction of norms, ideas, and expectations are of vital importance when analyzing the influence of one social structure on another. Therefore, social constructivist theory can be used to hypothesize that if identities and interests are indeed an essential part of the international community, then international relations and multilateralism can be effective through common goals, value systems and agreements.

Social constructivism is a lens through which to study European influence in Latin America. I will use this theoretical claim as a basis to the understanding of EU foreign relations. Social constructivism differentiates itself from other more prominent theories by not identifying the self-interest of a state as the basis for theory, as both

¹² A. Wendt 1992

¹³ Checkel, *The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory* 1998, 325

¹⁴ Checkel, *The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory* 1998, 324

neorealists and neoliberals do.¹⁵ Instead, constructivists analyze international relations by looking at other elements of the international stage: social constructs - goals, fears, cultures, identities, etc. These elements become exceedingly important in an analysis of complex relations, such as that of the EU and Latin America. Here, the EU differentiates itself from other powers, using distinctive elements of influence to impact Latin America through common goals, value systems and agreements.

¹⁵ A. Wendt 1992, 392

CHAPTER II: HISTORICAL PRESENCE OF EU AS A GLOBAL ACTOR

In these two sections I will give a brief historical background on EU relations with Latin America before and after the Cold War. I will further expand upon the EU's normative power and describe it as an accurate characterization of the EU's central foreign policy with emphasis on European values and principles, good governance, and regional integration. I use social constructivism to suggest the vital role of identities and interests in the international community, and how international relations and multilateralism can be effective through European common goals, value systems and agreements.

2.1 EU relations during the Cold War

The historical significance of the bi-polar world and the impact of the global weakening of U.S. power are significant in regards to EU external relations. During the Cold War, inter-state relations were largely influenced by U.S.' hegemonic presence.¹⁶ The economic and political dimension of Europe and its transatlantic relationship with the U.S. was based on a conflict of power, interests, and ideology. Often, the U.S. was referred to as an indomitable presence and power. This power was a historical consequence of the impact of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt between 1941 ('The Four Freedoms') and 1948 (UDHR), providing the U.S. a strong international presence.¹⁷ At first, this power was subject to American principles of freedom and justice; however, the normative power of the U.S. quickly developed into a more military-oriented power. This

¹⁶ Smith 2003

¹⁷ Manners 2006

was a consequence of the Soviet Union's power assertions. During this same time, Europe began focusing on the principle of a shared sovereignty. Here, Zaki Laidi of Sciences Po in Paris explains, "The sole means of permanently linking the fortunes of states that were determined to remain sovereign while simultaneously abdicating part of their sovereignty was to have them adhere to common norms, all the more restrictive in that they were to be negotiated."¹⁸

As the years progressed, issues of disagreement between the EU and U.S. placed the two regions in opposing corners considering global strategies. As the U.S. began to regard Central America as its own sphere of influence, the EU fought to maintain influence through economic ties with the region.¹⁹ During this time, the EU focused on a preference for engagement and partnerships rather than on power and influence. Economic and political goals concerning trade, development, EU leverage and democratization developed into driving factors.²⁰ Meanwhile, the U.S. became an exceedingly controversial influence. Ideological games were creating conflict on a global scale. As an example of the severity of the conflict, the U.S. was absent from the San Jose Process in 1984, which hoped to ease regional conflicts. Despite the belief by the U.S. that the EU should stay out of conflicts in the Americas, the European Community insisted on acting as a mediator. From the EU's perspective, any fight for the developing world would be waged through cooperation and partnership. Jean-Paul Marthoz, the Chair of the European Institute on Peace and Security Studies, attests that the 'European social mode' served as an alternative to the superpower games, and that with the extreme conservatism of the U.S., the globe placed its hopes in the EU. He further explains,

¹⁸ Laidi 2007, 4

¹⁹ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007

²⁰ H. Mackenstein 2005

“Attracted by the European discourse on sustainable development, North-South cooperation and human rights and diplomacy, they set up offices in Brussels to lobby the various EU institutions.”²¹ The EU was seen as a distinct and approachable power, granting a floor for global discourse and accountability.

2.2 EU relations since the end of the Cold War

As the EU gained prominence as a relevant world actor, the once unchallenged hegemonic hold of the U.S. on Latin America decreased. Throughout the 1980’s a range of European actors contributed to the emergence of important networks, facilitating social and political relations between Europe and Latin America. Numerous aid programs followed, and European investment in the economies of larger Latin American countries increased.²² Meanwhile, global ideological conflicts continued and the U.S.’s hegemonic presence continued its decline. The EU began exerting more of an economic influence. Collectively, the EU member states along with the European Commission began to direct more than half of all developmental aid towards the developing world. Today, Europe’s role in Latin America is notable, and it is evident that the EU differs from more traditional powers.²³

The EU seeks the integration of a world order based on the legitimacy of rules, the predictability of behavior and the enforceability of accepted principles.²⁴ With the introduction of the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) in 1997 and the declaration of the European Security Strategy in 2000²⁵, it was clear that the EU was

²¹ Marthoz 2008

²² Crawley 2000

²³ Baybars Karacaovali 2007

²⁴ Laidi 2007, 3

²⁵ McCormick, Understanding the European Union 2005

using its normative power to become an integral actor in world politics. It has a considerable presence in the global sphere, so much so, in fact, that other international actors cannot fail to notice its presence as the world's largest trading bloc or its consequent normative presence.²⁶ Further, European norms transferred into new regions, helping to regulate world affairs. States became interested in seeing that the norms linked to their own interests and perspectives, for it was becoming difficult to ensure protection by traditional means.²⁷ The influence of law on the EU's international relations was conducted through the establishment of legal agreements and cooperation measures. These agreements included various summits, trade partnerships and rights. Thus, the EU saw its power in shaping international actors by using persuasion, legal agreements, dialogue, and positive incentives.²⁸

Today, the EU has considerable economic influence in Latin America. For the 2007-2013 periods, EU assistance for the region is expected to amount to €3 billion, while during the same time the European Investment Bank promises to lend up to €2.8 billion.²⁹ Further, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit's report in July of 1999, new trade agreements between the EU and Latin America are impressive for both multinational companies and U.S. officials as they diminish U.S. hegemony in global economic integration. This includes negotiations between Mercosur³⁰'s full members and

²⁶ Smith 2003, 104

²⁷ Laidi 2007, 7

²⁸ Smith 2003, 107

²⁹ See European Union and Latin America, EU Online Portal

³⁰ Mercosur was created in 1991 and encompasses four Latin American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.

the EU member states. Such talks with the EU gave Mercosur additional leverage in separate negotiations to NAFTA.³¹

According to social constructivist theory, social structures and agents are mutually co-determined. Political discourse and the construction of interests and preferences both matter.³² Of course, Europe has neither the mandate nor the material power to impose norms within Latin America, and is, in any case, unwilling to bear the costs of doing so, as I will note in both the case studies of Honduras and Cuba.

Nevertheless, the EU consistently tries to encourage a focus in Latin America towards growth through regional integration, social responsibility through distinct norms and values, and what it sees as good governance through diplomacy and foreign policy.³³

According to Augusto Varas³⁴, “Giving precedence to diplomacy over direct intervention and fostering a concept of alliance, instead of naked unilateralism, could enable work to be carried out around a pragmatic, common agenda, in a hemisphere which, increasingly, should be seen as ideologically and politically plural.”³⁵ New attitudes towards the modern political world order allow the EU to pursue effective approaches to dealing with economic and political issues abroad.

³¹ See European Union and Latin America, EU Online Portal

³² Risse 2004

³³ Grugal 2004, 608

³⁴ Associate Researcher, FRIDE

³⁵ Varas 2008, 6

CHAPTER III: IMPACT OF EU ON LATIN AMERICA SINCE THE END OF THE COLD WAR

The end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Soviet Union allowed new actors to gain prominence.³⁶ Scholars now identify the phenomenon and the current power scheme in international relations as a “post-American world”. During the Cold War, European governments offered solidarity to the U.S., as their superpower patron, in exchange for security. This arrangement gave European countries a sense of power, without much weight of responsibility. However, now the increasingly unified EU must prove its political presence to the world.³⁷ Benita Ferrero-Waldner³⁸ states, “The recent history of the EU has shown that countries have everything to gain from cooperating, showing solidarity and uniting in their efforts to tackle the challenges of globalization together.” This chapter will be divided into three parts. The first part will explore the impact of European norms and values in general. The second part will focus on the specific norm of good governance; the third will explore the EU’s role in promoting regional integration in Latin America. Lastly, Europe’s new role as an essential actor in world politics will be evaluated through the case studies of Honduras and Cuba.

3.1 European values and norms

The view of Europe as a normative power is reinforced through the sharing of European norms and values. Zaki Laïdi³⁹ best describes the situation with these words, “Europe, which Europeans often look on as a weak actor with few means, is in reality

³⁶ Katzenstein 2009

³⁷ Shapiro 2009

³⁸ European Commissioner for External Relations and Neighbourhood Policy

³⁹ Senior Research fellow at the Centre d’Etudes Européennes of SciencesPo (Paris)

perceived as an influential player on the world scene, less on account of its military power than on account of the force of its norms.”⁴⁰ I claim that the EU has moved past pure power theory by constructing its foreign relations conditional on certain norms, especially those of the European convention on the universal declaration of human rights.⁴¹ These norms produce compliance by creating focal points in the domestic arena and act as instruments to manipulate and constrain the views of other actors.⁴² According to Franck Debié, the Executive Director of the Chirac Foundation, these norms contribute to the attractiveness of the EU social model and work to maximize European power as it receives global recognition and acceptance.

Europe’s responsibilities and political priorities are distinctive as they focus on human rights, citizenship, economic growth, liberalization, and global and economic integration.⁴³ As an example, EU policy priorities towards Latin America are defined in the Communication on a ‘Stronger Partnership between the EU and Latin America’.⁴⁴ Issues such as drugs, social cohesion, migration and partnerships with civil society actors figure prominently in bi-regional dialogues. These social norms both regulate the behavior and constitute the identity of social community.⁴⁵ “Constructivism maintains that collective norms and understandings define the basic ‘rules of the game’ in which they find themselves in their interactions.”⁴⁶ It emphasizes norm-guided behavior seen in various partnership agreements. As an example, in order to develop closer ties between Latin America and the EU, a number of regional cooperation programs have been

⁴⁰ Laidi 2007, 2

⁴¹ Lister 1997

⁴² Checkel 2001, 558

⁴³ Lister 1997

⁴⁴ For details see: http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/la/docs/com05_636_en.pdf

⁴⁵ Risse 2004

⁴⁶ Risse 2004, 163

established over the last decade in the areas of social cohesion, territorial cooperation, and SME development, financed primarily through the European Regional Development Fund.⁴⁷

Likewise, democratization is an important aspect of the EU's foreign policy. Firstly, Europe favors democratic countries in external and developmental affairs as necessary criteria for relations. The hope is that Latin American countries, as social actors, will be influenced by certain democratic norm, and subsequently reproduce and reinforce those norms through their daily practices. Towards the end of the 20th century, democracy became not just a precedent but a norm in practically every region of the world, rule of law and good governance became the first steps towards economic transformation and social mobilization.⁴⁸ Hence, the norm of democratization along with the creation of regional institutions to carry out the norm have led to the total acceptance that democracy is the only legitimate form of political organization.

European norms and values are spread through political, economic and social agendas. In 2003, for example, the EU embarked on a set of initiatives based around the theme of social inclusion, including research funding, seminars and the creation of a fund to provide for the regular exchange of ideas within Latin America, mimicking the EU's own policies. This signifies a change in the role influence can and should have. Briefly, the EU has also sought to broaden the social bases of its relationships in and with Latin America to include not only elites and governments, but also civil society actors.⁴⁹ The EU's relationship with Latin America has deepened considerably since the introduction

⁴⁷ See European Union and Latin America, EU Online Portal

⁴⁸ Kisielewski 1

⁴⁹ Grugal 2004

of aid and developmental policies to Latin America and specifically to its social actors. These policies are not only different from the U.S. approach, but they also are a viable alternative to U.S. hegemony in the region.⁵⁰ “Rule-guided behavior differs from strategic and instrumental behavior in that actors try to ‘do the right thing’ rather than maximizing or optimizing their given preferences.”⁵¹ The action of a state, as with the EU, cannot be separated from its norms and values which drive the actions of the EU as a social actor. *3.2 Good governance*

After the collapse of the communist world, a new way of viewing multilateralism developed, focusing on institution building and the promotion of good governance with the belief that the social reality of a given state must be constructed through daily practices. Constructivism offers an alternate understanding to the relationship between state, identity and interest, and the prospects for change in world politics⁵², allowing for my hypothesis that the EU exerts substantial influence in world politics. As European norms and values became intertwined in policy goals, an emphasis on governance became an integral component of foreign policy.⁵³

Governance by norms resembles a call to go beyond traditional cooperation between states. The EU’s idea of governance is a practical halfway platform between traditional intergovernmentalism and world federalism. The EU understands that it is only by norms and not by force that it can make its voice heard. It’s preference for norms means that the EU, given the lack of alternative, has the greatest interest in defending them. This differs from other actors who favor norms when it suits them or when they

⁵⁰ Grugal 2004

⁵¹ Risse 2004, 163

⁵² Hopf 1998

⁵³ Grugal 2004, 4

have proposed them, but who let the norms fade when the situation does not reflect their interests.⁵⁴

The EU's broadening conceptualization of the good governance agenda is a distinctive part of its global agenda. While the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the OAS retained a primarily technical perspective on good governance initiatives, the EU sought to link a good governance agenda to its political reform. Here Richard Young explains, “European policymakers saw as central to the E.U.'s distinctive approach the purposive attempt to design and pursue trade-related governance measures in a way that facilitated systemic improvements in democratic processes.”⁵⁵ Further, administrative reform programs in Central America were designed to compensate for the absence of state authorities in many localities; governance projects on state reform created change from within.

Social constructs such as: goals, fears, cultures, identities, etc., challenge the previously existent realist and liberal theoretical assumptions and thus create new opportunities for the Latin American countries. They concentrate on the social identities of actors as an explanation of their interests and go beyond pure power structures and goals. Therefore the approaches to governance of the EU can make a significant contribution to international goals of good governance. As Political Scientist Christopher Hill has noted:

“Precisely the kinds of attributes possessed by the European [Union]—the intellectual impact of a new model of interstate relations, the disposition of considerable economic influence over the management of the international economy, the possession of a vast network of contacts and agreements with every region of the international system—are those most capable of influencing the very environment which determines whether or

⁵⁴ Laidi 2007, 4

⁵⁵ Youngs 2002, 129

not military strength will need to be used.”⁵⁶

EU interests in Latin America exceed simple economic governance and seek to embrace social and development issues. John McCormick places a clear emphasis on normative influence by stating that “most serious threats to international peace and security - including poverty... trade dispute, and public health crises such as the spread of HIV and AIDS - have sources that demand non-military solutions.”⁵⁷ Thus, it becomes evident that the EU now lays claim to a set of interests in the region that go beyond questions of economic governance to embrace a range of social and development issues. Justly, European constructivists emphasize that the EU has the ability to deeply effect behavioral practices and act as a vital aspect to democratic socialization and consequently of good governance.⁵⁸

The influence of the EU has grown from bilateral to multilateral means. Many partnerships are evidence of normative influence, such as those between the EU and the United Nations concerning development and humanitarian cooperation. The EU is a power in global governance, based on the development of policy framework and increasing financial contribution to the UN System.⁵⁹ These common positions hold a collective weight that can have more impact in the world. In recent years, the UN has come to regard the EU as an important partner in addressing development and humanitarian issues. Further, the EU now extends its governance and norms system by being the sole voice to appeal for the creation of a Global Environmental Agency. Moreover, the call for global governance has been implemented by the EU in several

⁵⁶ Smith 2003, 108

⁵⁷ McCormick, *The European Superpower* 2007, 14

⁵⁸ Risse 2004

⁵⁹ Inoue 2008

ways, thus becoming a norm throughout the world. In the WTO, the EU has spoken out for a broad agenda to ensure that the opening of new markets and the regulation of these markets progress simultaneously by including governance goals. Here, Zaki Laidi states, “Norms are not possible without justice.”⁶⁰ The EU openly recognizes that governance is key to a variety of global issues.

There are many association agreements focusing on the strengthening of regional institutions in Central America and the participation of civil society in the process. The EU works to use its leverage to enact change through agreements and partnerships. Therefore, social constructivist theory can be used to hypothesize that if identities and interests are indeed an essential part of the international community, then international relations and multilateralism can be effective through common goals, value systems and agreements.

3.3 Regional integration

Europe must use foreign policy tools, such as regional integration, in order to function in the current political atmosphere in which the brief post-Soviet era of unrivalled American hegemony has been challenged.⁶¹ The EU has a distinctive policy and trade influence in Latin America through new regionalism. Latin America was one of the first areas where the E.U. combined its trade and foreign policymaking bodies in order to facilitate the linking of commercial and political norms. The emphasis on new regionalism, as a process of world-wide integration, is the greater capacity and power of the EU’s diplomatic power towards Latin America.

⁶⁰ Laidi 2007, 16

⁶¹ The Economist 2009, Wake up Europe!

The weight of the pressures in favor of global economic integration, and the opening of markets in trade and production regimes led to a global political economy that reflected the trend towards social and economic integration.⁶² By the 1990s, it became evident that preferential trade deals would no longer be effective. With the rise of European identity and a unified sense of social responsibility, European trade negotiators were driven towards a new and more practical use of diplomacy. The liberalization of European economies and the repositioning of the Europe within a new global political economy prompted a realignment of Europe's goals, making the old European instruments of engagement with the developing world no longer viable.⁶³ Seen through the theoretical understanding of social constructivism, these trends show the state as no longer the sole influence, but as one under the influence of other actors such as national governments, firms, or trade interests are deeply embedded in and affected by the social institutions in which they act.⁶⁴

In order to understand the distinctiveness of European regional and economic integration, it is necessary to understand how it differs from U.S. trade and economic policies. The EU uses new regionalism as means of displaying what it perceives to be a more humane governance model for Latin America.⁶⁵ On the contrary, U.S. views on regional integration stem largely from the justifications of the Breton Woods system. The agreement promoted a progressive harmonization of regulations that included considerable dependency on the external sector. Today, this dependency factor is evident in the regionalist policies of the US. Since the creation of NAFTA in 1994, the

⁶² Grugal 2004, 606

⁶³ Grugal 2004, 607

⁶⁴ A. Wendt 1992, 163

⁶⁵ Grugal 2004, 603

negotiations of the U.S. have been mainly ideological —regionalism is seen as a vehicle through which to create a mode of liberal economic governance under the steady hand of Washington.⁶⁶

Further, one of the most significant differences between the EU and the U.S. concerning new regionalist constructions is the language employed in discussing the role of economic integration. The European model focuses explicitly on terms such as ‘partnership’, rather than ‘economic agreement’ as used by the United States. Within the EU, communicative action acts as a facilitator to the establishment of consensus and agreements. Therefore, partnerships are the best ways to promote change and increase influence in the region as opposed to strict economic trading. Partnership agreements became a crucial aspect to EU development policy beginning in the 1990s.⁶⁷ Further, the EU recognized the adverse political impact of global financial instability. This economic-political linkage is most developed in Latin America than any other regional initiative.⁶⁸

Europe’s view of regionalism is distinctive as it focuses on policies towards developing countries that emphasize human rights, citizenship, and poverty reduction through regional goals and integration. These policies strengthen European identity and promote more active common foreign policies. Thus, new regionalism is conceptualized as a stimulus to good governance and responsible development through social networks, emphasizing a reliance on civil society to deliver and oversee policy. Regional integration is attractive for a number of economic reasons. At the regional level, efficiency and competitiveness are often strengthened through commonly agreed upon

⁶⁶ Grugal 2004, 608

⁶⁷ Grugal 2004, 607

⁶⁸ Youngs 2002, 126

forms of deregulation. In addition, the effects of regional economies of scale can drastically create dynamic effects that work to accelerate economic growth from within.⁶⁹

EU interest in Latin America is not confined to short term trade and investment deals but rather, it centers on long-term partnerships through programs. The aim of these programs is to enhance mutual understanding between the EU and Latin America through Latin-American regional integration.⁷⁰ One example of a successful program is the Mercosur treaty, which works to improve a country's global market position by placing production sites within a state's geographical boundaries⁷¹, differentiating itself from former U.S. dependency models of integration. These kinds of association agreements between the EU and Latin America help develop trade, research, democracy and human rights. The relationship with Mercosur, in particular, is evolving towards a process of integration modeled on the EU. The effectiveness of the model has been a huge precedent for regional programs and treaties worldwide. Chris Patten the EU Commissioner for External Affairs describes the EU–Mercosur relationship as such:

“What is at stake in the EU–Mercosur negotiations is the possibility for a strategic, political and economic alliance between the only two real common markets in the world...it will generate democratic development, growing prosperity and respect for human rights. Where prosperity reigns, democracy and human rights can take root. Beyond free trade and greater prosperity, we will have to overcome the problems of poverty, injustice and exclusion . . . Increasing business opportunity can never be an end in itself . . . It is the duty of governments to ensure that the benefits of these processes are widely shared.”⁷²

Given the state of affairs, the constructivist viewpoint insists that economic interests and identities are shaped through and during interaction.⁷³ Even though doubts have been raised on whether the EU can sustain its approach, the fact that the foreign

⁶⁹ Katzenstein 2009

⁷⁰ See Country Briefing: Honduras 2009, EU Online Portal

⁷¹ See European Union and Latin America, EU Online Portal

⁷² Grugal 2004, 613

⁷³ Checkel 1998, 561

policy of the EU is distinctive does not change. This is shown to be especially true in the Southern Cone, a region where both the U.S. and the EU have long had competitive interests. In this region, the EU's trade investment strategies began to formulate new criteria towards growth and development.⁷⁴ Regionalism brought countries together in formalized relationships across the North–South divide that have, in turn, sponsored informal networks of cooperation.⁷⁵ As an example, trade and law treaties are very important symbolic and public demonstrations of an international commitment to certain laws and norms. These reforms are clear examples of how the constructivist idea of learning by doing provides for a way to see the progression of a European agenda on Latin America.

3.4 Honduras

With the case studies of Honduras and Cuba, I will emphasize that despite continuous pressures and regional hardships, the EU has an opportunity to be a leading influence in the Latin American region and promote itself as an important actor in world politics. It will become evident that the most powerful of actors will be those that create opportunities. Throughout this section it is important to keep in mind that state actors and political structures are mutually constituted. Actors develop their relations with other actors through the media of norms and practices. “Constitutive norms define an identity by specifying the actions that will cause others to recognize that identity and respond to it accordingly.”⁷⁶ What is important from a constructivist perspective is how an action does

⁷⁴ Grugal 2004

⁷⁵ Grugal 2004, 607

⁷⁶ Hopf 1998, 173

or does not reflect on an actor; therefore the socialization of that actor becomes imperative.⁷⁷

There are several ways in which the EU attempts to be of influence in Honduras. Relations between the EU and Honduras are primarily based on the San José Dialogue launched in 1984. During that time, the entire Central American region was plagued by civil wars and general unrest. Summits, as new and innovative political solutions, therefore became vital proponents of change.⁷⁸ Also, a contemporary aspect of European relations with Latin America is the Latin American, the Caribbean and the European Union Summit, a biannual meeting of heads of state and government. To be an action point to these summits and dialogues, the EU has certain focuses when dealing with the country. The European Commission names the Strategy of Influence a tool to promote mutual interests concerning Honduras. This tool includes interventions on priority areas of regional strategic importance such as trade and investment promotion, regional integration, education and training, social cohesion, information society, governance and civil society.⁷⁹

The June 2009 coup in Honduras has greatly ignited international negotiations in the country. After the coup, the United States was the first to act by suspending millions of dollars in development and military funds. The EU quickly followed suit with its own regulations.⁸⁰ Just days after the conflict, the EU decided to temporarily suspend all non-humanitarian aid to the Central American state.⁸¹ The role the EU holds within this conflict will become an important step towards not only the unification of the region, but

⁷⁷ Hopf 1998

⁷⁸ Freres 2000

⁷⁹ See Country Briefing: Honduras 2009, EU Online Portal

⁸⁰ Malkin 2009

⁸¹ Weisbort, EU considering new measure against Honduras, Spain says 2009

the perception of the EU's power, worldwide. The international community was seeking the return of ousted Honduran President Manuel Zelaya so that elections could be held in November. The possibility for the country to return to a constitutional path is of great concern for both the United States and the European Union. Unfortunately, Interim Honduran leader Roberto Micheletti has been unwilling to allow Zelaya's unconditional return. The possibility for the country to return to a constitutional path is of great concern for both the United States and the European Union.⁸² According to a statement by the European Council, "The EU highlights the importance of restoring the constitutionality and stability of the political and security situation in the country and underlines the importance of ensuring that fair, timely and transparent presidential elections are held in November 2009."⁸³ The condemnation of the illegitimate regime by Europe is clear. The words of Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt further expound on condemnation with, "The only difficulty is that there's a president that shouldn't be there."⁸⁴

In order for the EU to be effective, it must be distinctive from U.S. policy areas in many ways. The cost and benefits offered by the EU could have considerable influence, although it will take time to see the clear effects. "Although not using the same terminology, constructivists have documented how compliance—especially at the elite level—is a game of cost/benefit analysis, with the diffusion of new social norms changing such calculations."⁸⁵ The importance of this situation is that discursive practices can be the means by which power relationships are maintained.⁸⁶ With such a conflict it becomes evident that the importance of power relationships, or at least the

⁸² Fox 2009

⁸³ See Declaration by the Presidency, on behalf of the European 2009, EU Online Portal

⁸⁴ MercoPress 2009

⁸⁵ Checkel 2001, 558

⁸⁶ Risse 2004

positive influence of good governance, norms and values on a political system, is of vital importance during any kind of uprising or dissolution of state. Although the European Union's response to Honduras has not been drastically different from that of the U.S., its influences present within the negotiation processes will be of utmost importance.

This conflict is best explained through the words of constructivists, "It is probably most useful to describe constructivism as based on a social ontology which insists that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings."⁸⁷ The fact remains that Latin America has in the past been influenced by the United States to promote change through coups. It is essential now for the EU to contest that norm through an insistence on democratic norms and constitution building. Petros Mavromichalis, EU representative for Central America, said "under the current circumstances it will be difficult to recognize the results of the elections, unless the situation (in Honduras) changes." The EU representative added that both sides must have some political will to find a satisfactory solution to the political crisis in their country, which has left Honduras in a difficult, vulnerable, socially violent and uncertain situation. "The current situation in Honduras is not the right one for holding free and democratic elections, that is why we (EU) have annulled participation through a delegation of electoral observers," said Mavromichalis who expected neighboring countries like Panama could play a more constructive role in helping solve the Honduran crisis.⁸⁸

Since the beginning of the conflict, the EU has repeatedly called for the restoration of constitutional rule in Honduras. The EU has been very clear about its

⁸⁷ Risse 2004, 160

⁸⁸ Zhi 2009

stance against the coup.⁸⁹ With the maintenance of EU norms and values and the accountability towards good governance, there is a hope and an expectation that with the right policy tools and sanctions, the Honduran situation will choose democratic norms. A spokesperson for Spanish Prime Minister Zapatero released the following statement: "The head of the government expressed his strongest condemnation for the illegal detention and expulsion of the constitutional president of the Republic of Honduras, Manuel Zelaya. The solution to any dispute must always be found through dialogue and respect for democratic rules. There is not, neither can there ever be, a solution to the Honduran crisis outside the country's constitutional framework. The European Union hold firm that it would continue suspending aid until the crisis was resolved."⁹⁰

The brief case of Honduras shows how difficult it is going to be to solve the crisis while also contributing to the advancement of democracy. The international community cannot opt for a short-term solution, but should instead encourage the construction of a more solid democracy through an agenda focused on democratic norms and governance. Because this conflict has the ability for international repercussions, the EU should focus its attention and remain aware of its responsibilities and its capacity for influence.⁹¹ In a post-American world, the United States knows it needs effective partners, and the EU has the ability to be the drive to democratic norms and ideals.

⁸⁹ Brunstrom, EU to Warn Honduras of Further Sanctions over Coup 2009

⁹⁰ Ortiz 2009

⁹¹ Serra 2009

3.5 Cuba

European influence in the communist state of Cuba is comprised of an agenda towards democratic goals and achievement.⁹² Despite evident ideological differences, the EU believes in sharing of democratic principles and norms with the country through any means, including the maintenance of political and economic ties. The EU believes that social practices have the power to reproduce entire communities, as they become propagators of dialogue and relations. These social practices within international actors can effectively discipline and police domestic norms and systems. The EU maintains the belief that state actions can be empowered positively by prevailing norms at home and abroad.

EU policies towards Cuba are characterized by a series of principles respected by all member-states. In the first place, the EU rejects the U.S. embargo – condemning it institutionally and within the framework of the United Nations – as well as all types of economic sanctions. Secondly, the EU respects the national sovereignty and the right to self-determination. In the U.S., the dialogue partner is the opposition, or the Cuban Diaspora within the US. The EU however, maintains dialogue with the Cuban government itself. Thirdly, the EU has made the signing of future cooperation agreements conditional on visible democratic changes. Lastly, within the EU, Spain is dignified with the ability to promote change by exerting the greatest amount of influence over EU norms and policy towards Cuba.⁹³

⁹² Smith 2003

⁹³ Gratius 2005, 2

Along with Colombia and Venezuela, Cuba is the country that has received most attention in Latin American and Caribbean policy in the EU; it is the only Latin American country for which the EU approved a Common Position, in 1996.⁹⁴ The main political objective of the Common Position is "to encourage a transition process towards a pluralist democracy and the respect of fundamental human rights and freedoms".¹⁶ The two specific components include: the linking of a cooperation agreement to visible progress towards democracy, and the distribution of development aid through European and Cuban NGOs.⁹⁵ This Common Position on Cuba was the result of a series of specific political events. That year, President Clinton had passed the Helms-Burton Act in response to a wave of repression in Cuba, limiting U.S. involvement in the country. Consequently, the EU saw an opportunity to act and influence Cuba through dialogue. For this very reason, the EU did not opt to end dialogue, but instead it chose to keep communication channels open.

The U.S. and the EU differ greatly with respect to their policies on Cuba. The two vary regarding economic instruments, the property ownership issue, national sovereignty, and the type of transition and democracy. Many claim that European investment and trade have helped Castro to stabilize his regime in terms of financial resources, while the U.S. sanctions policy – promoting the fear of an external enemy- has enabled him to justify his political ideology.⁹⁶ Moreover, the EU made the decision to lift the diplomatic measures, adopted against Cuba in 2003, in order to facilitate the political dialogue process. This political dialogue increased to include a range of potential fields of

⁹⁴ Gratius 2005, 2

⁹⁵ Gratius, Cuba: between continuity and change 2008, 8

⁹⁶ Gratius 2005

cooperation including political rights, human rights, and economic, scientific and cultural spheres. As stated, because of this economic engagement and conditional political dialogue, Cuba is one of the few countries in Latin America where the EU applies an active common policy to promote democracy. The EU has opted for a top-down approach in Cuba, which favors dialogue with the Cuban regime and identifies it as the main agent of political change. Given this, the EU has increased ability to influence the country towards democratic norms and values.⁹⁷

There have been a large number of statements and agreements that EU institutions have produced concerning Cuba. For example, the EU Commission has been clear in its promotion of the regional integration of Cuba in the Caribbean, Latin American and ACP context.⁹⁸ Additionally, since October 2001, Cuba has been a member of CARIFORUM and has signed a 'partial scope' free trade zone agreement with CARICOM. EU proceedings concerning Cuba define the policy towards the country as one of 'constructive engagement'.⁹⁹ This is true in terms of economy and cooperation, bearing in mind that Spain has become Cuba's largest trading partner, its main donor and the second largest investor in Cuba. However, the lifting of the 2003 diplomatic measures enabled a deepening of EU-Cuba dialogue and development cooperation. In addition, the EU agreed in June of 2009 to further pursue and deepen political dialogue.

In February of 2008 the Cuban Parliament proclaimed Raul Castro President of the state's highest governing body. This gave the EU a new chance for political engagement. The EU has since been working to re-establish a full political dialogue with

⁹⁷ Gratius 2005, 2

⁹⁸ Roy 2007

⁹⁹ See European Union and Latin America, EU Online Portal

Havana ever since Fidel Castro stepped down from power. The attempt at better relations included the lifting of sanctions imposed on Cuba in 2003 in protest of the Cuban government's imprisonment of the dissidents. "Both sides have moved back closer to each other because they are both interested in resuming a normalization of relations," said Bert Hoffmann from the Institute for Ibero-American Studies in Germany.¹⁰⁰

Today, the influence that the EU has towards Cuba is centered on Cuba's relationship with the European country of Spain. Spain's historical and undisputedly intimate links with Cuba are of major significance as an influence towards Europeans norms and values. "A selective poll taken with EU officials and European diplomats with Cuban interests and duties places Spain in the first place in a ranking of EU Member States having influence in EU-Cuban affairs."¹⁰¹ Therefore, from a constructivist perspective, since Spain has considerable influence in the government, the EU as a social actor can indirectly promote its own initiatives and agendas in the country. Here, I agree with Franck Debié, that traditional national diplomacy is an active aspect of EU foreign affairs. The EU as a body does not need to supersede this, but instead add to the already growing EU foreign policy.¹⁰² Even if the EU does not at all times agree with Spain's initiatives, the fact that Spain is a key to the promotion of European values and norms is of considerable importance. "A rejection of power politics and the pursuit of multilateralism and milieu goals are what the Member States can all agree on, though they may differ on the details of specific cases."¹⁰³ For the EU, this relationship is too crucial of an aspect. The country of Spain along with the EC is determined to place

¹⁰⁰ Knigge 2005

¹⁰¹ Roy 2007, 5

¹⁰² Debié 18 September, 2009

¹⁰³ Smith 2003, 109

political ideologies aside for the achievement of partnership goals.¹⁰⁴ The EU is at present considering whether to adopt Spain's dialogue-based approach, as having a political and economic presence, is the only way to promote the process of reform.¹⁰⁵

The EU believes that Cuba's eventual transition to democracy can be pacific if the current regime sets in motion the process itself. Additionally, the 'Spanish pre-transition', can influence Cuba, as a great example of an effective democratic transition. Within Spain, this transition was initiated long before the actual process of a return to democracy.¹⁰⁶ Many EU scholars hope Cuba will be a similar case. Some modern constructivists suggest that social learning and deliberation can lead to preference change. Further explanation shows that "in this view, the choice mechanism is instrumental...one of social interaction between agents, where mutual learning and the discovery of new preferences replace unilateral calculation."¹⁰⁷ The EU can influence Cuba as a 'social actor' and through its social norms, making it possible for a democratic social fabric to appear outside of the government and prepare for the conditions that could lead to future political change.¹⁰⁸

One of the biggest ways that the EU acts to influence Cuba is through the insistence of adherence to human rights and good governance. The EU has, in the past, accused the Castro regime of violating human rights and fundamental freedoms. In 2003 the European Commission opened an office in Havana, and just a few weeks later, the Cuban police arrested 75 dissidents and sentenced them to prison. For example, in this

¹⁰⁴ Gratius 2005, 5

¹⁰⁵ Gratius, Cuba: between continuity and change 2008, 8

¹⁰⁶ Gratius, Helping Castro? EU and US policies towards Cuba 2005

¹⁰⁷ Checkel 2001, 560

¹⁰⁸ Gratius, Canadian-Spanish Dialogue on Cuba 2009, 4

case, Cuba and the EU resumed political dialogue only when Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodriguez said the country had no political prisoners because all inmates had undergone due legal process. “The Council adopts this evaluation of the Common Position on Cuba. The Council will decide in June 2010 on the annual review of the Common Position including an assessment of the future of political dialogue, taking into account progress as to the elements of these Council resolutions, in particular in the field of human rights.”¹⁰⁹ As a consequence, the Commission rejected Cuba's application to join the Cotonou Agreement. The EU further battled the arrests by approving a list of ‘minor sanctions’, reducing high-level visits and making it official policy to invite dissidents to national celebrations. Fidel Castro rejected these sanctions.¹¹⁰ Thus, the Cocktail Wars, of 2003-2006, created tense relations, but after the cession of Fidel Castro’s power, these strained relations improved. Despite these improved relations, the EU still has reservations about Cuba’s communist government. Cuba, on the other hand, desires for the EU to assume a more hands-off approach in its relations with them but the EU nonetheless insists on the progress towards democracy and human rights.¹¹¹ Again, despite hesitations the EU demonstrates its influence through consistency and firmness. Good and effective daily practices will be both constructed and reproduced.

Currently, the perspectives for the relationship between Cuba and the EU seem more open. Although relations have improved, EU External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner asserts that, "There will be very clear language also on what the Cubans still have to do... releasing prisoners, really working on human rights questions."

¹⁰⁹ External Affairs Press Release, The Council of the European Union, June 2009

¹¹⁰ Gratius 2005, 4

¹¹¹ Reuters, EU Concern Over Dissident Anger Cuba 2009

There is considerable hope by the EU that diplomacy will be influential towards reform and democracy building in the country. From a constructivist perspective, the building blocks of international influence are formed on the bases of idea as well as material; ideational factors have normative influence as they express collective intentionality and can be highly influential.¹¹² Thus, the influence of the EU on Cuba can socially construct a new, more democratic identity.

3.6 Conclusion

With the end of the Cold War, the EU changed from being a part of an American dominated Western camp to a player in its own right. As European integration deepened, the EU's standing in the international arena became more prominent. The EU has become a normative power that wields influence on a global scale through an assortment of soft power instruments, using a socially constructed, normative style of diplomacy to influence Latin America. Presently, Latin America is employing a much wider scope of international relations, which include political, economic and military ties with counterparts as diverse as the EU, NATO, Japan, China and Iran. These partners provide investment, markets, finances, energy, arms, telecommunications and technology, amongst other things. All of these initiatives show the currently limited role of the USA in the Western Hemisphere and the existence of the EU as a power to establish institutions without its presence.¹¹³ As such, the EU has forged a truly new path and acquired a unique role in Latin America.

The preference for engagement is part of the EU's rather distinctive international identity. Therefore I argued that the EU's policies towards Latin America,

¹¹² Ruggie 1998

¹¹³ Varas 2008

specifically in the promotion of European norms and values, good governance and regional integration, are distinctive and represent progress in forging a closer EU - Latin American engagement. This is contrasted against frequent foreign intervention and various human rights abuses committed by successive U.S. administrations; which have led to wide spread anarchy and discredited Western efforts to promote democracy in the region. In light of this dubious past, it is clear that the time has come for Europe to utilize its new and more credible instruments in Latin America. If the EU had not been consistent in its policies and assertive in its guidance, then domestic and foreign policy in Cuba and Honduras would have been different. First, open dialogue between rogue states and democratic states would always remain primarily focused on U.S. hegemonic presence. Second, the influence of norms and values would not be of as great of an importance, preventing the gains in democratic building that those actors can make possible.

It was my aim to identify the possibility of rogue actors to comply with the norms embedded in regimes and international institutions. Norms matter as they shape interests and social learning. With the case studies of Honduras and Cuba, the evidence for change and successful regime change is still unknown; however the EU's ability to affect norms and to generate pressures for compliance on state decision makers is of most importance. Constructivists believe that State interests and identities have the possibility to be shaped through and during interaction. As a result, mere contemporary success of EU interaction with Honduras and Cuba is not of main importance, but rather the long term ability of the EU, as a distinct actor, to use its tools to influence the norms and values of rogue

states.¹¹⁴ Through the export of good governance, elite interaction, and policy advice the EU endeavors to spread balanced economic growth, and political accountability. Its upcoming challenges will reflect on its ability to show unity and coherence as it responds to global challenges.

¹¹⁴ Checkel, *Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change* 2001

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