

Exporting Paradise?  
EU Development Policy towards Africa  
since the End of the Cold War

“The book is a much needed correction of the official EU writing of history on its own development policy. The book successfully shows that the EU development policy aimed at Africa was not ‘unique’. Furthermore, it boldly demonstrates that EU development policy has not been providing ‘leadership’ neither to the discourse nor the practice of international development”.

—Professor Gorm Rye Olsen, Professor of Global Politics and Head of Institute of Society and Globalization, Roskilde University

“Taking a social constructivist approach, Faia convincingly invalidates the EU’s claims that it demonstrates ‘leadership’ and ‘uniqueness’ in its development policy to Africa. He shows that since 1989 the EU has been a ‘norm taker’, adopting the dominant ideas of the Bretton Woods institutions. The book will be of interest to both scholars and practitioners of EU development policy and those with a broader interest in the role played by the EU in international politics since the end of the Cold War”.

—Dr. Stephen Hurt, Senior Lecturer in International Relations, Oxford Brookes University

“The book provides excellent insights into the rise of the principal actors in the international development system and how they were instrumental in spreading norms. By focusing on the EU as an actor, Faia successfully challenges the EU’s self-assertion of ‘uniqueness’ and ‘leadership’ in its development policy towards Africa. This is warmly recommended reading for any serious student of International Relations!”

—Dr. Sophia Moestrup, Deputy Director for Central and West Africa, National Democratic Institute (NDI)

“Faia advances a fresh academic and public policy analysis of some of the ‘myths’ surrounding the EU development agenda in Africa, and the EU as an international development actor. The book’s multi-disciplinary approach will be of interest to EU and international development academics and practitioners”.

—Manuel Amarilla Mena, Director of Inessys Ltd and Senior Consultant in International Politics and Security Studies

Exporting Paradise?  
EU Development Policy towards Africa  
since the End of the Cold War

By

Tiago Faia

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOLARS**

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P U B L I S H I N G

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EU Development Policy towards Africa since the End of the Cold War,  
by Tiago Faia

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*For Lucas and Eva*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	viii
Acronyms .....	ix
Chapter One.....	1
Introduction to EU Development Policy towards Africa and Methodological Considerations	
Chapter Two .....	32
International Development and the European Union: The Role of Structure and Agency	
Chapter Three .....	78
Normative Liaisons between the EU and International Organisations in the Structure of International Development: Lomé Convention IV	
Chapter Four .....	151
Normative Liaisons between the EU and International Organisations in the Structure of International Development: The Cotonou Agreement	
Chapter Five .....	233
The EU in International Development: Exporting Paradise?	
Bibliography .....	272
Index .....	307

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# ACRONYMS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States
BIS	Bank for International Settlements
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States
CCNM	Centre for Cooperation with Non-Members
CIDIE	Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDA	Doha Development Agenda
DG	European Commission Directorate General
EAP	Environment Action Programme
ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council
EPAs	Economic Partnership Agreements
EU	European Union
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GNP	Gross National Product
GSP	Generalised System of Preferences
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IDGs	International Development Goals
IO	International Organisation
JEDH	Joint External Debt Hub
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MS	European Union Member States
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIEO	New International Economic Order
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Cooperation
OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
POGAR	Program of Governance in the Arab Region
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
REPA	Regional Economic Partnership Agreement
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SPA	Special Programme of Assistance for Africa
SWAC	Sahel & West Africa Club
TCBDB	Trade and Capacity Building Database
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Development
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank
WTO	World Trade Organisation

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION TO EU DEVELOPMENT POLICY TOWARDS AFRICA AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

“Fraternity has subtleties”  
—Fernando Pessoa

With its foundation in 1957, the European Union (EU) has progressed to become a significant regional organisation in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Together with directing special care to its internal integration process, the Union maintains a clear ambition not to be an isolated entity in the international system. It aspires to gradually “assert its identity on the international scene” through the establishment of close relationships with a variety of political and economic partners worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Thereby, the EU aims to carry out a leading yet benevolent role in the working of international relations based on the principles of liberalism, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. The formulation of a capable policy of development cooperation is central to the Union’s project to become a prominent international actor, where Africa remains its long-standing preferred development partner.<sup>2</sup>

This book aims to understand the contemporary character of EU development policy towards Africa at a time when the EU is gradually evolving into an increasingly prominent international actor. The Union’s close rapport with Africa results from the colonial legacy of some of its Member States (MS), progressing from an initial association agreement in 1957 to a development cooperation partnership in 1975 that was reformed

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<sup>1</sup> European Commission, ‘Treaty on European Union’, *Official Journal*, C 321E, 29 December 2006.

<sup>2</sup> In the current research, all references to ‘Africa’ point specifically to the Sub-Saharan Africa region, as well as to the countries of that region that entered a development cooperation agreement with the EU as part of the ‘African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States’ (ACP) in 1975 and thereafter.

periodically and strengthened up to the present day. As a result of the five decade-long relationship maintained between the two parties, the EU often claims that its development policy regarding Africa is both “unique” in nature and vested with a “leadership” role in the promotion of development in the African continent. By doing so, the EU professes its development policy to be not only distinct (“unique”) from the policy orientation of other actors in the domain of international development, but also a primary policy reference (“leadership”) therein. In view of the stated EU claims, the book aspires to assess the alleged “unique” and “leadership” facets of EU development policy regarding Africa from the end of the Cold War until the end of 2008, and understand its character and expression in the context of international development.

The ensuing chapter provides the background to understand EU development policy and Africa-EU relations, and outlines the contours of the analysis put forward in the book. Firstly, it addresses the historical evolution of Africa-EU relations in the context of international development cooperation. Secondly, it illustrates the existence of an analytical and public policy puzzle in the understanding of the contemporary character of EU development policy *vis-à-vis* Africa that results from the apparent gap between the “unique” and “leadership” claims recurrently advanced by the EU concerning its development policy towards Africa, and its ability to establish the veracity of those claims. Thirdly, it examines the existing literature on the subject in light of the identified analytical and public policy puzzle. Fourthly, it contends that Finnemore’s Social Constructivist research agenda has the capacity to both ponder aspects of EU development policy concerning Africa that other accounts have disregarded, and further the understanding of the subject.

## 1.1. Africa-EU Relations in Time and Context

Departing from a colonial-based model formalised by the 1957 Treaty of Rome creating the European Economic Community, Africa-EU relations evolved into development cooperation agreements under the Yaoundé Conventions, the Lomé Conventions, and most recently the Cotonou Agreement.<sup>3</sup> Under the Treaty of Rome and the Yaoundé Conventions, the EU and Africa were the sole parties to the relationship.

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<sup>3</sup> Following the conclusion of the Treaty of Rome in 1957, Africa-EU relations rested upon the Yaoundé Conventions I and II, signed in 1963 and 1969, the Lomé Conventions I, II, III, and IV, signed in 1974, 1979, 1984, and 1989, and the Cotonou Agreement signed in 2000.

Subsequently, in 1975, Africa-EU relations integrated the new development partnership arrangement struck between the Union and the newly created African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States (ACP)–the Lomé Convention.<sup>4</sup> Arguably, the Lomé Convention initiated a new era for Africa-EU relations resulting from its clear break with the alleged colonial tag of the Yaoundé Conventions and support to the New International Economic Order (NIEO) initiative launched by some developing countries at the time.<sup>5</sup> Following a mandate that spanned twenty-five years and four periodic renewals, the Lomé Convention expired in 2000 and gave way to the Cotonou Agreement. Most analysts of EU development policy hailed the agreement as the beginning of a new age for the Africa-EU relationship that broke with the Lomé tradition and set a distinct platform for future development cooperation between the two partners.<sup>6</sup> With a life span of twenty-years, the Cotonou Agreement is set to undergo revision every five-years to combine the maintenance of the treaty's original directives with its adaptation to potential new challenges that may emerge in both the states and in the international system.

The EU commitment to development cooperation in Africa over the past five decades transformed it into a relevant actor in the continent's existing international support structure for development promotion. Following Africa's decolonisation process in the 1960s, a number of international organisations (IOs) instituted what became an influential external structure to assist the future development of the continent. The World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations (UN), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

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<sup>4</sup> The creation of the ACP group of states results directly from the 1973 UK accession to the Community, which brought all its former colonies under the umbrella of the EU policy of development cooperation. Accordingly, most former colonies of EU Member States from the African, Pacific, and Caribbean regions established the ACP group of states in 1975 under the Georgetown Agreement as a platform for development cooperation with the EU; The Courier, 'Georgetown–The Foundation of the ACP Group', Special Issue, March 2008

<sup>5</sup> In the early 1970s, a group of developing countries operating within the framework of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) proposed the creation of a new international economic order more considerate of their needs through the reformation of international trade and development assistance. Many experts on EU development policy sustain that the Lomé Convention was its most emblematic expression at the international level; Simmonds, Kenneth, 'The Lomé Convention and the New International Economic Order', *Common Market Law Review*, Vol. 13, 1976

<sup>6</sup> Arts, Karin, 'ACP-EU Relations in a New Era: The Cotonou Agreement', *Common Market Law Review*, Vol. 40, 2003

(OECD), and most recently the World Trade Organisation (WTO) formed the nucleus of the international group of actors.<sup>7</sup> They stood behind the foundation of international development, and have had a considerable impact on its practice and discourse up to the present day. They marked the evolution of international development in a variety of spheres—lending, assistance, and discourse—and established a set of norms that ultimately defined the evolution of its composing structure worldwide.<sup>8</sup>

The stated IOs allocated most of their resources towards promoting development cooperation across the world, and evolved across time as the leading paradigm-setters of international development.<sup>9</sup> They conceived detailed development promotion strategies for the most impoverished countries and regions of the globe—with particular incidence on the African continent—to improve the livelihoods of its citizens through extensive economic reform. The resulting development programmes launched by the IOs in question aimed to set in motion the economic development of their targeted countries and regions, as well as integrate them in the international system, to stimulate greater quality of life for their citizens and gradually eliminate poverty.

Concomitantly, and through the adoption of a multifaceted policy approach to development promotion in Africa that encompassed aid, trade, and humanitarian assistance, the EU grew into a capable international development actor today. Under that capacity, it incorporated gradually the

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<sup>7</sup> The reference to the UN in the current introductory section is overtly general, appearing accurately defined under the UN agencies and programmes relevant to international development promotion in the subsequent chapters. While there is a large variety of agencies and programmes identified in this research with a development portfolio, some of the most influential are the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The WTO is not an international development IO *per se*. It is an institution founded in 1995 to replace the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and with the objective to supervise, manage, and support the liberalisation of international trade. However, as trade liberalisation and development strategies became increasingly indissociable in time, the WTO came to acquire a preeminent role in the dominion of international development today.

<sup>8</sup> Rist, Gilbert, *The History of Development: From Western Origins to Global Faith*, (London: Zed Books, 1997)

<sup>9</sup> Jolly, Richard *et al.*, *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); Staples, Amy, *The Birth of Development: How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945-1965*, (Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 2006)

existing international support structure for development promotion over the recent decades.<sup>10</sup> An illustrative display of this progress began to materialise in the 1980s, and gathered further momentum in the 1990s, when the Union sought to establish a close rapport with the stated IOs. Its main goal appeared to be to integrate the international initiatives launched by the IOs to create greater policy coordination and cohesion amongst all actors active in international development cooperation.<sup>11</sup> Following some years of significant progress, the current relationship between the EU and the aforementioned IOs reached unprecedented levels of collaboration concerning development promotion in Africa and in the developing world at large.

The establishment of closer relations between the EU and the IOs in question regarding the promotion of international development pertains not only to the Union's particular development policy vision, but also to its ambition to become a prominent international actor in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Accordingly, in 2000, the EU joined the UN-sponsored global initiative for development promotion and poverty eradication—the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—based on a set of eight specific policy targets to be met by 2015.<sup>12</sup> As the MDGs evolved into one of the paradigms of

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<sup>10</sup> In 2008 the EU became collectively responsible for approximately 54 per cent of the world's Official Development Assistance (ODA), with the European Commission alone disbursing the fourth biggest net contribution to worldwide ODA at USD13.527bn., and the second largest net contribution to ODA in Sub-Saharan Africa at USD4.719bn.; OECD, *OECD Annual Report 2009*, (Paris: OECD, 2009). Similarly, the EU remains Sub-Saharan Africa's largest single trading partner absorbing 31.4 per cent of its global exports and providing 27.8 per cent of its total imports; International Monetary Fund, *Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook 2008*, (Washington D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2009)

<sup>11</sup> The first most striking example of the stated trend took place during the 1990s, when the EU sought to integrate the proceedings of various international conferences organised by the UN with a view to revamp development cooperation across the world—United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (June 1992, Rio de Janeiro), World Conference on Human Rights (June 1993, Vienna), International Conference on Population and Development (September 1994, Cairo), World Summit for Social Development (March 1995, Copenhagen), Fourth World Conference on Women (September 1995, Beijing), Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (June 1996, Istanbul)—and it carried on into the new millennium, when the EU fostered closer relations with the WB, the IMF, the OECD, the UN (specifically the UNDP), and the WTO, as Chapter 5 demonstrates in further detail; Schechter, Michael, *United Nations Global Conferences*, (New York: Routledge, 2005)

<sup>12</sup> The eight MDGs are as follows: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger, Achieve Universal Primary Education, Promote Gender Equality and Empower

contemporary international development, the EU professed its further commitment to multilateralism and cooperation with the UN in a 2003 European Commission communication.<sup>13</sup> Consistently with its adopted approach, the Union went on to strike a recent partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which established a platform for collaboration in various activities in the field of human rights, good governance, food security, education, and crisis management.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, it set up a concerted relationship with the WB during the past decade through the alignment of policy assistance, the creation of common Trust Funds, and the joining of forces in several development initiatives around the world, including debt relief.<sup>15</sup> Additionally, the EU fostered a closer understanding with the OECD since the turn of the century through a focus on the harmonisation, alignment, and management of aid under the guidelines of the OECD-sponsored Paris Declaration of 2005.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the Union also sought to adopt a more participative stand in the workings of the WTO, specifically in its Doha Development Agenda (DDA) project launched in 2001, which aimed to protect developing states from the economic unbalances of the globalised international trading system and foment the implementation of more sustainable forms of development worldwide.<sup>17</sup>

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Women, Reduce Child Mortality, Improve Maternal Health, Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and Other Diseases, Ensure Environmental Sustainability, and Develop a Global Partnership for Development; United Nations, 'United Nations Millennium Declaration', General Assembly, A/Res/55/2, 8 September 2000; European Commission, 'Speeding Up Progress Towards the Millennium Development Goals—The European Union's Contribution', Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, and the Economic and Social Committee, COM (2005) 132 final, 12 April 2005

<sup>13</sup> European Commission, 'European Union and United Nations: The Choice of Multilateralism', Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament, COM (2003) 526 final, 10 September 2003

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, *Improving Lives: Results from the Partnership of the United Nations and the European Commission in 2007*, (Brussels: United Nations System in Brussels, 2008)

<sup>15</sup> Europa-Press Releases (RAPID), 'Collaboration Between the European Commission and the World Bank', MEMO/06/168, 21 March 2006

<sup>16</sup> OECD, *The European Community: Development Assistance Committee—Peer Review*, (Paris: OECD, 2007)

<sup>17</sup> Europa-Press Releases (RAPID), 'WTO Doha Development Agenda: WTO Mid-point Agreement Paves the Way for Future Conclusion of Trade Round—a Stronger Multilateral Trading System', IP/04/1011, 2 August 2004



Progressively, the EU evolved into a capable actor in international development and arguably incorporated its existing structure through the promotion of a progressive rapprochement with its leading actors. Therein, the Union maintained a distinctive understanding of the nature and role of its development policy. In the form of its publications and public standing on the issue, the EU recurrently advanced its development policy as effectively “unique” in comparison with that of other actors, and vested with the capacity to serve as a leveraging force (“leadership”) in the discourse and practice of international development. The double claim sustained by the Union regarding its policy of development cooperation *vis-à-vis* Africa emerged for the first time in 1975 upon the signing of the Lomé Convention, and was subsequently kept and re-enforced up to the present day. Following the signing of the Lomé Convention in Lomé, Togo, on 28 February 1975, Claude Cheysson, the then European Commissioner for Development, asserted that it was an “agreement which, I say it with some pride, is unique in the world and in history. Never before has there been any attempt to do anything of this kind”.<sup>18</sup> Speaking at a time when the EU and Africa were attempting to overcome the colonial shadow arguably still present in the preceding Yaoundé Conventions, Cheysson’s statement set the tone for the Union’s reading of the nature and role of its development policy in the context of international development in the decades to come.

Correspondingly, the European Commission went on to claim in a 1982 memorandum that “development policy is a cornerstone of European integration (...) because of the novel forms of international cooperation it has pioneered. Today it is a manifestation of Europe’s identity in the world at large and a major plank in the Community’s external policies generally.”<sup>19</sup> The EU continued to maintain the “unique” and “leadership” claims regarding the nature and role of its development policy towards Africa in the domain of international development, as confirmed subsequently at the signing ceremony of Lomé Convention IV on 15 December 1989. Thereupon, Michel Rocard, the then President of the Council of the European Community, voiced the recurring EU perception of its partnership with Africa and asserted that “no other instrument in the world has instituted such carefully-planned, concrete and positive ties” between developing and developed countries, which he eulogised for “its

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<sup>18</sup> Cheysson, Claude, ‘An Agreement Unique in History’, *The Courier*, Special Issue, No. 31, March 1975, p. 12

<sup>19</sup> European Commission, ‘Memorandum on the Community’s Development Policy’, *Bulletin of the European Communities*, Supplement 5 (82), 5 October 1982

originality, its unique character, and its success”.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, a decade later and already following the conclusion of the Africa-EU development cooperation agreement that was to substitute the Lomé Convention–the Cotonou Agreement–the Union expressed a similar take on the nature and role of its development policy towards Africa at the turn of the century. In the words of Bernard Petit, then the Director of the European Commission Directorate General (DG) for Development, who had led the EU negotiation team in preparation for the new accord, “the Cotonou Agreement is the only one of its kind in the world. I know of no other agreement that is as global as this.”<sup>21</sup>

As the Cotonou Agreement introduced Africa-EU relations to the new millennium, the Union upheld the same understanding of the nature and role of its development policy *vis-à-vis* Africa. Louis Michel, then the Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, maintained an identical perception of EU development policy regarding Africa in a 2007 essay entitled “Africa-Europe: The Indispensable Alliance”.<sup>22</sup> When he addressed the renewed partnership between Africa and the Union, Louis Michel asserted that “Europe is in a unique position in relation to Africa, geographically, historically, and economically, and also as regards to the role it has been playing for forty years with development aid”.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, Louis Michel went on to state that the partnership between Africa and the EU was distinct and consequential in the domain of African development as “the EU’s approach is unique in that it is a ‘global soft power’ which relies on laws, rules, and example both in its approach to development and growth”.<sup>24</sup> According to Louis Michel, the EU’s “global soft power” capacity gave it a leading role in the promotion of development in the African continent, because “Europe is better placed than anyone to help Africa. As to Africa, it can always count on a partner which, will not drag it into big power rivalries or push it into forms of development that do not correspond to its basic interests”.<sup>25</sup>

As Africa-EU relations progressed over the decades, the Union arguably integrated the existing structure of international development

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<sup>20</sup> Rocard, Michel, ‘We Must Join Forces’, *The Courier*, Lomé IV, No. 120, March-April 1990, p. 5

<sup>21</sup> Petit, Bernard, ‘The Cotonou Agreement is the Only One of Its Kind in The World’, *The Courier*, Special Issue Cotonou Agreement, September 2000, p. 18

<sup>22</sup> Michel, Louis, *Africa-Europe: The Indispensable Alliance*, (Brussels: European Commission, 2007)

<sup>23</sup> Michel, Louis, *Africa-Europe: The Indispensable Alliance*, p. 28

<sup>24</sup> Michel, Louis, *Africa-Europe: The Indispensable Alliance*, p. 33

<sup>25</sup> Michel, Louis, *Africa-Europe: The Indispensable Alliance*, p. 34

through increasingly closer relations and policy alignment initiatives with its comprising leading agents. Therein, it maintained a distinct reading of the nature and role of its development policy. It claims that its policy of development cooperation regarding Africa is “unique” in nature and plays a “leadership” role in the dominion of international development. These claims are a feature of the Union’s perception of its development policy since the signing of the Lomé Convention in 1975, which remained unaltered even after the significant changes that occurred in the international system after the end of the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the gradual end of communism in most of Eastern Europe effectively instigated both the end of the Cold War and the bipolar international system in the period between 1989 and 1991, bringing about the most significant political, economic, and social event at the international level over the past two decades.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, the EU perception of its development policy remained unchanged, which disregards not only the capacity of the long-established international support structure for the promotion of international development and the position of its composing agents (IOs) as leading paradigm-setters, but also the challenges posed by the post-Cold War international system.

## 1.2. The Puzzle

Considering the established international support structure for the promotion of international development, inclusive of the position of the stated IOs as its paradigm-setters, can the EU effectively sustain its recurrent claims? Similarly, can the EU substantiate the “unique” nature and the “leadership” role of its development policy in the domain of international development? Additionally, did the EU’s “unique” and “leadership” conditions and the disposition of its development policy towards Africa remain unaffected by the end of the Cold War?

In view of the reality described herein, the understanding of the contemporary character of EU development policy *vis-à-vis* Africa remains a puzzle. The fundamental problem at hand is primarily analytical in nature, but also relevant from a public policy standpoint, which centres on the apparent gap between the “unique” and “leadership” claims recurrently advanced by the EU concerning its development policy towards Africa, and its ability to establish the veracity of those claims. The EU habitually declares its development policy regarding Africa as

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<sup>26</sup> Bozo, Frederic *et al* (Eds), *Europe and the End of the Cold War: A Reappraisal*, (London: Routledge, 2008)

“unique” and playing a “leadership” role in the domain of international development without effectively authenticating those claims. Accordingly, the EU-suggested picture concerning the nature and role of its development policy concerning Africa in the domain of international development appears paradoxical to the degree that it openly disregards both the established position of the stated IOs in the discourse and practice of international development, and the Union’s endorsement of several development cooperation initiatives and projects launched by them. As a result, the Union appears to clearly assume its development policy towards Africa as intrinsically distinctive, and thereby accredit it with an inherently “unique” nature and a “leadership” role in the context of international development. Departing from the advanced puzzle, the book aspires to comprehensively capture how EU development policy regarding Africa progressed since the end of the Cold War, and its nature and role in the domain of international development.

### **1.3. How the Subject Has Been Interpreted in the Past**

In contrast with most EU policy areas, development policy remains generally understudied and under-theorised despite its prolonged existence and economic and political significance in the external relations of the Union. African development cooperation was an EU concern since its foundation in 1957. What later evolved into its development policy failed to gather the level of attention, which academic researchers attribute to other EU policy areas. This scenario was particularly striking during the period covering the 1957 Treaty of Rome, the Yaoundé Conventions (1963 and 1969), and the early years of the Lomé Convention (1975, 1979, 1984). The first benchmark studies on the topic emerged only in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

The existing literature on EU development policy rests upon three broad theoretical and thematic clusters: “State Interests”, “Means of Extensive Domination”, and “Significance and Character of the Partnership”. Whilst the accounts on “State Interests” take a broad inspiration on Realism as their theoretical standpoint, those on the “Means of Extensive Domination” and on the “Character and Significance of the Partnership” follow a Marxist and Liberal orientation, respectively.

#### **1.3.1 State Interests**

The available literature on EU development policy categorised under the label “State Interests” focuses on the self-preservation of the Union

and some of its MS in the international system. “State Interests” narratives engaged in a Realist-inspired take on the subject but without adopting the orthodox notion of Realism as a theoretical tradition in International Relations (IR). Political Realism has been the dominating force in IR academic thinking since the emergence of the subject in the post-World War I period. It regards the nation-state the principal actor in IR, whose main purpose is to secure national survival in a hostile environment. Realism contends the acquisition of power as the appropriate, rational, and predestined goal of a state’s foreign policy, and reduces international politics to a constant struggle for power.<sup>27</sup> The translation of power takes the form of a means and an end in itself, as it consists both in the capacity to influence or change the behaviour of others in a particular fashion, and in the ability to resist similar influences from other actors on account of one’s own behaviour. In contrast with orthodox Realist interpretations of EU development policy towards Africa, “State Interests” narratives concentrate primarily on the interests of the Union and some of its MS in Africa-EU relations, and on how the functioning of the relationship expresses those same interests.

The early “State Interests” narratives tended to concentrate particularly on France’s leading role in the design and management of EU development policy. France featured in the accounts as the major force behind the EU policy of development cooperation towards Africa, which it manoeuvred according to its self-interest in the continent as a former colonial power. Marjorie Lister, Paule Bouvier, John Ravenhill, and Jeffrey Herbst<sup>28</sup> emerged as the major voices behind this particular interpretation of the Africa-EU partnership, and largely discarded the significance of real development promotion within the Lomé Convention cooperation system. They advanced that the purpose of the Lomé Convention lay simply in its face value. For these authors, the Lomé Convention cooperation system existed as a simple instrument at the hands of the Union, which was chiefly under the control of France. In their view, the Lomé Convention was conceived to ensure the continuity of trade and

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<sup>27</sup> Burchill, Scott, *The National Interest in International Relations Theory*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006)

<sup>28</sup> Bouvier, Paule, *Coopération au Développement–Un Bilan: La Convention de Lomé*, (Bruxelles: Editions de l’Université de Bruxelles, 1980); Herbst, Jeffrey, ‘Theories of International Cooperation: The Case of the Lomé Convention’, *Polity*, Vol. 19 (4), 1987; Lister, Marjorie, *The European Community and the Developing World: The Role of the Lomé Convention*, (Aldershot: Gower, 1988); Ravenhill, John, *Collective Clientelism: The Lomé Conventions and North-South Relations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985)

market connections between Europe and its former colonies in Africa, as well as to guarantee the EU uninterrupted access to the continent's raw materials.

Whilst the interests of France captured the attention of some academics in the interpretation of the Africa-EU partnership, a distinct group of authors called upon the importance of EU interests therein. They focused on the apprehension of the political and economic dynamics behind both the Lomé Convention and the Cotonou Agreement. Marie-France Jarret and François-Regis Mahieu, Ismael Musah Montana, and Mary Farrel<sup>29</sup> claimed that Africa-EU relations emerged as a EU tool to protect its own interests *vis-à-vis* the former colonies of some of its MS. They stressed that the Lomé cooperation system suffered from an intrinsic anomaly of power that made it unable to contribute effectively to the promotion of development cooperation in Africa. These analyses concluded that the sole aim of the development partnership between Africa and the EU rested upon the protection of EU interests abroad. Accordingly, Africa-EU relations existed as a mechanism designed initially to protect the EU from the impact of decolonisation in Africa, and subsequently to maintain the political and commercial leverage of the Union over its formal colonies.

Other authors expressed their understanding of Africa-EU relations based on the protection of EU interests, but through a focus on historical and practical factors. Enzo Grilli and Gorm Rye Olsen<sup>30</sup> are the most prominent authors that express this particular understanding of EU development policy. They stress that the Lomé Convention emerged from the combination of a set of predominantly *ad-hoc* circumstances with the

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<sup>29</sup> Jarret, Marie-France & Mahieu, François-Regis, 'Ethique et Développement dans le Système de Lomé', in Labouz, Marie-Françoise (Eds.), *Le Partenariat de l'Union Européenne avec les Pays Tiers*, (Bruxelles: Bruylant, 2000); Montana, Ismael Musah, 'The Lomé Convention from Inception to the Dynamics of the Post-Cold War, 1957-1990s', *African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 2(1), 2003; Farrel, Mary, 'The EU as a Global Player: Politics of Inter-regionalism', in Soderbaum, Fredrik & van Langenhove, Luk (Eds.), *The EU as a Global Player: The Politics of Inter-regionalism*, (London: Routledge, 2006)

<sup>30</sup> Olsen, Gorm Rye, 'Western Europe's Relations with Africa Since the End of the Cold War', *Journal of Modern African Affairs*, Vol. 35(2), 1997; Olsen, Gorm Rye, 'Europe and the Promotion of Democracy in post-Cold War Africa: How Serious is Europe and for What Reason?', *African Affairs*, Vol. 97(388), July 1998; Olsen, Gorm Rye, 'The European Union: 'European Interests', Bureaucratic Interests and International Options', in Engel, Ulf & Olsen, Gorm Rye (Eds.), *Africa and the North: Between Globalisation and Marginalisation*, (London: Routledge, 2005); Grilli, Enzo, *The European Community and the Developing Countries*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993)

EU ambition to maintain access to African markets and raw materials as a means to preserve some influence in the international system. According to them, the Union created a development cooperation framework with Africa purely in order to secure its own interests in the international system. Thereby, the EU maintains its influence over the African continent through the control of the delivery of aid and the design of the pillars upon which their relationship rests. As the Africa-EU partnership progressed, these authors claimed that security and migration issues became the Union's priority in its relations with Africa in a newly globalised world, which transformed the Lomé Convention and the Cotonou Agreement into inexpensive symbolic arrangements capable of maintaining the status quo of the relationship and fundamentally guarantee the protection of EU interests.

The "State Interests" accounts shared a focus on the interests of the EU and some MS and proved relevant to capture the existence of interests behind the Union orientation in Africa-EU relations. Nevertheless, they did not address the understanding of those interests. Comparatively to all actors in the international system, the Union developed its own interests vying to protect them in the relations it maintains with other actors. Yet, the simple identification of these interests overlooks the interpretation of the nature of those same interests, specifically how they incorporated in time the EU process of development policy design. There are multiple factors pertinent to the formulation of these interests and their relation to the functioning of the Africa-EU partnership. These narratives left them unaddressed, specifically the inclusion of the Union in the international system, and the impact of the international system upon the nature and role of EU development policy in the dominion of international development.

The EU featured in these accounts as an isolated actor in the international system whose main goal is simply to protect its interests against the interests of other state actors. As such, EU and MS interests appear unproblematised, which suggests that either the MS in question or the EU always know what they want, and that the source of their interests always lies within its internal structures. The understanding of interests in these narratives reduces *a priori* both the capacity of the international system over the formulation of EU interests and its potential impact upon the process of EU development policy design. These accounts leave the possibility of the EU learning from the international system unaddressed, specifically regarding the norms and ideas propagated therein. Additionally, they exclude the capacity of non-state actors to influence the EU in the construction of its own interests. They overlook the power of the leading IOs in the discourse and practice of international development

over the EU formulation of its own development policy. As a result, these narratives do not account for the interpretation of the nature and role of EU development policy in international development, which they reduce to a simple enterprise of interests' protection.

### 1.3.2 Means of Extensive Domination

A particular faction of authors placed an equal focus on the nation-state and the zealous protection of its interests in the international system. Nevertheless, they followed a distinct IR approach. They analysed EU development policy based on the concepts of exploitation and dominance, which they borrowed largely from dependency theory within the Marxist tradition. Dependency theory emerged intimately linked with the process of development promotion in Latin America, where great intellectual activity during the 1950s and 1960s produced a body of literature based on the inevitability of class warfare in an economic world divided in two separate factions, the advanced industrial core, and the commodity-producing periphery.<sup>31</sup> According to this theoretical interpretation of IR, a system based on cooperation was effectively unattainable since the terms of the relations between the two sets of countries ensured the constant exploitation of the periphery by the core. The application of this approach to the interpretation of the development process of the newly independent African countries produced analogous results, leading "dependentists" to claim that the level of subservience of the periphery to the core was to endure perpetually. Thereby, African developing countries were to remain trapped in an inferior position of power in relation to their former colonial rulers, which barred them from protecting their own interests when integrated in the international economic system.<sup>32</sup>

When translated to the interpretation of EU development policy analysis, "Means of Extensive Domination" accounts relied mostly on dense theoretical narratives built upon the principles of dependency, paternalism, clientelism, and ultimately neo-colonialism. They sought to identify and assess a power structure of complex dependence between international actors. Marjorie Lister, John Revenhill (who also featured in

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<sup>31</sup> Presbisch, Raul, *El Nuevo Orden Económico Internacional y Valores Culturales: Dos Grandes Mitos del Capitalismo Periférico*, (Madrid: Jimenez, 1964)

<sup>32</sup> Blomstrom, Magnus & Hette, Bjorn, *Development Theory in Transition: The Dependency Debate and Beyond*, (London: Zed Books, 1984)



the ‘State Interests’ narratives) and Stephen Hurt<sup>33</sup>, presented some of the most pertinent accounts in the “Means of Extensive Domination” literature, by stressing that the Africa-EU relationship remained locked in an asymmetrical economic cooperation framework. As a result, African countries had limited bargaining power since the founding of the Africa-EU partnership, which allowed the Union to exert direct control over them and therefore ensure the protection of its own interests accordingly. In this regard, the cooperation between the two parties owed its existence to the EU ambition to maintain the status quo of its relations with Africa instituting what Lister then labelled a partnership of welfare neo-colonialism.

The narratives on the “Means of Extensive Domination” in the existing literature on EU development policy posed an initially commendable attempt to understand its evolution in time as well as its nature and role against the background of the international system. Nonetheless, in practice, they translated into a simplistic structural analysis of the subject. EU development policy featured as a rigid expression from the Union in its partnership with Africa, which progressed in function of the EU change in tactics to secure its effective economic and political control over Africa. The discussion of the nature and role of EU development policy did not go beyond the perceived power dynamics of the core-periphery system of Africa-EU relations. Therein, the fixation with the perceived dynamics of the Africa-EU partnership left the relevance of norms and ideas in the formation of EU interests unaddressed, and contended that cooperation between different actors was unattainable. Accordingly, the “Means of Extensive Domination” accounts denoted theoretical limitations regarding the interpretation of the role and nature of EU development policy, as well as the evolution and continuity of the relationship between the two parties. Furthermore, they overlooked the potential impact of norms and ideas characterising the discourse and practice of international development upon the process of EU development policy design.

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<sup>33</sup> Lister, Marjorie, *The European Community and the Developing World: The Role of the Lomé Convention*, (Aldershot: Gower, 1988); Ravenhill, John, *Collective Clientelism: The Lomé Conventions and North-South Relations*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Hurt, Stephen, ‘Cooperation and Coercion? The Cotonou Agreement Between the EU and ACP States and the End of the Lomé Convention’, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 24(1), 2003

### 1.3.3 Character and Significance of the Partnership

In contrast with both previous clusters of analysis on EU development policy, the greatest bulk of research on the subject followed a markedly Liberal tendency that highlighted the interdependence of states and other actors in the international system. In its purest form, the Liberal theory of IR contains a number of propositions built upon the principles of democracy and peace, natural harmony of interests, global justice, and collective security.<sup>34</sup> Despite the various tendencies within the Liberal tradition, the theoretical approach regards states as but one actor in world politics. It attributes states the capacity to cooperate through institutional mechanisms and bargaining, and thus undermines the propensity to base interests on simple equations of power.

The application of the Liberal IR theory to the interpretation of EU development policy produced two general currents in the understanding of the subject: the authors that focused on the character of the partnership, and those that concentrated on its significance, even if most accounts displayed a crosscutting angle between both. Most of the literature available on the topic under a Liberal perspective endorsed the historical importance of Africa-EU relations for the two parties as its point of departure, and frequently embraced the moral duty of the Union over the promotion of development in Africa. A common feature of the narratives consists in the inclusion of an econometric dimension to the interpretation of Africa-EU relations. The stated literature contributed significantly to the advancement of research on the subject since the 1970s. However, it displayed a mostly positive overview of the Africa-EU partnership despite the emergence of an opposite trend from the mid-1990s, when various authors progressively called for caution concerning the altering character of the relationship into a more political-based cooperation system. The Liberal perspective on the subject contended that international cooperation exists, because it is in the interest of all actors in the international system to cooperate. Nevertheless, the accounts overlooked the problematisation of EU interests as an actor in the international system, and their potential relation with the norms and ideas propagated therein by its comprising principal agents.

Following the conclusion of the Lomé Agreement in 1975, the first interpretations of the renewed Africa-EU relationship centred on its relevance for Africa and the Union. The early research on the subject

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<sup>34</sup> Viotti, Paul & Kauppi, Mark, *International Relations Theory: Realism, Pluralism, Globalism, and Beyond*, (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2004)

centred on the capacity of both parties to progress from the condition of a colonial arrangement to an ambitious development cooperation framework. William Zartman and Carole Cosgrove-Twitchett<sup>35</sup> were the leading critics of the Lomé Convention at the time. They stressed that the accord contributed to the enhancement of North-South relations as well as to the promotion of development in Africa. Both authors acknowledged the new Africa-EU development cooperation agreement as a springboard towards interdependence and development promotion in the continent, and a means to overcome the colonial heritage between the EU and Africa.

The research undertaken by Cosgrove-Twitchett served later as an example to other authors interpreting EU development policy during the 1990s, namely Stefan Brune, Joachim Betz, Winrich Kuhne, Olufemi Babarinde, and Paul Collier.<sup>36</sup> They provided mostly policy-oriented analyses of the Africa-EU development cooperation framework that aimed to enhance it as a pre-condition to promote effective development in the African continent.

A distinct group of critics opted for a strong political orientation in their analysis of the subject, whilst still concentrating on the character of Africa-EU relations. They drew inspiration from the postulates of Liberalism, and called for a focus on the principles of cooperation and interdependence in the creation of a development cooperation framework between independent and sovereign states. Most accounts focused on the expansion of the character of the Africa-EU partnership, and highlighted its multidimensional nature in opposition to the purely exploitative facet of the colonial past. Gordon Crawford, Charles Kwarteng, Marjorie Lister, and Joseph McMahon<sup>37</sup> produced the most pragmatic narratives therein.

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<sup>35</sup> Cosgrove-Twitchett, Carole, *Europe and Africa: From Association to Partnership*, (Westmead: Saxon House, 1978); Zartman, William, 'Europe and Africa: Decolonisation or Dependency?', *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 54(2), January 1976

<sup>36</sup> Stefan Brune, Joachim Betz & Winrich Kuhne (Eds.), *Africa and Europe: Relations of Two Continents in Transition*, (Hamburg: Lit Verlag, 1994); Babarinde, Olufemi, *The Lomé Conventions and Development: An Empirical Assessment*, (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994); Collier, Paul, *Living Down the Past: How Europe Can Help Africa Grow*, (London: Institute of Economic Affairs, 1998)

<sup>37</sup> Crawford, Gordon, 'Wither Lomé? The Mid-Term Review and the Decline of the Partnership', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 34 (3), 1996; Kwarteng, Charles, *Africa and the European Challenge: Survival in a Changing World*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1997); Lister, Marjorie, *The European Union and the South: Relations with Developing Countries*, (London: Routledge, 1997); Lister, Marjorie, *The European Union Development Policy*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998);

They stressed the increasingly egalitarian quality of the Africa-EU relationship, which fostered the development of African economies, and stimulated their process of modernisation from a traditional to a modern society. Despite sharing the tendency to portray an overly positive analysis of Africa-EU relations, some of the narratives alerted for the future dangers for the Union and Africa. At the centre of their concerns was the growing Union's intent to transform the Africa-EU partnership into a highly politicised development cooperation agreement at the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

In parallel with the narratives that focused on the character of the Africa-EU partnership, other accounts concentrated on its significance in the background of international political economy. Some authors attempted to address the process of policy change characterising the evolution of the Lomé Convention and the Cotonou Agreement by integrating both agreements in the context of relations between developing and developed countries. Matthew McQueen, William Brown, Karin Arts and Anna Dickson, Mary Farrell, Martin Holland, Christopher Stevens, and Maurizio Carbone<sup>38</sup> compose this particular group of authors. They produced some of the most comprehensive studies on the subject, and advanced an unprecedented grasp of the process of EU development policy design. Unlike most Liberal accounts on the topic, these authors shared a propensity to highlight the deficiencies of the Africa-EU partnership based on the assessment of its results on the ground, which illustrated its limited impact in the effective promotion of development in the African continent.

From within the stated set of authors, it is paramount to stress the research undertaken by Karin Arts and Anna Dickson, William Brown,

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McMahon, Joseph, *The Development Cooperation Policy of the European Community*, (London: Kluwer Law International, 1998)

<sup>38</sup> McQueen, Matthew, 'ACP-EU Trade Cooperation after 2000: An Assessment of Reciprocal Trade Preferences', *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 36(4), 1998; Brown, William, *The European Union and Africa: The Restructuring of North-South relations*, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002); Arts, Karin & Dickson, Anna (Eds.), *EU Development Cooperation: From Model to Symbol*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Farrell, Mary, 'Internationalising EU Development Policy', *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Vol. 9(2), June 2008; Holland, Martin, *The European Union and the Third World*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); Stevens, Christopher, 'The EU, Africa and Economic Partnership Agreements: Unintended Consequences of Policy Leverage', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 44 (3), 2006; Carbone, Maurizio, *The European Union and International Development: The Politics of Foreign Aid*, (London: Routledge, 2007)

and Mary Farrell for they produced timely analyses of EU development policy in the context of North-South relations. These authors argued that EU development policy progressed broadly from a model to a symbol over the past two decades. They shed light upon the apprehension of both the significance and character of EU development policy in international development by setting a straightforward analogy between EU development policy and the policy advanced by other international actors. They suggested a growing similarity between EU development policy and the policy advocated by other international actors, and argued that EU development policy had progressed from a model into a symbol in the dominion of African development during that period.

The “Character and Significance of the Partnership” narratives fostered considerable progress in the understanding of EU development policy. However, some pertinent questions remain unanswered, mostly regarding its nature and role in international development today. Some authors, such as William Brown, Karin Arts and Anna Dickson, and Mary Farrel attempted to address this dimension of EU development policy. Nevertheless, their accounts did not provide a comprehensive interpretation of EU development policy, because they left unproblematised the formation of EU interests and their expression through its policy of development cooperation in the context of international development. In spite of their laudable attempt to integrate their research on the subject in the context of relations between developing and developed countries, these authors proposed the understanding of EU development policy in the international system in isolation from the structures and agents that comprise it. By doing so, they advanced a comparative exercise to the detriment of an organic analysis of the subject. In addition, the analyses overlooked the power of norms and ideas in the formation of EU development policy, which ultimately left the scrutiny of the nature and role of EU development policy in international development broadly unaddressed.

#### **1.4. An Alternative Interpretation of EU Development Policy towards Africa**

The review of the available literature on EU development policy illustrated the existence of three main thematic clusters of analysis, which are supported by their respective particular theoretical dispositions and propose a plethora of interpretations of the subject. The explored works on EU development policy have fostered the discussion of a still under-theorised EU policy area. However, they also overlooked some theoretical

and practical aspects regarding the comprehensive scrutiny of the evolution, nature, and role of EU development policy *vis-à-vis* Africa from the end of the Cold War until the end of 2008.

The objective of this book is to suggest a distinct approach to the study of the subject to advance a more inclusive grasp of its contemporary character. For that purpose, it aims to focus on the social dimension of the EU presence in international life and thereby address the evolution, nature and role of EU development policy concerning Africa since the end of the Cold War. Therein, the book proposes Martha Finnemore's Social Constructivist research agenda as an alternative method of analysis to scrutinise the subject further.

### **1.4.1 Social Constructivism and Martha Finnemore as Method of Analysis**

The book advances Social Constructivism as a method of analysis with the capacity to ponder aspects of EU development policy that other accounts have disregarded. Social Constructivism is a complex theory of knowledge devised within the domain of Sociology that recently filtered through to the field of IR, and which posits a distinct approach to the study of international politics. It emerged in the post-modernist era of the social sciences as a particular approach to political research based on social inquiry. Its aim is to capture the nature of a culturally and historically contingent discourse that depends on social interaction. Distinctively from power-laden methods of political research, Social Constructivism denotes concern with social facts in international political life and rejects the notion of an objectively "knowable" world.<sup>39</sup>

Accordingly, Social Constructivism can integrate elements that other theoretical approaches have previously neglected, which demonstrates its theoretical utility in the study of international politics. A Social Constructivist approach can therefore complement existing forms of analysis of a given phenomenon because its theoretical composition does not stand in opposition to either of the classic IR schools of thought (Realism and Liberalism), but rather, it simply illustrates their incompleteness. The aim of a Social Constructivist analysis is to develop an inclusive interpretation of political phenomena, such as the EU policy

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<sup>39</sup> Fearon, James & Wendt, Alexander, 'Rationalism v. Constructivism: A Skeptical View' in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse and Beth Simmons (Eds), *Handbook of International Relations*, (London: Sage Publications, 2002)