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Imperial Power Europe? The EU's Relations with the ACP Countries

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Abstract

Imperialism is a contested concept in political science. The projectors of imperialism rarely acknowledge its existence yet the impact on the recipients of this power is often detrimental. By drawing from theories of imperialism and power, this paper examines the nature and forms of the EU's power projection in the world with a particular reference to the ACP Countries. It reveals that the nature of the EU's power projection towards these countries, as evident in such areas such as trade, agriculture, energy and security contains elements such as coercion, mobilization of bias, manipulation, exploitation but also attraction that are associated with imperialism. This has broader implications on how we understand the EU as a polity as well as how power is embedded in the concept of imperialism.

Key words: EU; ACP countries; empire; imperialism; hegemony; neo-colonialism; power.

I. Introduction

In a world of established (i.e. US, Russia and China) and emerging (i.e. India, Brazil and Japan) superpowers, the EU is called upon to not only promote its interests but do so in way that is in sync with the proclamations of its founding fathers, such as Jean Monnet, but also contemporary leaders who see the Union as 'a force for good'¹ in the world committed to ethical and moral values based on universal human rights. The EU's Council's first Annual Report on Human Rights specifically states: 'Human rights...are the foundations of freedom, justice and peace in the world...The Union's headway towards integration is paralleled in the field of human rights. In a world where human rights...continue to be violated daily, the Union's commitment to human rights is continuously being translated into action². In its relation with the wider world, Article I-3(4) of the Constitutional Treaty states: 'the Union shall uphold and promote its values and interests. It shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the Earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and the protection of human rights, in particular the rights of the child, as well as to the strict observance and the

¹ Solana, 2003. Javier Solana is the EU's High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy. See also, the EU's European Security Strategy 'A Secure Europe in a Better World', Brussels, 12 December 2003, p.13).

² Council of the EU, EU Annual Report on Human Rights, 1998-1999, Luxembourg: OOPEC, p.2).

development of international law, including respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter'. These are declarations that reveal a superpower that has set for itself high moral and ethical standards in its dealings with the world. And it also reveals a power that wants to distinguish itself from other superpowers in the world, as for example, the US, China and Russia. A power that offers a different model of internal but also external governance – a power for example, that is against the death penalty, which is open and tolerant to immigrants and asylum seekers and that wants to reconcile social welfare and social justice with neo-liberalism and the free markets. A power that puts diplomacy, rapprochement and multi-lateral solutions at the forefront of its foreign policy and which is reluctant to use military power and 'pre-emptive' strikes in its dealings with rogues states, which is in favour of prosecuting to the International Criminal Court of Westerners as criminals of wars, which is in favour of high standards of environmental protection and alternative sources of energy as outlined in the Kyoto Protocol. A power that aims to combine its trade policies with the development and environment concerns of its partners. A power that takes pride in being the biggest donor of humanitarian aid and which constructively contributes to conflict resolution and conflict transformation of war torn countries. These are traits that more often than not are highlighted – by EU scholars and policy-makers alike – in *juxtaposition* to the aforementioned superpowers. Indeed, it is argued, that the EU's strength, appeal and attractiveness in the world stems from these 'unique qualities' which are directly linked to its *sui-generis* character and to its existential narrative, i.e. the ability of war torn countries to come together and rise from the ashes of WWII and gradually unite a continent on the basis of the principles of democracy, liberty, equality, justice and prosperity. This is a unique European story indeed but it is on the basis of this unique history that the EU has since claimed to project a *sui-generis* power in the world. Yet to what extent is this power really unique and *sui-generis*? To what extent rhetoric meets reality in the nature of the EU's power projection in the world? A set of key ontological questions will be examined:

- a) What kind of power is the EU?
- b) In what forms/mechanisms is this power projected in the world?
- c) Who are the main drivers/shapers of the EU's power?
- d) What are the consequences of this power projection for the EU and others?
- e) In other words, 'what is', 'what does' but also 'what should' the Union be doing in the world?
- f) And more broadly, how is power embedded in the notion of imperialism or what kind of power relationship is imperialism?

The starting point of this analysis, as the title suggests, is the conceptualization of the EU as Empire. The recent reference of the European Commission President Manuel Barroso (2007)³ that the EU is a 'non-imperial Empire' has all but officially reignited the debate among academic and policy circles regarding the nature of the EU's power projection in the world. More particularly, it has awakened the ghosts of Europe's imperial past which has more often than not been associated with negative forces such as aggression, control, domination and exploitation. It has arose the question whether Europe has done away with this imperial past or whether it continues to operate in the 'shadows of empire' with imperialism deeply ingrained in

³ 'Barroso says EU is an Empire', *EU Observer*, 11 July 2007.

the EU's DNA determining its current behaviour in world politics. This decade old debate has taken different shapes and forms as evident from the wide array of works which sought to understand the EU as an 'imperial power': 'neo-medieval' (Weaver, 1997; Zielonka, 2006) 'gradated' (Diez & Whitman, 2002), 'soft' (Hettne & Soederbaum, 2005), 'neo-liberal', 'cooperative' and 'post-modern' (Cooper, 2007) 'cosmopolitan' and 'post-imperial' (Beck & Grande, 2007), an Empire of 'capital' (Wood, 2005), 'an Empire in denial' (Chandler, 2006) similar to 19th empires (Anderson, 2007; Behr, 2007) are some of the terms that have been employed to characterize the EU while others have chosen the related term of a 'hegemonic' power (Diez, 2005; Haukkala, 2008). More importantly, this debate has taken place in the backdrop – and in contrast - to the more established and old conceptualizations of the EU as that of a 'civilian' (Duchene, 1972), 'soft' (Nye, 1990), 'normative' (Manners, 2002) and more recently 'ethical' (Aggestam, 2008) power which are terms associated more often than not with positive forces such as attraction and the power of ideas universally accepted as being appropriate – those include for example, democracy, rule of law, human rights, justice, equality and prosperity. Yet as with other works that have sought to understand the EU as a global actor (Whitman, 1998; Hill & Smith, 2005; Bretherton & Vogler, 2006; Elgstrom & Smith, 2006; McCormick, 2006; Soderbaum & Van Langehove, 2006; Sjursen, 2007; Laidi, 2008; Telo, 2009), there has not been a systematic utilization of the major theoretical and conceptual understandings of power (Dahl, 1957; Weber, 1978; Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Lukes, 2005) in order to understand the EU's relations with the world. More broadly, there has been little attention in seeking to understand how power is embedded in the notion of imperialism and how the different faces of power manifest themselves through imperialism. This paper aims to contribute towards filling these gaps in the literature by examining the EU's power projection towards the ACP countries, focusing in particular on the drivers, mechanisms/forms and consequences of this power projection. The ACP countries are selected as a case study, as it is the author's assertion that Europe's contemporary imperial tendencies are nowhere more obvious than in its relationship with the so-called dark continent and the Caribbean and Pacific group. Also, in light of the fact that the ACP countries are the least developed of the world's continents, it is an important testing ground for the overall credibility and ethics of European rhetoric and action.

II. Conceptualizing and Theorizing Imperialism

Imperialism, like a host of other important concepts in IR, is an essentially contested concept – it means different things to different people. There is no absolute agreement on what constitutes an empire.⁴ The notion of 'conceptual stretching' (Sartori, 1970) is again evident in this case, as there is a propensity to define 'everything as empire' (Motyl, 2001)⁵. Scholars have come up with various

⁴ Empire derives from the Latin word 'imperium' and entered usage following the rise of the Roman power in the Mediterranean.

⁵ For example, Hardt and Negri (2001) conceive empire as 'a new global order or form of sovereignty' as 'a postmodern reality in which imperialism exists but no single nation (or any other entity) is at its centre. The paper will not adopt this unique definition of empire.

definitions of imperialism from different perspectives though one can observe some common patterns in regards to the terms used in these definitions. For example, there are scholars drawing from the Marxist perspective that have associated imperialism with ‘the expansion of capital’ (Lenin, 1916; Arendt, 1951; Weber, 1978; Waltz, 1979; Harvey, 2003); others with ‘coercion’ (Hurrell, 2005; Chandler, 2006), ‘exploitation’ (Emmanuel, 1972; Caporaso, 1974; Chandler, 2006), ‘force’ (Schumpeter, 1951; Chandler, 2006), ‘subordination’ (Mathew, 1968), ‘domination’ (Cohen, 1974; Motyl, 2001; Chandler, 2006) and ‘control’ (Robinson, 1972; Cohen, 1974; Doyle, 1986; Lake, 2001; Hurrell, 2005); ‘inequality’ (Caporaso, 1974), ‘dependence’ (Caporaso, 1974; Cohen, 1974; Chandler, 2006) and ‘asymmetry’ (Cohen, 1974); with the existence of ‘hierarchical’ and ‘centre-periphery’ structures (Galtung, 1971; Emmanuel, 1972; Motyl, 2001; Lake, 2001; Chandler, 2006); or ‘with the reversal of power relations between states’ (Morgenthau, 1948). Finally, others have argued that imperialism exists when the ‘objects of imperialism’ view that there are ‘negative consequences’ stemming from their relations with the imperialist power (Barnett & Duvall, 2005). Since imperialism is closely associated – though often confused - with neo-colonialism⁶ and hegemony⁷ it is useful for comparative purposes to provide a similar term association. Thus, neo-colonialism has been associated with ‘control’ (Crozier, 1964; Nkrumah, 1965; Hodder-Williams, 2001), ‘inequality’ (Hodder-Williams, 2001), ‘exploitation’ (Nkrumah, 1965; Hodder-Williams, 2001), ‘domination’ (Crozier, 1964); whereas hegemony has been associated with ‘coercion’ (Gramsci, 1971; Zahran & Ramos, 2010), ‘domination’ (Cox, 1987; Arrighi & Silver, 1999; Joseph, 2002), ‘consent’ (Gramsci, 1971; Cox, 1987; Joseph, 2002; Zahran & Ramos, 2010) and ‘leadership’ (Gramsci, 1971; Cox, 1987; Arrighi & Silver, 1999; Zahran & Ramos, 2010). A conceptual map comparing the three terms is provided below:

Table 1. Terms Associated with Imperialism, Neo- Colonialism and Hegemony

	Imperialism	Neo-Colonialism	Hegemony	
Coercion	x		x	
Force	x			
Control	x	X		
Domination	x	X	x	
Subordination	x			
Exploitation	x	X		
Consent			x	
Leadership			x	
Inequality	x	X		
Dependence	x			
Asymmetry	x			

⁶ The term derives from the Latin word *colonia* which was a synonym for the Greek *apoikia* (ἀποικία) meaning a settlement of people from home. It first appeared in 1961 in left-wing journals such as *The New Statesman* and *The New Left Review*.

⁷ The term hegemony derives from the Greek word *hegemonia* (ἡγεμονία) that first appeared in ancient Greece during the Peloponnesian war, through the writings of Thucydides, in order to characterise the policy of the two fighting sides.

* X: Two or more scholars that used the term in their relevant definitions.
Source: Own Compilation

An equally great number of perspectives exist in theorizing imperialism. Three major strands of theories are those based on the insights of conservative scholars such as Benjamin Disraeli (1878)⁸, Cecil Rhodes (1888)⁹ and Rudyard Kipling (1899)¹⁰; liberals such as John Hobson (1902) and Norman Angell (1932); and Marxists such as Lenin (1916), Luxemburg (1951), Bukharin (1972), Harvey (2003) and Wood (2005). Focusing on the *drivers* of imperialism – rather than its *mechanisms* and *consequences* – the three theories agree that under-consumption at home leads to aggressive expansion of capital abroad to reinvigorate saturated domestic markets. They mainly disagree in regards to the value and necessity of imperialism, with the conservatives arguing that imperialism is in fact necessary and valuable for the metropolis and the Marxists on the opposite side of the spectrum. Other perspectives that draw – yet are distinct – from the three major theories of imperialism are those of dependency/underdevelopment scholars such as Baran (1957), Frank (1967), Galtung (1971), Emmanuel (1972), Amin (1972), Wallerstein (1974) and Rodney (1982) who view and examine the world in terms of centre-periphery relations, with the periphery dependent upon and exploited (mainly in terms of trade) by the centre. These theories are not concerned with the *drivers* of imperialism but with the *mechanisms* and *consequences* of imperialism. Moreover, politico-economic theories brought forth by Morgenthau (1948) and Cohen (1974) see imperialism as military conquest, economic exploitation and displacement of one culture by another, focusing their attention on the *mechanisms* and *consequences* of this process. Finally, Schumpeter’s (1951) socio-psychological theory views imperialism as an objectless expansion (a learned behaviour) driven by warlike elites, being concerned only with the drivers of this process.

Finally, it is important to indicate that imperialism has both agential and structural dimensions. The structure-agency debate¹¹ is based on two truisms about social life that underlie social scientific inquiry: a) human beings and their organizations are purposeful actors whose actions help reproduce or transform the society in which they live; b) society is made up of social relationships, which structure the interactions between these purposeful actors. Taken together these truisms suggest that human agents and social structures are, in one way or another, theoretically interdependent or mutually implicating entities (Wendt, 1987: 338). On the one spectrum of the debate, the structure-centre approach stipulates different forms of structural determinism treating state actors as nothing more than complex organisms processing stimuli; on the other spectrum, the agent-centre approach focuses on actor goals, beliefs and self-understandings, stipulating that the conduct of relations with other state actors reproduces the structure of the international system,

⁸ On Disraeli, B. see Blake Robert (1966). *Disraeli*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

⁹ On Rhodes, C. see William Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902* (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1935) Chapt. 3, pp. 78.

¹⁰ On Kipling, R. see Carrington, Charles. 1955. *Rudyard Kipling His Life and Work*. Macmillan and Company, London and New York.

¹¹ See, for example, Wallerstein, 1974; Waltz, 1979; Giddens, 1984; Wendt, 1987; Hollis and Smith, 1990; Cox, 1996; Ruggie, 1998; Wight, 2006.

that is, the structure is the unintended outcome of inter-state interaction for maximizing national interest and goals. This debate has important implications for the study of the EU's purported imperial projection of power. It raises the question as to whether the EU is acting in this manner because of structural constraints related to the international system, because of its own will and choice, or both. It also highlights the notion of responsibility for the agent and of the value of tracing the power and its consequences back to the agent. More broadly, it only when one understands the relationship between structure and agency in the context of imperialism that one is able to understand the processes required in order to dismantle imperialism.

III. Conceptualizing and Theorizing Power

There is a surprising absence of conversation between the clearly related literatures of power and imperialism. Yet one cannot understand how imperialism is projected without understanding power and its different forms. Niccollo Machiavelli (*The Prince*, early 16th century) and Thomas Hobbes (*Leviathan*, mid 17th century) provided the foundation in modern thinking about power, but in contemporary times it was scholars such as Max Weber (1947), Robert Dahl (1957), Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz (1962), Steven Lukes (1974), Anthony Giddens (1979) and Joseph Nye (1990) that provided a conceptual framework for understanding the various forms of power.¹² In simple terms, and according to Weber (1947), power is defined 'as the probability that an actor within a social relationship would be in a position to carry out his will despite resistance to it' or according to Dahl (1957) 'as the ability to make somebody do something that otherwise he or she would not have done' coining the notion of one having 'power over' another. Lukes (2005: 37) emphasizes the notion of 'interests'¹³ in power, defining the latter as the situation when 'A exercises power over B when A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests'. He also emphasizes the notions of 'responsibility' and 'agency' (rather than 'structure') in power stating that 'the point...of locating power is to fix responsibility for consequences held to flow from the action, or inaction, of certain specifiable agents'(2005: 58). Giddens (1979: 93), on the other hand, emphasized how structure and the enduring relations in which actors participate determines their ability to exercise power defining the latter 'as the capability to secure outcomes where the realization of these outcomes depends on the agency of others'.¹⁴ Drawing from this literature one can distinguish three major forms of power. Dahl's conceptualization constitutes the first dimension of power (i.e. overt), whereby power involves a focus on *behaviour* in the making of *decisions* on *issues* over which there is an observable *conflict* of (subjective) *interests*, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation. Behaviours associated with this first dimension of power

¹² Scholars such as Michael Foucault (1980) (i.e. 'lack of a source of power'), John Gaventa (1980 & 2007) (i.e. 'cube of power') and Barnett & Duvall (2005) ('four forms of power') have also made important contributions to the literature.

¹³ Lukes (2005: 146) conceptualizes 'interests' (he refers to 'objective' or 'real' interests') as to what an agent would do 'under ideal democratic circumstances' or 'under conditions of relative autonomy and in particular independently of A's power, e.g. through democratic participation'.

¹⁴ Isaac, 1987 also took a similar structural approach to power. In contrast, Lukes refuses conceptual assimilation of power to structural determination – power is about alternatives, and Lukes claims that to identify a given process as an exercise of power is to assume that within the process lies the possibility - for individuals, groups or institutions - to act differently.

include those of ‘coercion’¹⁵, ‘force’¹⁶, ‘control’, ‘domination’ and ‘exploitation’. Bachrach & Baratz (1962, 1963 & 1970) developed the second dimension of power (i.e. covert) which involves a *qualified critique* of the *behavioural focus* of the first dimension of power, (qualified because it is still assumed that non-decision-making is a form of decision-making) and it allows for consideration of the ways in which *decisions* are prevented from being taken on *potential issues* over which there is an observable *conflict* of (subjective) *interests* seen as embodied in express policy preferences and sub-political grievances. Behaviours associated with this second form of power include ‘inducement’ (or incentives), ‘persuasion’, ‘encouragement’, ‘agenda-setting’ (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970: 8) or ‘mobilization of bias’ (Schattschneider, 1960: 71).¹⁷ Lukes (2005) developed the third dimension of power (i.e. latent) which involves a *thoroughgoing critique of the behavioural focus* of the first two dimensions, and which allows for consideration of the many ways in which *potential issues* are kept out of politics whether through the operation of social forces and institutional practices or through individual’s decisions. This moreover, can occur in the absence of actual, observable conflict, which may have been successfully averted – though there remains here an implicit reference to potential conflict.¹⁸ Non-behaviours associated with this third form of power include ‘attraction’¹⁹ and ‘influence’²⁰ but may also contain certain coercive elements such as ‘representational force’²¹ (Mattern, 2007), ‘manipulation’²² (Lukes, 2005) and ‘exploitation’. It is precisely within this broader discourse of Luke’s third dimension of power that the much discussed notions of ‘civilian’²³ (Duchene, 1972), ‘soft’²⁴ (Nye, 1990) and

¹⁵ ‘Coercion’ exists where ‘A secures B’s compliance by the threat of deprivation where there is a conflict over values or course of action between A and B’.

¹⁶ ‘Force’ exists when ‘A achieves his objectives in the face of B’s noncompliance by stripping him of the choice between compliance and non-compliance’.

¹⁷ In this second dimension of power, A devotes energies in creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A.

¹⁸ In this third dimension of power, A prevents the formation of grievances from B by shaping its perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way as to ensure the acceptance B’s role in the existing order. Here, A affects B simply by its existence, by inactivity, by a lack of decision. A may exercise power over B without being aware that it is doing so or of its consequences. Furthermore, B may not be aware of its real interests, may not express them, and may have a false consciousness. B follows its real interests only when it exercises choice under conditions of relative autonomy and independently of A’s power (i.e. through democratic participation).

¹⁹ The notion of the ‘power of attraction’ was used in contemporary literature by Munuera, 1994.

²⁰ ‘Influence’ exists where ‘A, without resorting to either a tacit or an overt threat of severe deprivation, causes B to changes his course of action’ (Bachrach & Baratz, 1970: 30).

²¹ ‘Representational force’ works similarly with coercive force, i.e. through credible threats of unbearable harm to its victims. However, unlike coercive force, the threats of representational force are aimed at the victim’s *subjectivity* rather than physicality and are communicated not in reference to material capabilities but through the way the author of representational force structures his/her narrative and norms (Mattern, 2007: 110). The ‘War on Terrorism’ and the ‘With us or Against us’ rhetoric of the Bush administration on the Iraq war is an example.

²² In ‘manipulation’, ‘compliance is forthcoming in the absence of recognition on the complier’s part either of the source or the exact nature of the demand upon him...and it involves a conflict of values’ (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963: 636; Bachrach & Baratz, 1970: 28). Also in situations involving ‘manipulation’, ‘A seeks to disguise the nature and source of his demand upon B, and if A is successful, B is totally unaware that something is being demanded on him’ (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963: 636). Lukes adopts this definition but indicates that ‘manipulation’ occurs in the latent (third dimension) of power.

²³ According to Duchene (1972), a ‘civilian power’ is a ‘special international actor whose strength lies in its ability to promote and encourage stability through economic and political means, a power which is long on economic power and relatively short on armed force’.

‘normative’²⁵ (Manners, 2002) power fall under. From a conceptual and analytical point of view all three notions are similar and neutral despite the fact that EU and US policy-makers as well as many scholars (from both sides of the Atlantic) have tended to separate them or emphasize their positive connotations. In fact, all three notions can be used for both ‘good and bad’ purposes and as Scheipers & Sicurelli (2008: 609) indicated when referring to normative power ‘the ability to promote norms internationally may have either morally desirable or undesirable implications both for the norm promoter and for the receiver of these norms’. **Table 2** provides a conceptual map of the three forms of power.²⁶

Utilizing the existing definitions of imperialism and the terms associated with these (see **Table 1**) as well as employing the three dimensions of the power model (see **Table 2**), the paper adopt a wider definition of imperialism as: ‘*a hierarchical relationship of asymmetry, inequality and dependence in inter-state relations maintained by coercion, exploitation and control (sovereign or not), expressed in overt, covert and latent ways, and which is viewed as such by the objects of imperialism*’. In this sense, and under this wide definition, imperialism can be projected in all three forms of power, in behavioural and non-behavioural ways.

²⁴ According to Nye (1990 & 2004) soft power is the ‘ability to get others to want the outcomes that you want’ or otherwise the ‘ability to obtain preferred outcomes through attraction’. Soft power combines elements of both the second (i.e. agenda-setting) and third (i.e. attraction) forms of power. As Nye (2007: 163) indicates, soft power can simply understood as ‘attraction’ but ‘agents can control agendas and structures’ preferences so that some things appear attractive that might otherwise not be so’. As a note, Nye (2009) also coined the notion of ‘smart’ power which is the combination of both hard and soft power.

²⁵ According to Manners (2002: 239), ‘normative power’ refers to ‘power over opinion’, ‘*idée force*’ or ‘ideological power’ and defined it as the ‘ability to shape conceptions of ‘normal’ in international relations’. Manners (2008: 48) views the EU as a normative power in world politics which promotes a series of principles ‘that are generally acknowledged within the United Nations system, to be universally applicable’ such as ‘sustainable peace, freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law, equality, social solidarity, sustainable development and good governance’.

²⁶ Any conceptualization of power would be incomplete without reference to its ethical dimensions or more simply its ‘good or bad’ forms. Usually, power and (self) interests are not associated with ethics though a number of studies have indicated that one can indeed define an ‘ethical power Europe’ (Aggestam, 2008) or an ‘ethical (European) foreign policy’ (Smith & Light, 2001; Chandler, 2003; O’Neill, 2003; Khaliq, 2008). The common thread between these studies in regards to defining an ethical power or ethical foreign policy is their emphasis on ‘agency’ and ‘responsibility’ in International Relations rather than ‘structure’ – in other words, there is an acceptance that the world is inherently and structurally asymmetric in terms of power (e.g. geo-political, economic, military resources) but that there is a responsibility from the stronger nations to use that power in a manner which will not harm the interests of others, that it would promote universally accepted values such as democracy, human rights, rule of law, and good governance and that it would follow strategies mostly related to forms of power such as persuasion, encouragement, attraction and influence rather than coercion. There is, however, a conceptual antinomy here in that the pursuit of self-interests inevitably comes at the expense of others, human values are not always universally accepted and that the exercise of these soft forms of power come in the backdrop (or with the threat) of exercising more coercive forms. For these conceptually contradicting reasons, and given the value laden nature of ‘ethical power’ it would be appropriate to separate this notion from the three main forms of power.

Table 2. The Three Faces of Power

Faces of Power	1 st – Overt behavioural	2 nd – Covert (non) behavioural	3 rd – Latent – non - behavioural	
Other terms associated with this form of power	‘Hard’ ‘Imperial’	‘Soft’ ‘Imperial’ (in accordance with its wider definition above)	‘Civilian’ ‘Soft’ ‘Normative’ ‘Imperial’ (in accordance with its wider definition above)	
Mode of Behaviour	‘Coercion’ ‘Force’ ‘Control’ ‘Domination’ ‘Exploitation’	‘Agenda-Setting’ (or ‘Mobilization of Bias’ ‘Inducement’ (or Incentives); ‘Persuasion’, ‘Encouragement’	‘Attraction’ ‘Influence’ ‘Representational Force’ ‘Manipulation’	
Resources Utilized	Geopolitical (size, population, geographical location, political clout) Military, Economic	Geopolitical and Socio-Cultural	Socio-Cultural, Ideological/Ideational, Institutional (though existence of geopolitical resources may act as a reinforcing way).	
Conflict of Interest between actors	YES A participates in the decision-making of B in a manner contrary to	YES A devotes energies in creating or reinforcing social and political values	YES/NO (absence of observable conflict, though there remains an implicit reference to potential conflict) A prevents the	

	B's interests.	and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to A	formation of grievances from B by shaping its perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way as to ensure the acceptance B's role in the existing order.	
Key scholars associated with this form of power	Dahl; Weber	Bachrach & Baratz	Lukes	

Source: Own Compilation

IV. The Imperial Nature of the EU's Relationship with the ACP countries

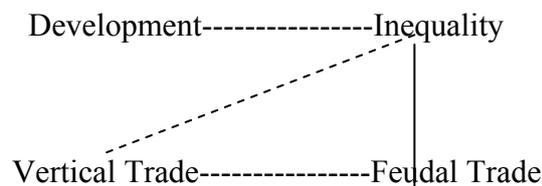
The EU's imperial projection in Africa has been evident in the areas of trade, agriculture, energy and security. It has been expressed primarily with the establishment of the Yaoundé and Lomé Conventions, the Cotonou agreement and the related Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) as well as the Africa-EU Partnership for Energy. These agreements have traditionally disadvantaged African states and have been initiated by certain Member States' desire to preserve links with former colonial dependencies in order to ensure continued access to raw materials and natural resources, and to protect economic investments established during colonialism. What the EU has been promoting with these agreements is the neo-liberal economic model across the African continent and, in the process, attempting to secure for itself continued market access and privileged economic status in the continent's markets and raw materials while giving little consideration and resources to the trade, agricultural, energy and security challenges of the continent.

At the economic level, and by utilizing²⁷ a statistical analysis combining Galtung's (1971) 'structural theory of economic imperialism' and Emmanuel's (1972) 'unequal exchange theory' one can indeed detect evidence of a hierarchical and centre-periphery structures; asymmetry, inequality and dependence; and exploitation

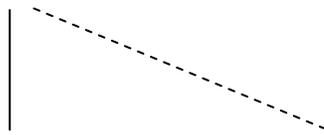
²⁷ I am very grateful to Dr Gianpiero Torrasi (Centre for Urban & Regional Development Studies, Newcastle University) who has conducted the economic data gathering and analysis for the application of Galtung's and Emmanuel's models in this case study.

in the EU-ACP relationship – all being key elements of the constructed definition of imperialism (p.6). More specifically, Galtung (1971: 101-103) theorized that in a hierarchical centre-periphery relation of economic imperialism there are three occurrences: a) in terms of *absolute properties* (i.e. development variables such as GNP/cap and percentage employed in non-primary sectors) the centre is high on rank dimensions and the periphery low; b) in terms of *interaction relation* (i.e. trade composition index) the centre enriches itself more than the periphery; c) in terms of *interaction structure* (i.e. partner and commodity concentration index) the centre is more centrally located in the interaction network than the periphery – the periphery being higher on the concentration indices. In that regard, the ‘development’ variables (i.e. GNP/cap & percentage employed in non-primary sectors) place the polities (i.e. EU and the ACP bloc) in the international ranking system, the ‘inequality’ variables (i.e. Gini income distribution; Gini land distribution) describe the internal structure of the polity whereas the ‘vertical trade’ (i.e. trade composition index) and ‘feudal trade’ variables (i.e. partner concentration and commodity concentration index) describe the structure of relations between two polities. According to Galtung (1971: 101-103) in a relationship of economic imperialism the following correlation pattern occurs (see **Figure 1**) whereby solid lines indicate positive relations and the broken lines indicate negative relations between polities. Data analysis²⁸ supports the existence of elements of economic imperialism between the EU and the ACP countries according to the Galtung model. In particular, there is a negative relation between the ‘development’ and one of the ‘feudal trade’ (i.e. partner concentration) variables (i.e. correlation is -0.2283); between the ‘development’ and ‘inequality’ (i.e. Gini income and land) variables (i.e. correlation is -0.4317 and -0.2366 respectively); between the ‘vertical trade’ and one of the ‘inequality’ variables (i.e. correlation is -0.1461); and between ‘vertical trade’ and one of the ‘feudal trade’ variables (i.e. correlation is -0.0315) (See **Table 3**).

Figure 1 – The correlation pattern according to Galtung’s economic imperialism theory



²⁸ Data for % non-primary, Trade composition, Partner concentration and Commodity concentration are drawn from Eurostat; Data for GDP/cap are International Monetary Fund, World Economic Outlook (2009); Data for Gini Income are drawn from the World Income Inequality Database compiled by United Nations University. Note that except for the Gini land index which refers to the most recent available datum all other variables refer to the respective 1999-2009 average.



Source: Galtung, 1971

Emmanuel (1972: 91-92) also theorized that in a centre-periphery or hierarchical relation there is an unequal exchange of products, whereby the centre predominantly provides the periphery with manufactured goods (i.e. iron, steel, textiles) including medium and high-tech products (i.e. electronic machinery, chemicals, communications equipment) in exchange of primary goods (i.e. oil, coal, fuels, gas and agricultural products) compounded by exploitation²⁹. Again, in this analysis one can observe elements of an unequal relationship in trade between the EU and the ACP countries (see **Tables 4 & 5 and Annex**) which further supports the economic imperialism hypothesis. In particular, one can observe a pattern in the EU-ACP trade relationship whereby the EU imports from the ACP countries mainly primary products (i.e. fuel & mining; agricultural products) in exchange for manufactured goods (i.e. machinery & transport equipment; chemicals).

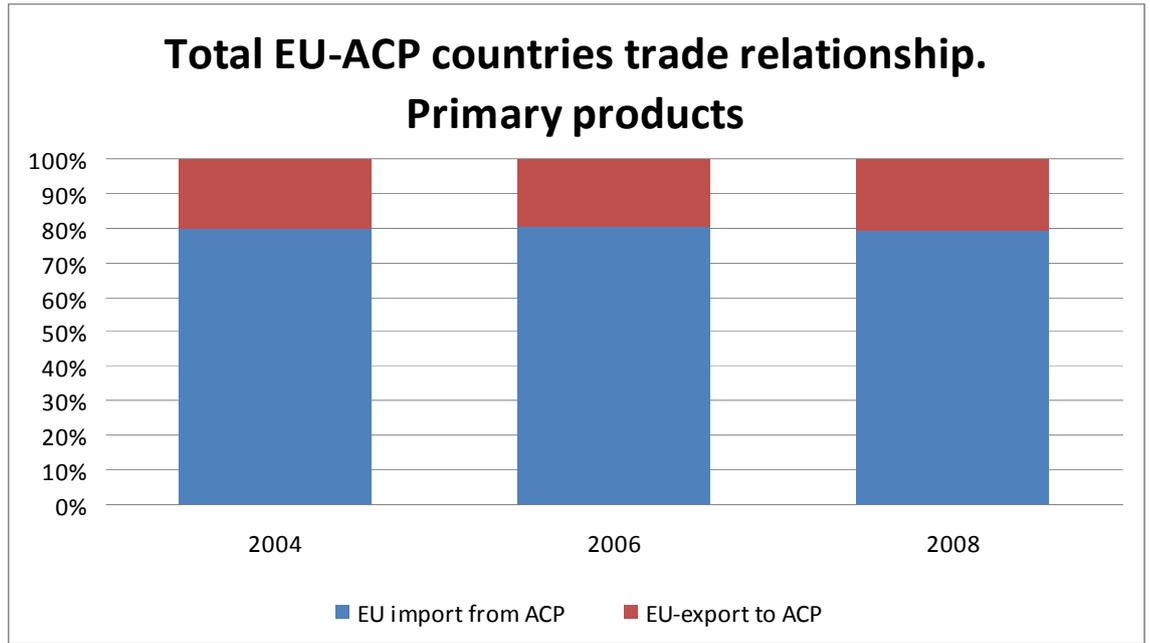
Table 3. Galtung’s economic imperialism theory applied to EU-ACP relations

	GDP/cap	% non-primary	Gini income	Gini land	Trade comp.	Partner conc.	Commodity conc.
GDP/cap	1						
% non-primary	-0.4663	1					
Gini income	-0.4317	0.2808	1				
Gini land	-0.2366	0.1095	-0.2114	1			
Trade comp.	-0.3389	0.8916	0.3602	-0.1461	1		
Partner conc.	-0.2283	0.3121	0.0082	-0.0928	0.3210	1	
Commodity conc.	0.1148	-0.0768	-0.1623	0.5177	-0.0315	-0.5832	1

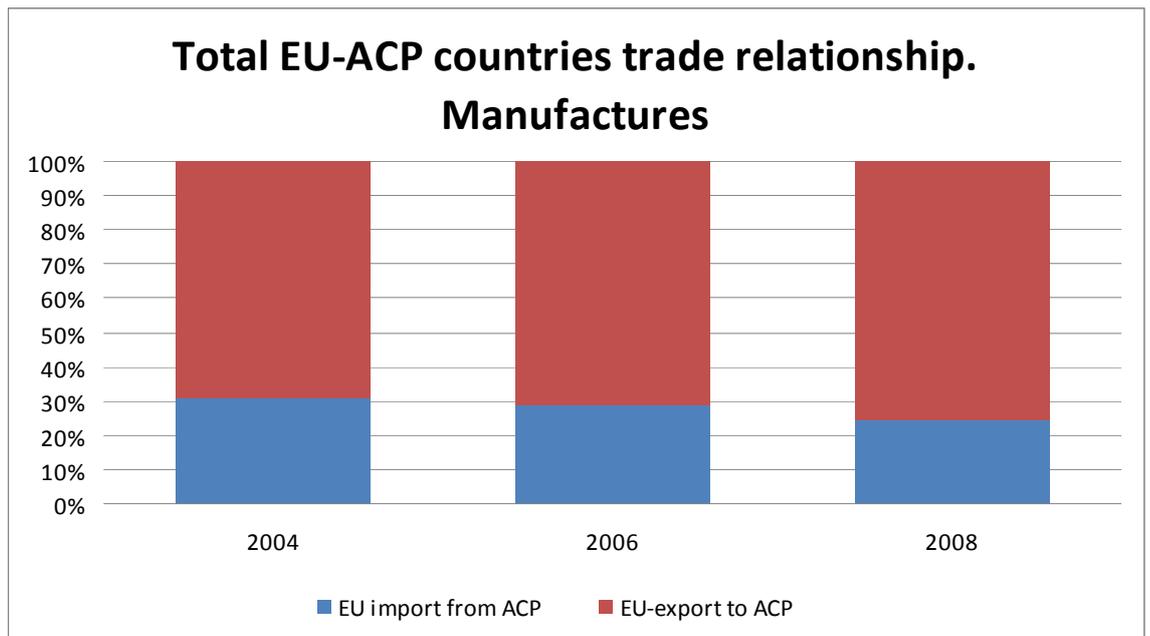
Source: Own Compilation

Table 4 & 5 – Emmanuel’s unequal exchange theory applied to EU-ACP relations

²⁹ According to Emmanuel (1972: 91-92) exploitation occurs when a fair exchange of product X with Y is undermined by trade distortions such as tariffs, quotas, indirect taxes, discriminatory transportation rates, subsidies, cartels etc.



Source: Own Compilation



Source: Own Compilation

The drivers of imperialism

The *drivers* of EU imperialism in Africa consist of Member States, EU institutions and non-state actors. The Member States driving the EU's policies in Africa are those with an imperial past in the continent such as Britain, France, The Netherlands, Italy and Belgium; EU institutions include those of the European Commission's DGs of External Relations, Trade, Energy, Agriculture but also

Development and Aid; non-state actors include multinational oil, gas and mining companies such as Royal Dutch Shell, BP, ExxonMobil, Anglo-American, Rio Tinto and BHP Billington; European agricultural and trade unions and the European defence industry. The intent of these actors to exploit Africa's resources can be identified in the EU's official documents though EU rhetoric is constructed in ways that aim to avoid references of dependence, domination or exploitation. Thus, the Cotonou Agreement and the Commission's strategy for Africa refers to the need to form a relationship with Africa based on 'equality, partnership, ownership, subsidiarity and solidarity' as well as 'reciprocity' one which is aimed at 'poverty eradication and sustainable development'³⁰ and agreements with 'due regard for the political choices and development priorities of weaker regions'.³¹ Some official documents, however, do point to the direction of the EU using the neo-liberal logic for the purpose of dominance and supremacy. For example, the Commission's DG External Trade states: 'More than ever, Europe needs to import to export. Tackling restrictions on access to resources such as energy, metals and scrap, primary raw materials including certain agricultural materials, hides and skins must be a high priority' (7). 'As global demand increases and Europe becomes more dependent on external energy sources...we should seek to improve transparency, governance and trade in the energy sector in third countries through non-discriminatory conditions of transit and third party access to export pipelines infrastructure (7). Also, 'the EU has a strategic interest in developing international rules and cooperation on competition policies to ensure European firms do not suffer in third countries from unreasonable subsidization of local companies or anti-competitive practices (8).'³² Finally, a British think tank with close links to the Commission's DG External Trade, which has been headed successively by two former British politicians, refers to the need to 'pursue aggressively market access modelled on the US approach' in regions such as the ACP, 'both bilaterally and in the WTO'.³³

The mechanisms/forms of imperialism

The mechanisms of the EU's imperial policies in the ACP countries can be identified through the three faces of power. The EU projects all three faces of power (i.e. overt, covert and latent) towards the ACP countries. Elements such as *coercion*, *mobilization of bias (or agenda-setting)*, *manipulation* and *exploitation* but also *attraction* are particularly evident. The element of *attraction* is the easiest to identify as the ACP countries are clearly driven to negotiate trade and other related agreements with the EU in order to have access to its lucrative markets and the global trade market as well as to be members of multinational trade forum such as the WTO. But there is also the attraction that accompanies such agreements which is the humanitarian and other aid components attached to the EU's trade agreements with developing countries. *Coercion* and *manipulation* have been evident in the structures set up to negotiate the EPAs as well as the subsequent pressure from the EU on the ACP countries to sign the agreements. Firstly, the EU insisted that the EPA's were to be concluded not with the ACP group as a whole, but with six regions within the group. Also, no country could negotiate within more than one region. Since some

³⁰ European Commission, 2005.

³¹ ACP-EU, 2000 (Revised 2005), Article 34. See also, Peter Mandelson, 'Economic Partnership Agreements: Putting a rigorous priority on development', speech, Brussels, 20 January 2005.

³² European Commission, 2006b.

³³ Chatman House, 2008.

countries in Africa are members of more than one regional organization, they were forced to choose between these groupings. By insisting on moving negotiations to the regional level, the EU excluded the possibility of more concerted action on behalf of the group as an entity (Slocum-Bradley, 2007: 365). Since the regional groups are smaller they have less power to negotiate an agreement that favours the interests of the developing countries. Secondly, the principle upon which the EPA agreements is based, and which has been promoted by the EU as *fait a compli* - citing WTO rules - is that of *reciprocity* in trade which essentially entails the elimination of all tariffs or other restrictions between trading countries. While this principle may be beneficial among countries with symmetrical wealth and development it is not for those poorer countries or regions, such as the ACP bloc, whose goods and services cannot compete with those of more advanced polities such as the EU. Moreover, intense EU pressure was put on the ACP countries to sign the EPA's insisting on a December 2007 deadline (negotiations began in Sept. 2002). In this case, the EU insisted that the deal must be concluded in order to ensure WTO compliance with Peter Mandelson and Louis Michel, the EU's commissioners for trade and development, insisting that if the EPA's were not agreed by the end of the year they will have to 'fall back on the EU's default preference scheme', meaning higher tariffs for the ACP countries.³⁴ The ACP countries through their parliamentary representatives repeatedly called for an extension of the deadline asking the Commission to 'cease pressuring the ACP bloc' to sign the agreements and allow more time to revise them in order to fulfil their development needs and aspirations.³⁵ The EU insisted on its earlier argument indicating the need to make the EU-ACP trade relations compatible with WTO rules. In fact, the EU's argument of no 'credible alternative' was untrue in that the EU did have alternative choices but lacked political will. For example, the EU could seek to extend its WTO waiver or fine-tune the enhanced general system of preferences (often called GSP+) to allow all ACP countries to retain market access equivalent to that which they have now. Even if a country brought immediate proceedings against the EU and the ACP, the glacial speed of WTO proceedings would allow ACP countries more time to assess their needs and the deals on the table. Forcing the pace of negotiations could only disadvantage the weakest player and it is a form of threat, bullying³⁶ and manipulation. ACP officials³⁷ also indicate how the EU set the agenda and controlled the content and pace of negotiations in regards to Cotonou and the EPA agreements, allowing little room for debating clauses that were objectionable to the ACP countries such as 'tariff liberalization', 'export tax', 'rules of origin of cumulation' and the 'SGP regime' while also taking as de facto that the neo-liberal economic model is the 'starting point' and 'aspiration' of the ACP countries. In that regard, it was argued that these agreements were 'unfair and untenable' and pressuring the ACP countries to sign them was essentially 'holding poor countries to ransom'.³⁸ The Council of the 76 ACP Trade Ministers issued a statement deploring 'the enormous pressure that has been brought to bear on the ACP states by the European Commission to initial the interim trade arrangements' and that 'the EU's mercantilist interests have taken precedence over the ACP's developmental and

³⁴ *The Guardian*, 8 November 2007.

³⁵ Joint Assembly of the EU and the ACP countries 2008, Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States 2008.

³⁶ *The Guardian*, 8 November 2007.

³⁷ Interview with Christiane Leong HoYng, Expert, Multilateral Trade Issues, ACP Secretariat, Brussels, 15 Oct. 2009.

³⁸ *The Guardian*, 2 November 2007.

regional integration interests'.³⁹ And the Assembly of the African Union stated: 'Political and economic pressures are being exerted by the European Commission on African countries to initial Interim Economic Partnership Agreements'.⁴⁰ Also, President Wade of Senegal argued that Europe was trying to push Africa 'into a straitjacket that doesn't work'.⁴¹ And Malawi's President Mutharika accused the EU of 'imperialism', saying it was punishing countries that resisted the EPA's by threatening to withhold aid from the European Development Fund (EDF).⁴²

The EU's policy to link future development funds to ACP countries on the condition of signing the EPA's is a further element of *coercion* and *manipulation*. In particular, the EU engineered the convergence of the final stages of the EPA negotiations with the programming of the 10th European Development Fund (EDF). This tactic aimed to use the much-needed development aid to Africa in order to 'window-dress' or 'sugar pill' the Economic Partnership Agreements. Goodison (2007a: 148) argues that this constituted in some sense, an 'institutional bribery' with ACP finance ministers being 'encouraged' to 'put the arm' on reluctant trade ministers who remained unconvinced of the economic value of the type of the EPA's which the EU was proposing. In the end, Africa-EU EPA's ended up closely resembling the Union's ambitious bilateral agreements with a few development assistance sweeteners thrown in. Hurt (2003: 174) also argues that the EU has deliberately put WTO and IMF rules at the centre of the debate over these agreements and they are portrayed as fixed and immutable rather than the political construct that they really are. It is in this sense, that Storey (2006: 343-344) argues that the EU has acted in the case of the EPA's as 'an old fashioned realpolitik defending its economic self-interests' pushing for the norms of neo-liberal governance which do not necessarily correspond to the development needs of the ACP countries. In assessing the EPA agreements, Slocum-Bradley & Bradley (2010: 45) conclude that the processes which the EU, and especially the Commission, has used to steer the ACP countries towards compliance with its own interests are not in accordance with its vows to respect ACP sovereignty and promote ownership of adopted policies and practices.

The EU has also used similar *coercive* and *manipulation* tactics in its energy policy towards Africa. The EU, whose overall dependence on energy imports stands at 50 per cent - has integrated its energy security interests in energy-rich Africa (i.e. oil, gas, uranium) into its foreign policy, with the establishment in September 2008 of an Africa-EU Energy Partnership. It renewed its interests in African energy imports in November 2006 following its failure to reach agreement with Russia over a new cooperation and partnership agreement PCA that would formalize their energy relations⁴³ as well as increasing competition with other energy-seeking powers such as the US, China and India. Yet this strategy has been one-sided, serving the interests of the EU and giving little attention to improving the continent's energy needs, i.e. improving access to energy in Africa and helping African states develop alternative energy sources. Youngs (2009: 134) reveals that African governments have admonished European government hypocrisy in talking of new 'jointly-owned' energy partnerships while they pour new funds into their own efforts to develop

³⁹ ACP Council of Ministers, 13 December 2007, ACP/25/013/07.

⁴⁰ Assembly of the African Union, Tenth Ordinary Session, 31 January – 2 February 2008.

⁴¹ 'Trade Talks Reach Impasse at Europe-Africa Summit', *Africa Renewal*, vol. 21 (4), January 2008.

⁴² AllAfrica (2008) 'If the EPAs Are So Good, Why Force Us to Sign?', by P.Semu-Banda, 23 April.

⁴³ The EU currently imports 15 per cent of its oil and gas from Africa with this figure expected to substantially increase in the coming years.

alternatives to developing state's oil and gas. They also accuse the EU of pushing for market liberalization as an instrumental fillip to their own supplies when combating local energy poverty was more a question of state intervention and redistribution.

The consequences of imperialism

The *consequences* of EU imperialism for the ACP countries are documented by independent sources other than the EU (e.g. think tanks, WTO, NGO's) but also from the recipients of imperialism, i.e. the ACP countries. Firstly, there is evidence that these agreements will undermine rather than promote regional integration – the latter being one of the stated goals of the EU. More particularly, Hess & Hess (2004) point out that the EU's decision to devise SIX⁴⁴ separate regional EPA groupings for Africa, that is, the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) group and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) group undermines regional integration as these accords are mutually incompatible and co-existence is possible only as long as agreements remain partly unimplemented. For example, under the East African Community (EAC) transition arrangements, Uganda and Tanzania are permitted to charge higher tariffs on goods imported from their partner Kenya than they do on those sourced from other Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) or from Southern African Development Community (SADC) states (Charalambides, 2005: 4). Moreover, the EU's proposed aim of intra-regional liberalization rests on the logic of the increased costs of recidivism – if a state fails to alter its tariffs at the agreed time it would fall foul not only of its neighbours but also of the EU, facing the possible sanction of losing preferences on its exports to the EU and potentially aid as well. Yet, Stevens (2006: 446) argues that on the basis of this logic the impact on regional liberalization could also be negative – some countries willing to remove barriers from their neighbours with similar economies may be unwilling to offer the same terms to highly competitive (and possibly dumped) EU imports, thus inducing regional groups to splinter between those willing to liberalize towards the EU and the others. Milner *et al* (2005: 348) indicate that the economic impact of the EPA on three African economies – Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda – will be negative in regards to trade. While consumers in Tanzania and Uganda might benefit from cheaper EU imports, Kenyan producers, who supply many of these imports, would lose out. Also, in the case of Tanzania and Uganda, over half of the tariff revenue would be lost, leading to the core conclusion that the welfare effects on ACP countries would be negative. Borrmann *et al* (2005: 171) point out that in the case of West Africa there will be a potentially moderate trade impact but also severe loss of important customs revenues. In the case of Cape Verde and Gambia, that projected loss might amount to 20 per cent of total government revenue, with the figure likely to range between 5 and 10 per cent for other countries in the region, something that would 'affect the ability of West African countries to provide much needed public goods, such as education and infrastructure'. The Institute for Development Studies (IDS) (Stevens & Kennan, 2005: 4) reinforced these conclusions noting that 'the task of adapting to tariff revenue loss could be substantial'. The United Nation's Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

⁴⁴ The six regional groups are: West Africa; Central Africa; Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA); Southern Africa (SADC Group); Caribbean; Pacific.

concludes that while the EPA's will create new trade and enhance consumer surplus under some conditions, they will undermine regional and African trade integration (for example, in the case of COMESA, intra regional trade would go down by 6 per cent) and reduce fiscal revenues, in some cases in large numbers (as for example, in the 16.55 per cent decrease in the case of Djibouti).⁴⁵ Studies from West Africa also suggest that the EPA's would also undermine ACP government revenues of up to 20 per cent with annual total losses of \$1,972 million – almost double the total annual payments under the combined national indicative programmes of African ACP countries (Goodison, 2007a: 149). The global financial crisis is likely to aggravate this loss, with Action Aid predicting that Africa will suffer a drop of income up to US\$49 billion with the worst affected countries, such as South Africa, experiencing a drop of income up to 50 per cent.⁴⁶ Oxfam indicates that the EPA's 'most favored nation' clause would also require ACP countries to extend to Europe the benefits of any future deal with other regions such as India, China and Mercosur, something that would undermine South-South integration.⁴⁷

Moreover, the combination of the EU's trade and agricultural regime would also have negative *consequences* on the ACP countries. While the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank encourage Africa to reduce its agricultural subsidies and tariffs, developed polities such as the EU which dominate these bodies do not necessarily practice what they preach. The EU's CAP is regularly cited as being in flagrant breach of all neo-liberal principles, dispensing approximately 55 billion euro per year in subsidies which in turn has a negative impact on free trade. As a result of this, the CAP regularly results in over-scale overproduction whose excess is then largely 'dumped' on Africa, thereby undercutting local producers who cannot compete (Flint, 2009: 87). In this sense, the CAP has allowed EU farmers to 'sidestep' high production costs and nullify the comparative advantage in the agricultural sector held by African countries. Goodison (2007: 28-29) also indicates that despite the WTO-induced CAP reforms there will still be a reduction in the value of traditional trade preferences enjoyed by African agricultural exporters. For a continent where the agricultural sector accounts for more than 90 per cent of GDP in many of its countries, and which is the foundation of the continent's industrial development, the negative impact of the CAP becomes more evident.

Studies also indicate that the EPA's will also have negative *consequences* on Africa's forests, biodiversity and forest-dependent communities. The European Commission's own mid-term Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) clearly acknowledged the likelihood of such a negative impact resulting from trade liberalization. 'Overall adverse effects on climate change and global biodiversity are expected, primarily through increased transport and pressures for increased agricultural production in biologically sensitive areas'.⁴⁸ This could have direct social and economic repercussions on the poor localities of the ACP countries, by removing the natural resources they rely on.⁴⁹ The Commission's dedicated forest sector admitted that there are likely to be significant and irreversible impacts on forests and biodiversity in 'biodiversity hotspot' countries such as the Congo Basin.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ UNECA, 2005.

⁴⁶ Action Aid, 2009

⁴⁷ Oxfam, 2008.

⁴⁸ European Commission, 2006a.

⁴⁹ Friends of the Earth, 2008.

⁵⁰ European Commission, 2005

In regards to the EU's energy policies, Muller (2007: 16) points out how local activists are discontent as they see the European Investment Bank funding massive hydro-electricity plants, such as in the case of 2005 Great Inga Dam in the Democratic Republic of Congo, that while local governments support, nonetheless have serious negative *consequences* on the health and livelihoods of the surrounding populations, such as the loss of habitat and fishing grounds. Human rights activists in Europe and Africa point out that European banks and firms are involved in systematic bribery of African leaders and local officials in return for access to resources. For example, French/Elf executives bribed compliant leaders in Gabon, Guinea, Angola and Congo-Brazzaville in return for protecting France's supply of cheap petrol.⁵¹ In Congo, France/Elf was accused of plotting a coup in 1992 to oust a government that had come to question the terms of oil contracts (Medard, 1999: 8). Similarly, the oil riches of Angola have been appropriated by local elites with the complicity of foreign banks, often brokered by arms dealers connected to European governments and oil companies. Reports have also surfaced that in the period 1993-1998, French government officials appear to have unofficially assisted the oil for weapons trade in Angola, as production declined in its former dependencies Gabon and Cameroon.⁵² In Angola specifically, the oil industry has been a classic 'enclave' sector since independence, cordoned off from the country's conflict and replete with Portuguese advisors (Youngs, 2009: 128). In the Nigerian Delta, the Dutch-British oil company Shell has been ruthlessly exploiting the region since the 1970s - in cooperation with the corrupted Nigerian elite - committing grave environmental and human rights violations and driving the indigenous communities to impoverishment. Yet, the EU which imports 20 per cent of its oil (and 80 per cent of its gas) from Nigeria has been reluctant to link its aid agreements and debt-relief schemes with governance and energy reform in Nigeria, and has refrained from imposing real punitive measures⁵³, out of fear of 'rocking the boat', according to a Solana advisor, and disrupting the energy supplies in Europe (Youngs, 2009: 142). Even high level EU officials have been accused of implication in dubious schemes. For example, Congolese human rights campaigners and opposition leaders claim that Louis Michel, former Belgian foreign minister and current EU Commissioner for Development, has had unsavoury dealings in Congo-Kinshasa linking him to Walloon arms and mining interests; these siphon the Congo's raw materials to Europe with the complicity of well paid local politicians, in a mutually lucrative arrangement that compensates the economic deficits of Walloon Belgium (Muller, 2007: 16).

And while the EU is seeking to take advantage of trade and energy opportunities in Africa, it has given little attention to the continent's security challenges stemming from the various ethnic conflicts whose seeds were arguably planted during Europe's past colonial rule of the continent. The EU's passive role in conflicts such as in Sudan, Chad, West Saharan Africa, Congo and Zimbabwe has resulted in negative *consequences* in these conflicts. Gibert (2007: 30) indicates that the EU limited itself to supporting 'multilateral subsidiarity' through support for the interventions of other organizations, particularly the African Union which have been ineffective to tackle such conflicts. Experts also point out that the new EU Battle Groups established in 2007 merely repackaged much existing military capacity and

⁵¹ *The Independent*, 25 January 2000.

⁵² *InterPress Service News*, 19 February 2009

⁵³ For example, when prominent Ogoni human rights activist Ken Saro Wiwa was executed in 1995, the EU refrained from imposing an oil embargo (under British and Dutch insistence) resorting instead to the softer measure of suspending military cooperation and the visa regime.

that the ESDP, particularly in Africa, settled into a comfortable niche of narrowly delineated military-civilian crisis management operations divorced from broader security challenges (Howorth, 2007). Bailes (2008: 120-121) also indicates that the EU deliberately chose operations in Africa that required little force and risk and that the professional military component was minimized, ignoring cries for help in major crisis in Africa (e.g. in the genocide of Darfur).⁵⁴ For example, in the case of Sudan (Darfur) – which the UN labelled the worst humanitarian crisis in the world – the EU’s position was markedly muted, issuing numerous expressions of ‘concern’ but taking only limited action (essentially an arms embargo and diplomatic sanctions). Olsen (2009) also indicates that the EU’s military conflict management policy in Africa has been and still is primarily motivated by European interests, primarily French and British, and only secondly by concerns on Africa. Smith (2001: 193) and Khaliq (2008: 260) indicates that there is an inconsistency in the human rights policy of the EU in Africa citing examples from the EU’s policy towards the Ogoni people in Nigeria and their slain leader Ken-Sara Wiwa. And much of its rhetoric for dealing with these conflicts is aimed towards securing and promoting economic liberalization and the EU’s energy interests in the continent. Similarly, the Union has not been committed and effective enough in pushing for reforms and political dialogue in the areas of human rights, democracy and rule of law – again, any reference to these issues in the stated agreements appear to promote more the objectives of economic liberalization than democratization. Mayer (2008: 70) also points to double-standards and the inconsistency with which human rights clauses are included in the interregional agreements with the ACP than in those with Asia.

V. Conclusion

The paper has indicated that the EU’s relationship with the ACP countries contains elements of centre-periphery and hierarchical structures, asymmetry, inequality and dependence, and which is compounded by exploitation. It also indicated the *drivers*, *mechanisms/forms* and *consequences* of the EU’s imperial power projection towards the ACP countries. It revealed that certain Member States with former colonial links in the continent (e.g. France, Britain, The Netherlands, Italy, Belgium), as well as key EU institutions (e.g. DG External Affairs, Trade, Energy and Agriculture) have been the main *drivers* of the EU’s policies towards the continent. The EU’s *mechanisms* of imperialism in the continent have been agreements such as the Cotonou and EPAs where one can identify the projection of all three forms of power (i.e. overt, cover and latent) expressed primarily through coercion and exploitation, agenda-setting, manipulation but also attraction. The *consequences* for the ACP countries from the EU’s policies has been the undermining of the bloc’s regional integration efforts while it also had negative impact on their trade, energy and agricultural sectors, their environment as well as the security dimension. The *consequences* for the EU relate to questions raised in regards to its credibility, legitimacy, identity and its self-promoting image as a moral and ethical power, a ‘force for good’ in the world, and has implications on how its policies are perceived and accepted around the world. If the EU’s power projection towards the ACP countries contains imperial elements, and in light of the fact that the EU has

⁵⁴ Indeed, the UK military intervened in 2003 in Sierra Leone and France in 2002 in the Cote d’Ivoire but these were not part of a coherent ESDP policy and some even viewed these operations as having a neo-colonial mantle.

forged similar intra-regional agreements with other developing parts of the world such as in Latin America, the South-East Asia as well as its immediate and wider Neighbourhood (i.e. the Western Balkans, the Black Sea Region, the South Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and the Persian/Gulf Region) one can argue that the EU's model of imperial power projection may not be confined to a specific region (in this case the ACP countries) but has a universal character. What this study also shows is that imperialism may be projected not just through the overt (1st) form of power (e.g. coercion, force, domination) but also through covert (e.g. agenda-setting) and latent (e.g. attraction and manipulation) forms of power. Finally, if one draws from the structure-agency theorem then one indeed trace the responsibility and the consequences of the power projection of imperial polities (such as the EU but also US, China, Russia) without, at the same time, discounting how the structure of the international system – to which they decisively contributed in shaping its rules with the creation of multilateral organizations such as the WTO, IMF and others – has its own dynamic which conditions and constrains the way in which such polities behave in the international arena.

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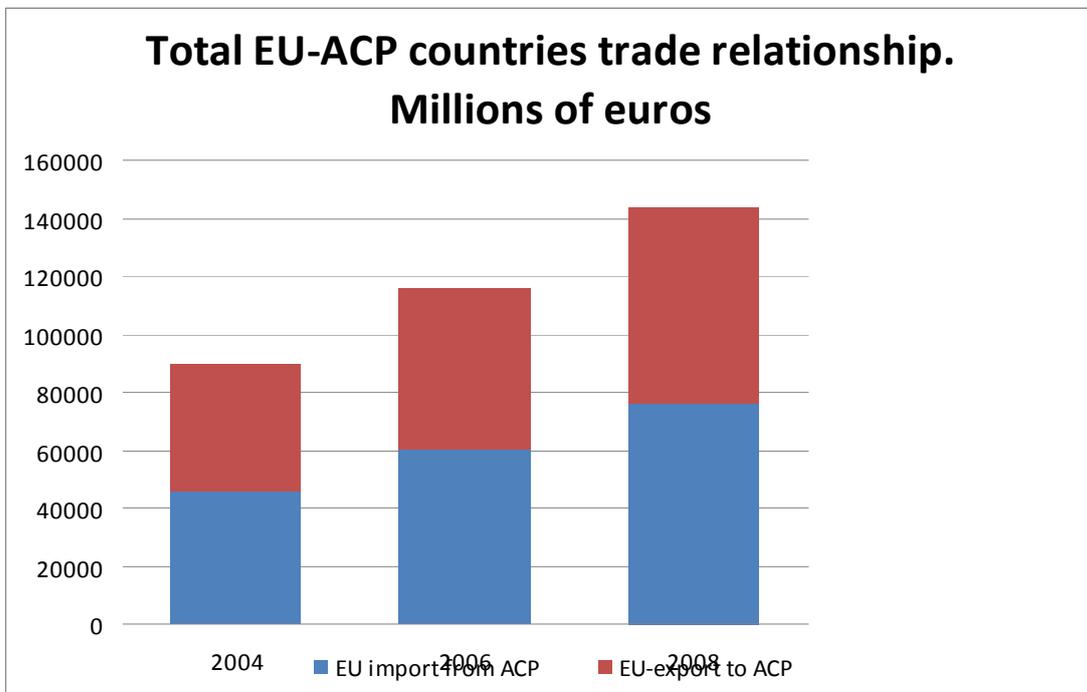
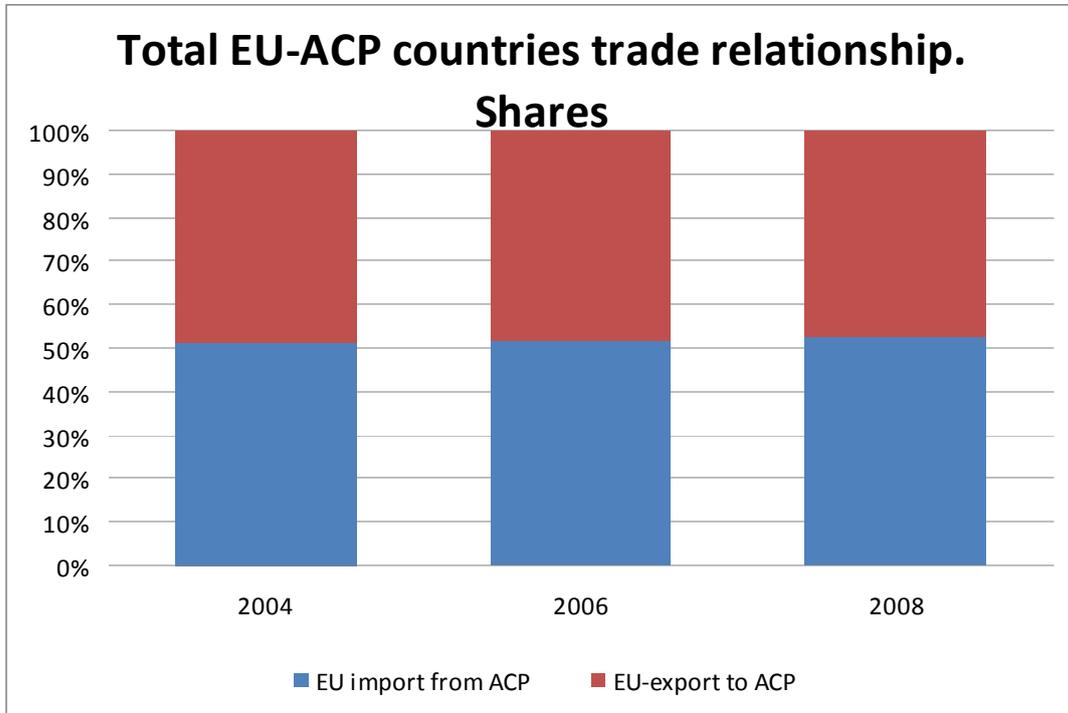
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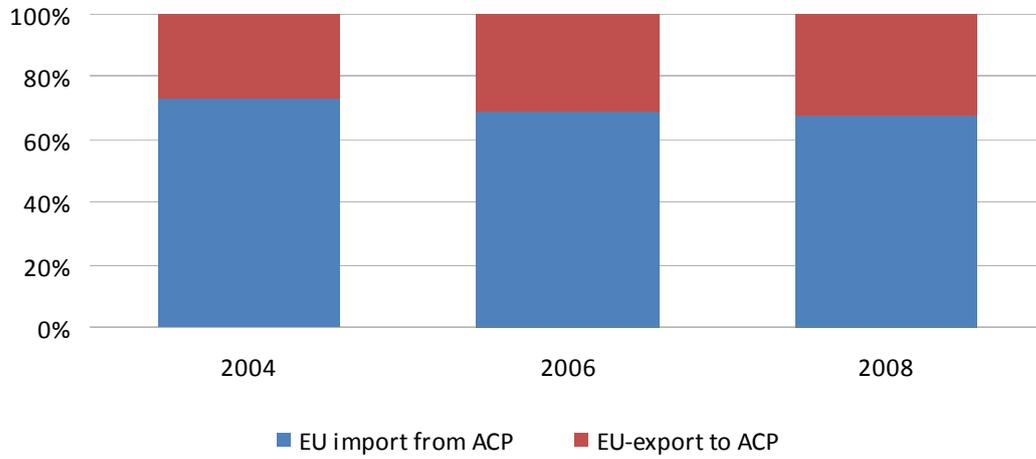
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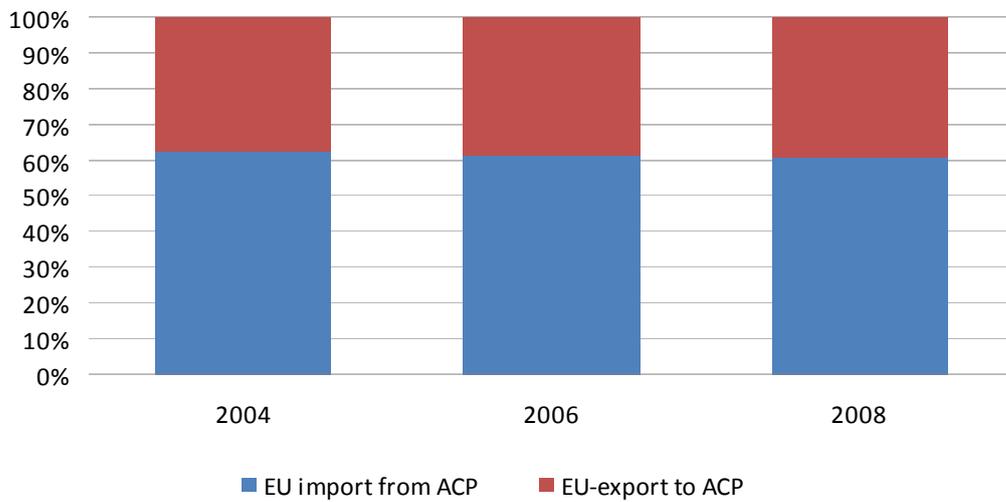
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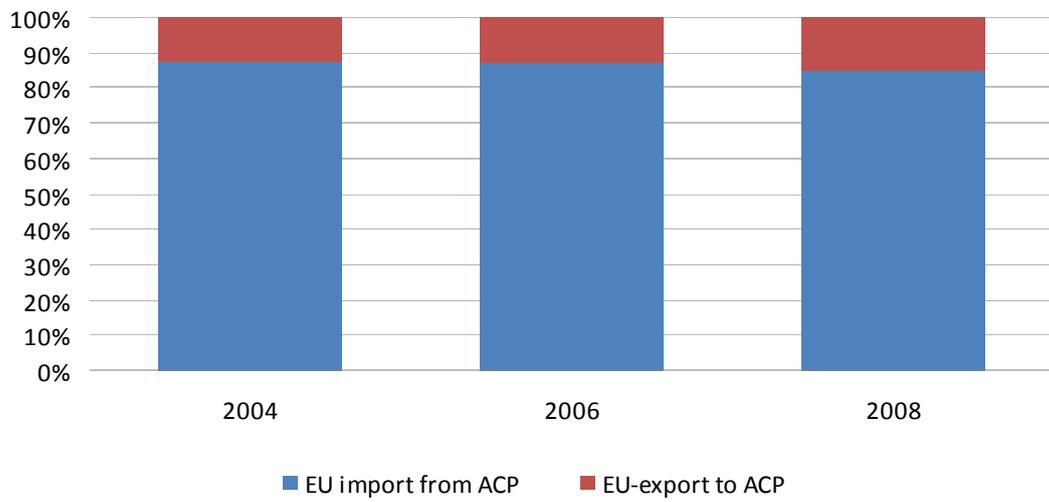
EU-ACP countries trade relationship. Agriculture



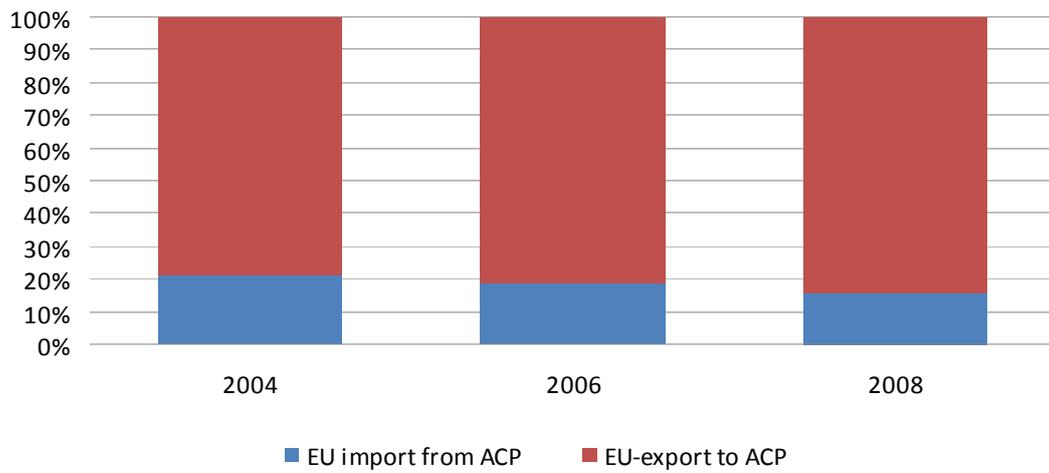
EU-ACP countries trade relationship. Iron and steel



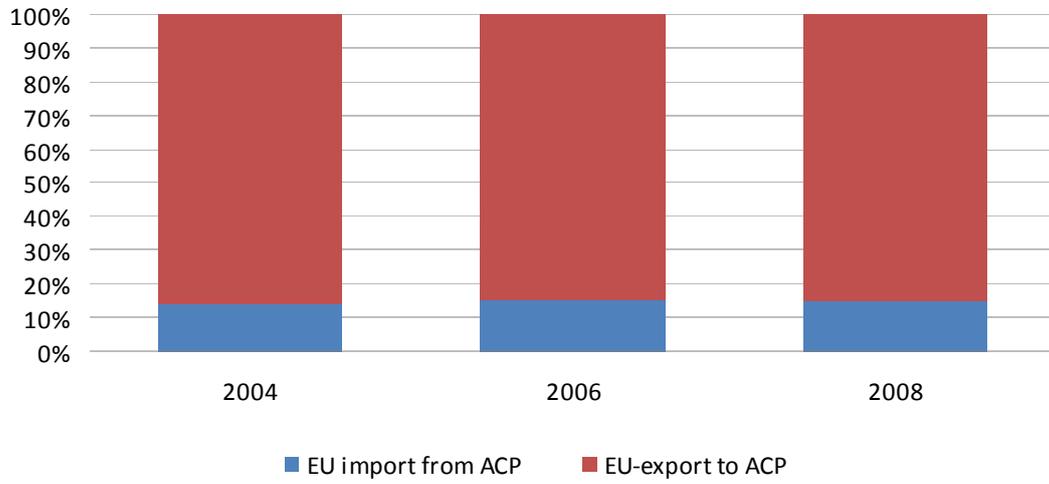
EU-ACP countries trade relationship. Fuel and mining products



EU-ACP countries trade relationship. Machinery and transport equipment



EU-ACP countries trade relationship. Chemical



EU-ACP countries trade relationship. Textiles

