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**EPA's & Problematizing
Development:
Discourse
D.e.s.i.g.n
Values**

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Abstract

This thesis investigates and problematizes the notion of development in the context of the EU-ACP EPA agreements with a particular focus on Kenya. Official statements, documents, empirical observation and qualitative interviews conducted in Nairobi and Kagwe, Kenya in April of 2009 provide empirical data. Applying the concepts of international trade theory, capacity developments complex adaptive systems approach and supplementing these concepts with an underlying thread of axiology, this paper seeks to explore the drastically divided and widely differing definitions of the situation, world views and casual beliefs in viewing the EPA development tool for what it is vs. what it means. By problematizing the notion of development, the findings suggest that it seems as though much of the dissonance between what constitutes development, what the ‘problem’ is, why it exists, and what the ‘solution’ is, is the result of a clash between theoretical models and the informal concepts of how things get done in a particular context. Thus, it is difficult seeing the EPAs functioning as a tool for a form of development that would suit the values, norms, and voices involved in conceptualizing development.

Abbreviations

ACP	African Caribbean Pacific
CAS	Complex Adaptive Systems
CD	Capacity Development
DG	Directorate General
EPA	Economic Partnership Agreement
EC	European Community
EU	European Union
GATT	General Agreements on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IEPA	Interim Economic Partnership Agreement
KS	Kenyan Shillings
LCD	Least Developed Countries
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSA	Non State Actor
SEATINI	Southern & Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Institute
UN	United Nations
WTO	World Trade Organization

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1. Introduction

The Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) between the European Union (EU) and the African Caribbean Pacific (ACP) group of countries, signed in Cotonou in 2000, created a new comprehensive framework for bilaterally reciprocal economic and political relations between the EU and ACP countries. They stem from a long history of colonialism and the ensuing post-colonial legacy of preferential non-reciprocal economic and development cooperation. In such, they characterize a significant aspect of part of Europe's past as well as the EU's current collective presence and role as a global actor. The EPAs aim to build upon this legacy by facilitating economic growth and development through transition of the ACP countries into the world economy by way of reciprocal free trade agreements: EPAs. The EU's articulated aspiration is not only to open up commodity access to global markets, but also to enhance trade in services and to increase cooperation in trade related areas like competition and investment in the name of development.

The EU's advocated argument for this objective stems from the poor export performance of ACP countries in recent decades, despite preferential non-reciprocal trade agreements. For example, ACP countries share in the EU market declined from 6.7% in 1976 to 3.0% in 2005 (EU Commission 2006). Furthermore, the EU seeks to establish a new trading agreement that is compatible with WTO GATT regulations. The preceding economic agreements with the ACP¹ would require a waiver from the WTO in order to be prolonged, one which the EU claims unfeasible as well as unbeneficial to ACP economic well-being and most ACPs have now signed an EPA interim agreement², which implies that the ACP states will have to open up their markets for EU products within twelve years, scheduled for the period between 2008-2020.

According to classic economic theory, beneficial effects could be expected from lowering trade barriers with the ACP countries in order to exploit the well known and

¹ Evolution of EC/EU-ACP economic partnership; the Yaoundé, Lomé and Cotonou. Further readings are abundantly available, though Bretherton & Vogler summarize them well in chapter 5 of "The European Union as A Global Actor".

² For up to date information on the current and ongoing process of signing the EPAs, cf. <http://www.acp-eu-trade.org/>

much hailed monetary surge from international exchange. However, this basic outcome may not hold since many of the demanding assumptions of such economic models are not realistic in that they do take the ACP context into account.

It is within this context that the notion of development becomes complicated. A clear and homogenous view or definition of its meaning and implication is lacking, as such the tools used to facilitate development and the actors involved are all subject to its ambiguity.

1.1 Statement of Purpose/Aim of Intent

This study was originally motivated by my transnational observance of what I deem to be the increasingly visible folly in letting neo-liberalism steer the path of global governance and civil welfare. This presupposition began by seeking to examine in which ways the ideological notion of economic growth by way of free trade, which is hegeomonically thought to coincide naturally with development, impacts labor and human rights development in the Kenyan tea industry. Though in this process, it became clear to me that ‘development’ in itself is a highly ambivalent term, and that this ambivalence in regards to what constitutes as ‘development’, its ends and means and the source of this ambivalence was the core of my problem. The aim of this thesis is thus to briefly illuminate the process of the EU-ACP EPA bargaining procedure for the divided black and white process it was, diverging drastically on two widely differing definitions of the situation, world views and casual beliefs. In seeking an understanding of the division between seeing development tools as what they are vs. what they mean, the championing ‘economic growth=development’ ideology will be presented and problematized, followed by a further problematization of ‘development’ enhanced by reviewing the institutional and societal capacity crux in Kenya and while simultaneously illustrating the theory from which Kenyan NSAs have started to approach and advocate ‘development’ from. Finally, it aims to discern the perception of development held by those whom development rhetorically aims to empower (the impoverished) under current and projected EPA free trade conditions by using qualitative data and insight gained from my April 2009 field experience in the Kenyan tea industry. The ultimate goal is to contribute to a more reflective conception of development and what can constitute as quality within that

development by using my own unique combination of theoretical framework and personal experience.

1.2 Problem Formulation

The aim of this study has been problematized by the following interconnected research questions;

1. How is development understood by those who favor and oppose the EPAs and where does it derive from?
2. Can the EPAs be seen as dismissive and improperly tailored to the ACP context? What needs to be addressed and why?
3. What do the whose voices are never heard and for whom the matter of 'development' is most pertinent to (in my case, Kenyan tea workers) perceive as development?

1.3 Disposition

After having briefly touched upon prior research within the EU-ACP EPA and development field, I will continue by outlining the method I have used to accumulate and interpret the material used. Moving on to the theoretical, I will give an outline of my theoretical triad; International Trade Theory, CAS Capacity Development Theory and supplementary Axiology concept. This eclectic triad will convey how my research has been crafted with the intent of a greater benefit to both myself and the reader than a readily accessible elementary description of the EPAs and/or criticism of their potential socio-economic outcome. Rather, this theoretical triad will convey how my research can contribute to the way we (particularly students and scholars of Europe) see and value development by enhancing the way we see and value the empirically tools used to facilitate development. The discourse analysis, interviews and observations will be intertwined with analysis and trajectory that international trade theory, capacity development theory and a light supplement of axiology can offer.

In the first section of the analysis, I make clear the basis of the EPA controversy by introducing the heated debate held between the EU/WTO and the NGOs and representative voices of the ACP countries in order to delineate the ideological rift dividing the perception of the EPAs and their potential outcome.

The second part of the analysis builds upon this rift, its essence, and this lack of a homogenous perception of development by problematizing ‘development’ and the value base which grounds it. It continues the problematization by presenting the development theory which SEATINI and Eco News Africa³ approach the development agenda from.

The third section of the analysis augments and applies the insight gained from the first and second section and gives further voice and problematization of development. It does this by exposing the insights of my data and experience gained through the Kenyan tea plantations where I took conducted participant observation and conducted qualitative interviews.

Finally, the thesis draws to a close with conclusions based on my findings, further thoughts and suggestions for future research. I am aware that in my analysis I am giving voice to many actors through a wide theoretical and methodological lens in a limited amount of space. However, a macro perspective is necessary in this problematization of development in the EU-ACP case in order to give scope and thus ground it legitimately. Knowing this is a ‘big’ study, I will however aim to be as sharp and coherent as possible in order to convey my findings logically and yet dynamically in the space provided in this explorative thesis.

³ These two organizations which I met with and interviewed in Nairobi, Kenya will be properly introduced in chapter 4

1.4 Previous Research

Much investigation in the form of reporting, advocacy and research on the EPAs and the historical evolution between the EU and ACP has been carried out by academics, NGOs, governments, and private interest groups. It is certainly not an uncharted domain of study. The majority of investigation has been critical in nature, and admittedly my research has also been motivated from a critical and mechanism assessment standpoint. Though my research differs from the impact assessments and simultaneously contributes to them. Furthermore, development and value studies, while not ‘new’ are not as established as trade ideologies in the field of EU-ACP research and from my findings, are seldom intertwined with the EPA discussion on a fundamental level.

1.5 Method and Material

To reiterate, this study is macro in nature and based upon an inductive qualitative approach. The qualitative method is of particular relevance to my aim, in that it depicts the “authenticity...in their stories” (Silverman 2006: 20) The ‘stories’ involved in my study are those of ‘how’ and ‘why’, and as such, not quantitatively measurable “which offers little scope for the subjects to express meanings other than those contained in the researchers pre-structured categories” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2008: 244). The method used to gather the material has been three-fold, as any one of them on their own or even just a two-fold combination would not have been able to provide broad or detailed enough observations and documentation for the macro scope of my research. (Ibid: 241)

- Qualitative discourse analysis textual positivist interpretation⁴ of official political rhetoric and action plans of the actors involved in the EPA formulation and ratification process.
- Qualitative participant observation in Kenya during April 2009 for the purpose of building a shared authorship⁵
- Semi-structured qualitative personal interviews in order to enhance the discovery and building of a shared authorship of how Kenyan NGOs and workers in the Kenyan tea industry perceive development as well as their societal political institutions.

1.5.1 Interpretation of Documents

Before leaving for Kenya I made use of literature and articles applicable to my study in order to gain relevant background information and form a subconscious broad and varying theoretical composition in my mindset. That said, I did not consciously set out with a particular theory or set of theories in mind through which to filter my findings, rather, empirically observable realities guided my data collection. As pointed out by May; “Induction has a long history in the philosophy of science. It is based on the belief, as with empiricism, that we can proceed from a collection of facts concerning social life and then make links between these to arrive at our theories.” (May 2001: 32) I assessed policy papers from the EU, UN and NGOs, and in interpreting them, I have been aware that they are “representatives of practical requirements for which they were constructed” (May 2001:182) That is, all actors have their image and interests for survival and flourishing to attend to. Articulated statements must be seen as not only for what they are, but where they are coming from in their images and interests. Furthermore, I have also been aware that documents do not simply reflect empirically stated reality, they can also construct it as signifiers by means of which social power is expressed. (Laclau in Andersen 2003: 52)

⁴ Textual Positivism “is a narrow focus on statements which are described in as much detail as possible” (Alvesson & Sköldbberg 2008: 241)

⁵ Shared authorship is a method “in which the subject of an investigation talks in parallel with researcher/author”. (Ibid: 241)

1.5.2 Participant Observation

The participant observatory and interview portion of my data collection was carried out in Nairobi and Kagwe, Kenya in from April 6th until the 20th of 2009. Having spent two days in direct contact with Nairobi based NGOs Eco News Africa and SEATINI, eight days with a tea cultivating family in central Kenya and two weeks in total in Kenya. I did not have any particular ‘duties’ designated to me while there, though with the NGOs I was able to conduct interviews and sit on two meetings. On the tea plantation I carried out daily work with the farmers, as well as slept and ate in their home. Researchers using the participant observatory approach are gathering data by “being present, and participating in the activities of the subjects under investigation” (Sanchez-Jankowski, 2002: 145). The daily interaction and observations added to my understanding of how practical work by both Nairobi based NGOs and Kenya tea farmers are involved in. As pointed out by Becker, “The nearer we get to the conditions in which they actually attribute meaning to objects and events, the more accurate our descriptions of those meanings will be” (Becker 1998: 14) The observations provided me with a general frame and context which I could utilize to relate my other research to. Also, being personally present allows for the observation of informal, personal activities that might not be disclosed in interviews or literature. Interviews were then used to elaborate on the themes which participant observation presented me with.

1.5.3 Interviews

In order to get a diverse perspective on the quandry of development, I partially base my argumentation on data from semi-structured open-ended interviews gathered in the aforementioned Nairobi and Kagwe stay. I posed my questions as comfortably as possible in relaxed atmospheres where the interviewees day-to-day workload and/or lives are/were carried out and logged them by pen and paper. It is my belief that the pen and paper, as opposed to a recording device, made my interviewees feel more comfortable than they had otherwise and perceive me as less foreign and formally intimidating than they had otherwise. Open-ended technique was utilized in order to unveil the subject matter the interviewee would addressee him/herself. (Silverman 2006: 25) Later in my interviews, I used semi-structured tactics in order to provide

comparability. (May 2001: 123) From that point, my study of the perception of development in the Kenyan tea industry was mentally approached from a labor and human rights stand-point due to the guidance given me by the open-ended interviews. Guided from the findings of the open-ended interviews, focus subsequently became strongly characterized from a southern workers perspective, not from the commonly examined northern consumer and 'leader' perspective of trade and the consequential impact on development and human rights⁶. My journey to Kenya and in person interaction by both participant observation and interviews was crucial to my study in order to characterize the environment and intrinsic meaning of development to those it is to effect most. Otherwise, one runs the risk of simple transference, projecting ourselves from our own context into another without taking the contextual difference into account. Illustrating this necessity,

What if we don't find out directly what meanings people are actually giving to things... Will we, in a spasm of scientific ascetism, rigourously abstain from any discussion of motives and purposes and intents? Not likely. No, we will still talk about those meanings, but we will, by necessity born of ignorance, make them up, using the knowledge that comes out of our everyday experience. (Becker 1998 :14)

Furthermore,

We (researchers) are not those people and do not live in their circumstances. We are thus likely to take the easy way, attributing to people what we think we would feel in what we understand to be their situations. (Becker 1998 :14)

1.5.4 Choice of Data

The decision to carry out research in Kenya and within the Kenyan tea sector in Kagwe in particular was made for several reasons, as I started to touch on above. Though why I chose Kenya and Kagwe in particular requires elaboration as well. First and foremost, the ACP grouping is simply too large and too diverse to get an intimate or authentic connection to as a whole. I needed a foothold in it somewhere. Due to proximity, Africa was a more logical choice than any Caribbean or Pacific countries would have been. Also, Africa houses the highest concentration of LDCs per ACP

⁶ As we will see in the third part of the analysis, Kenyan tea workers associate development with labor and human rights.

area. Thus the issue of ‘development’ could be seen as most significant for African ACPs. Narrowing down my choice to one nation was made on the basis of language accessibility and export (to the EU) dependency.⁷ While Swahili and many tribal languages are spoken in Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya has a strong legacy of British imperialism which has largely impacted the sphere of social communication and English is widely spoken. Not speaking Swahili or any of the Kenyan tribal languages myself, being able to readily communicate in English was of great priority. Kenya and Kenyans are also in the unique position of having prior experience to (partial) trade liberalization in the name of development and can thus perhaps give a more balanced or nuanced perspective than a Sub-Saharan African nation which has not. The commodity of tea was purposely chosen for the fact that Kenya’s greatest export is tea.⁸ Living and working with the tea farmers/workers in the central province in the town of Kagwe came about through contacts within the SEATINI and Eco News Africa network whom were willing and able to host me in their home for eight days and nights without any charge or preconditions.

1.5.5 Limitations and Source Criticism/Validity

Due to time, and moreover, space hindrances, there is much of pertinence to this topic left unattended to in this body of research. The quandary of selective sampling and synecdoche is “that the part may not represent the whole as we would like to think it does, may not reproduce the miniature characteristics we are interested in, may not allow us to draw conclusions from what we do know that will also be true of what we haven’t inspected for ourselves.” (Becker 1998: 67)

A comprehensive outline of the EPAs mechanisms and their specifics, as well as a post-colonial cultural study and a presentation and examination of the current Kenyan government in its need for better governance would have been optimal in order to present a more encompassing portrait of the potential for the EPAs to act as a development tool. Sustainability, though arguably an intrinsic element in the current

⁷ Other candidate countries were Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda. South Africa was never an option due to the fact that it has its own bi-lateral agreement with the EU and as such, a socio-economic history which can not be classified as an ACP experience.

⁸ 28% of Kenyan export is tea. www.epckeny.org/downloadfile.asp?filename=

contextual definition of what can be defined as development, has been purposefully left aside for the most part. This was a difficult, though necessary and conscious decision made for the sole reason of research limitation. Sustainability has been an ever-present concept in my mind while working with this topic (I had originally intended to thread it throughout my work) though literally embedding sustainability, even ‘just’ social sustainability, into my research would have necessarily taken my writings into a discussion of planetary resources and environmental factors, which this bachelor thesis, macro though it is, simply can not fit in.

As mentioned, quotes, opinions and ascertations which have been primarily used to illustrate the two greatly divided sides of the EPA debate, have been compiled from official documents and statements of EU and ACP representatives as well as from NGO publications and web sites. I have kept in mind that backgrounds and aspirations of all organizations vary, that interests and goals (be they stipulated or not) of all sources are as vital as their words and actions.

In regards to critique of my interviews and empirical observation sources, one should keep in mind that due to Kenya’s history as a former British colony, there has been and endures a historically entrenched view of white people as rich and powerful. Furthermore, Kenya has a comparably traditional and conservative gender structure⁹. Thus, my being a white female guest researcher¹⁰ of another heritage could have impacted what was revealed to me and my subsequent findings. Though being a white female of another heritage on a research agenda may have helped open doors for me in quickly getting in contact with Kenyan NGOs and their network (which subsequently led to the placement on a rural tea plantation in central Kenya) some information or elements could have been left out do to a perceived culture or language barrier. To elaborate on potential research hurdles in the form of language, English was a second or even sometimes third language for all of those I interviewed. This may have impacted the study by not allowing them as much ‘freedom’ with their expression as they would have otherwise had in their native tongue. Knowledge of

⁹ This statement is made based on my empirical observation, though for elaboration see “*Burying Otieno: The Politics of Gender and Ethnicity in Kenya*”, by Patricia Stamp. 1991

¹⁰ I use the term ‘guest researcher’ in the meaning of a guest in the home and lives of the tea cultivating family I stayed with in Kenya as well as a guest in the country. It would be inaccurate to perceive my usage of the term ‘guest researcher’ in relation to a formal or institutional setting.

Kenyan governance and institutional strength and cohesion have not been carried out by way of direct working experience within governmental bodies, rather through ‘outsider’ observation and qualitative interviews. As for the choice in my length of stay in Kenya, two weeks time is admittedly not deep and broad enough to facilitate the most intimate research possible. The reasoning behind this length of time was mainly due to budget restraints, being that my travel and all costs were financed by myself. However, one does not necessarily have see my length of time spent in Kenya as a limitation in that it entailed:

Less time concentration on the collection and processing of data and more on interpretation and reflection – in relation not only to the object of study but also to the researchers themselves and their political, ideological, metatheoretical and linguistic context- appears to be a reasonable and fruitful path for qualitative research to follow. (Alvesson and Sköldbberg 2003: 241)

2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical background is three-fold and seeks to develop in a continuous dialogue with the empirical material presented in the analysis.

- First of all, it draws from International Trade Theory in order to give backbone to the EPAs and the hegemonic ideology of free and international trade, its proprietary and proliferation which they can be seen to represent.
- Secondly, Capacity Development Theory (the branch of CAS in particular) is applied as a tool for viewing the most vital organs in society and governance whose optimal health is necessary for any sort of ‘developmentally’ successful transplantation of the interim bilateral FTAs.
- Thirdly, the broad philosophical branch of axiology is used as a supplement to evaluate where and how the presented contestation of what constitutes as development stems from and to aid the facilitation of broadening the way it is perceived.

This particular theoretical combination will ground the basis on which the EPAs and free trade in general is built upon, that is, from an aspect where the EU acts globally

and normatively in trade and development. It shall also illustrate that copy-paste institutional and societal poverty solutions are inadequate in the simple scissors and glue method. Finally, it also means to contribute to a theoretical conception of seeing the EPAs as tools for development through a value based aesthetic in order to open up the scope of ‘development’.

2.1 International Trade Theory

The everyday economic role of the EU in the world system, and the role which most countries have direct experience with the EU as an actor is as gatekeeper to the Single Market, regulator of trade relations and opener of overseas markets under the Commissions Market Access Strategy¹¹. (Bretherton et al 2006) The method utilized to become this actor stems historically from Europe’s own (economic) integration, and this continues to provide the basis for the oldest and most powerful manifestation of the EU as a global actor. As Bretherton et al point out, “the evolution of the Common Commercial Policy can only be understood with reference to the trade regime” (Ibid:66) Initiated in 1947, the GATT has provided the basis for international trade theory with such important significance as the out-lawing of quotas, non-tariff barriers (Articles XI-XIV) and trade distorting subsidies (Article XIV). The EC was constructed in accordance to the terms of the institutional setting of the GATT regime, though the regime itself was molded to the requirements of one of its most powerful participants (Ibid:66). It was (and is) greatly this inter-subjective conditioning that has established the normatization¹² of international trade as a hegemonic ideal. International trade theory facilitated the primarily significant GATT Article XXIV, creating customs unions and free trade areas.¹³

¹¹ The foundation for this strategy is a large database recording the specific difficulties experienced by EU exporters in gaining access to third country markets. The data is then used by the commission and 133 Committee to devise market opening actions which may involve or resort to the WTO disputes procedure, consultations within bilateral trade agreements or, within the case of emerging markets, the setting of conditions for WTO membership. (Bretherton et al: 67)

¹² Here I characterize Normativity in the shaping of ‘norms’ sense of definition, not the altruistic characterization outlined by scholars such as Ian Manners.

¹³ Customs unions must comply with three conditions: that there will be no increase in trade barriers after integration, that tariffs and other trade barriers are eliminated on ‘substantially all’ goods within ‘a reasonable period of time’ and that fulfillment of these conditions is scrutinized by a working party.

This provides the legal justification for the EU itself ...EU practices across the whole range of its trade activities and policy instruments has been framed, not only by the legal 'disciples' but also by the common intersubjective understanding of the regime.
(Bretherton et al 2006: 68)

Specifically, the regime grounds ideology on what can be boiled down to a very straight-forward approach. It suggests that countries should pursue liberal trade policies and exchange goods and exchange goods and services on the basis of their comparative advantage. That is, international trade occurs because there are things that are produced in a particular country that individuals, businesses and governments abroad want to buy. The classic theory stipulates that trade provides people with a greater selection of goods and services to choose from, often at lower costs than at home. In order to become wealthier, countries want to use their resources as efficiently as possible. The central concept underlying international trade is opportunity cost. Producing (consuming) something comes at the cost of not producing (consuming) something else. An important economic theorem states that there are gains from trade associated with minimizing opportunity costs through the division of labor (specialization). It has two essential effects.

1. Bring about a reallocation of resources towards those activities in which the country has comparative advantage
2. Expand the consumption opportunities of countries

Within international trade theory, the measure of success is the notion of the annually increasing GNP and has become synonymous with development.¹⁴ (Hoekman et al 2001: 28)

¹⁴ The GNP is a quantitative measure of a nation's total economic activity, generally assessed yearly. It equals the gross domestic product plus income earned by domestic residents through foreign investments minus the income earned by foreign investors in the domestic market. Gross domestic product (GDP), often confused with GNP, consists of the total value of goods and services produced in an economy over a specified period. GNP is also equal to the sum of consumer spending, investment spending, government spending, and net exports. If the country runs a trade deficit, net exports are a negative number that reduces GNP; i.e. less economic activity is taking place in the domestic economy because some of it has shifted overseas. Thus trade deficits reduce a country's growth, while trade surpluses add to a country's growth. (Hoekman 2001)

2.2 CD & Capacity Adaptive Systems Theory

CAS is a recently developed theory of policy management which defines itself as being between planned interventions and emergent processes. It has evolved from and is closely associated with CD¹⁵, starting to be used and advocated by the Kenyan NSAs I met and spoke with in Nairobi. CD has, since the mid 90's, been the 'traditional' enhancement to institutional reform, particularly in regards to the millennium development goals and sustainable development more generally. In the more formal UN literature, CD has been elevated from strategy, a means of achieving something, to a way in which development occurs. Specifically, UN General Assembly Resolution (UN, A/RES/50/120 Art.22)¹⁶ refers to the "objective of capacity-building" as "an essential part of the operational activities of the UN" (Lusthaus 1999: 9) CAS has evolved out of CD for a lack of sufficient attention given to "fully understanding how capacity develops in differential organizational and societal contexts" (Land et al 2009: 1). It is a self-proclaimed 'holistic'¹⁷ theory which;

Questions the appropriateness of approaches to CD that are informed exclusively on technocratic and linear planning logic. Such a notion is premised on a notion of people, organizations, and systems as pieces of performance machinery whose capacity can be constructed and adjusted through a set of purposeful (and often externally financed and managed) interventions. This logic tends to underestimate the importance of politics, culture and historical context, and to rely on the application of "best practice" solutions across contexts. (Ibid: 2)

¹⁵ In the field of development the term *capacity development* emerged in the 1980s. CD quickly became "the central purpose of technical cooperation in the 1990s (UNDP 1996). CD is seen as complementary to other ideas that dominated development thinking (and still play an important role) over the past four decades. These concepts include *institution building, institutional development, human resource development, development management/administration* and *institutional strengthening*." (Lusthaus et al 1999)

¹⁶ A UN framework for Capacity building was formed in 2003, meetings are held and agendas set annually. <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/oa.htm>

¹⁷ See Land et al for further characterization of 'holistic'

Outlined below is the paradigm shift made to enrich CD with the concept of CAS

	Capacity Development Paradigm	CD Complex Adaptive Systems Paradigm
Nature of Development	Improvement in economic and social conditions	Societal transformation, including “building of capabilities
Conditions for effective development cooperation	Good policies formulated overseas	Good policies formulated endogenously in developing countries
Symmetric property of donor recipient relationship	Should be handled generally through a ‘spirit’ of partnership and mutual respect	Should be addressed as a problem for which concrete measures should be taken
Institutional capacity development	Human resource development (also combined with institutional development)	Should be developed as three cross linked layers of capacity: individual, organizational and societal
Acquisition of knowledge	Knowledge is transferable	Knowledge has to be acquired
Forms of most important knowledge	Development of knowledge in the North, and export of knowledge to the South	Local knowledge combined with knowledge acquired from other countries in the South and North

My own representative table based upon Fukuda-Parr’s, Sakiko et al. (2001)

The value of CAS lies in its ability to go beyond mechanisms in understanding how and why human systems unfold as they do. It recognizes that capacity emerges from multiple processes that are more complex and unpredictable than is often assumed. It is a way of mentally framing the empirical ‘tools’ of development in a way that takes into account the dynamics within systems. It takes the view that,

organizations and institutions –whether simple or complex- are more analogous to living organisms than they are to machines. In a process of constant change, this flux is only partially open to explicit human direction and, importantly, can not be predetermined ...or put on a time scale. (Ibid 2009: 2)

North (1993) argues that one of the shortfalls of economics is its failure to consider the role of time in the evolution of markets and economic systems. Those involved in cognitive and developmental psychology understand that time plays a crucial role in the evolution of learning (Lusthaus 1999:8). People learn certain things at specific stages of development and

not at others. Systems and organizations go through cycles. Time matters. Although policy literature acknowledges CD as a long-term process, Kenyan NGOs SEATINI and Eco News Africa highlight the value in the form of a CAS enhanced CD into the complex role that time plays in the evolution of individuals, organizations and systems. As North (1993:) states in his critique of economic theory:

...in all the areas of human endeavor the beliefs that individuals, groups, and societies hold which determine choices are consequences of learning through time, not just the span of an individual's life or of a generation of a society, but the learning embodied in individuals, groups and societies that is cumulative through time and passed on inter-generationally by culture or society (North in Arceneaux 2007: 49)

This 'time' element views change as a development in itself as a form of emergence.¹⁸ As such, it is not driven by purposeful intervention and can not be managed in a conventional sense and questions the way which external partners in policy set about influencing local change processes.

2.3 Axiology

Axiology is the general science of value inquiry¹⁹; as such it may not be entirely inappropriate to apply it as a theory, as it could be compared to using the science of knowledge, epistemology, as a theory. For this reason as well as time and space limitation, I present and use axiology as a supplementary concept, a postulation for the premises of problematizing development. This postulation is built from the premise of awareness of accelerating tension between the 'developed' world and the 'developing', evident in a multitude of areas, though in this particular case, the EPA development agenda.

¹⁸ I use 'Emergence' by the descriptive definitional term used to convey how big systems change and how capacity develops within them. (Land et al 2009)

¹⁹ More specified value sciences being aesthetics, ethics and even economics.

As axiologist Bahm points out,

When persons responsible for policy decisions face actual decisions, the value theories called on, implicitly or explicitly, reflect prevailing confusion and biased explanations. When disagreements occur and appeal is made to the excuse...efforts to seek the truth are abandoned...the result is determined by which biased opinion of value happens to be most prevalent (Bahm 1984: 8)

Axiology, as a science of inquiry into values, tries to understand the nature and kinds of values by “inquires into goodness which is a condition of inquiries into existence and knowledge (and the inquiries constituting all other sciences).” (Ibid: 4) It highlights that values are complex in their natures, and questions the assumption of such value often appearing or being treated as simple ‘feelings’. (Ibid: 7) Such feelings are difficult to describe and locate outside the practicality of ‘matter of taste’. Explanations that have developed, have contributed to culturally inherited misunderstandings and confusions that few can escape.

Though I have not elaborated exhaustively on this concept, this science, this brief value science introduction has sought to provide myself and the reader with the understanding that the distinction between empirical knowledge and value does not imply that what is distinguished is thereby separated. I do not seek to claim that axiology in itself can explain the predicament crisis of policy such as the EPAs, though political and economic theory alone can not either. Thus, part of the significance of axiology is to be found in its services to other sciences that provide information essential to understanding our predicaments. In this case, development.

2.4 Hypothesis

I have chosen to present my hypothesis at the end of my introduction and theoretical framework chapter and just before my analysis for the clear purpose of keeping maintaining true and coherent to my inductive methodological approach. Together, my aim in this study and my eclectic theoretical framework has led to my hypothesis; as the development component (in the EPAs) is *grounded* and *approached*, they can

not function as tools for development in that the notion of development is too elastic to allow for 'success' or 'failure'. In such, the notion of development becomes problematized. I argue that this is primarily due to the lack of a universally homogenous conception of what constitutes as development in developing countries, and furthermore, that within the context of the Kenyan institutional infrastructure the EPAs will have little chance for any economic growth spurred by the EPAs to permeate the nation itself in the form of development. This argument is further supported by Kenyan tea plantation owners and workers whom enhanced my 'south' and particularly Kenyan perspective on development.

My hypothesis does not seek to condemn an evermore interlinked global political economy and the notion of trade with developing countries. It does not make claim to an inherent 'good' or 'bad' in the free trade of goods, what is being problematized is the foundation from which the preconditions that are being attached trade are built upon, in the form of societal and institutional assumptions themselves. It is what countries such as Kenya are being told they have to do to change themselves - privatize and liberalize their services in a context vastly different from the one industrialized countries developed in. As such, any potential benefit of free trade induced economic growth, that is; development is worth study and problematizing.

3. The Discourse of The Process of EPA Negotiation

The EPA process has not been an easy or friendly one; words and deeds have often been at odds, and tension has flared up. (Meyn 2008: 42)

After six years of bargaining between the EU and six regional groupings of ACP countries, more or less comprehensive EPAs were signed between the EU and some of the ACP regions/nation states in November/December 2007. The European Commission (primarily the Directorate-General Trade) and ACP member state officials directed the undertaking, with EU member states and ACP governments controlling the process. Several European as well as non-European NGOs were also very engaged in the process, as well as lobbyists, advocates and critical observers.

When reviewing the discourses surrounding the process, two very contrasting images of the role and nature of the EU and its goals and negotiating behavior emerges. On one hand the EU is portrayed as an ultimately altruistic saint concerned primarily with the economic and social development of the ACP countries, or as an actor driven by self-interest, a hidden agenda and using confrontational tactics. The first image is mainly held by the commission officials while the second by NGOs and some ACP spokespersons. The debate lacked any assertion of nuanced behavior and thus hindered the possibility for a common ground from which to collaborate on. The importance of this fact will be briefly concluded and lead into the ideological cleft which I believe to impede a homogenous conception of development.

The existence and traits of the two competing and contrasting images of the EU found in the EPA debate process do not necessarily encompass the personification of any one concrete actor, but rather reflect the two established representations found in empirical material. Elgström makes extensive use of quotes from participants in the debate in order to illustrate the ambitions and goals ascribed to the EU and what interests are claimed to drive EU policies. A description follows of what is said to depict the EUs strategies and tactics.

3.1 The EU's altruistic rhetoric

No set of developing countries has ever received an offer and a basis for a trade agreement like that from any other source, at any time, anywhere in the world. (Peter Mandelson, EU External Trade Commissioner; 2008 in Elgström: 4)

The stated goals of the EU in the EPA process are to encourage a process of 'economic reform, regional integration²⁰ and progressive trade opening' that will lead to a new partnership which that can support ACP partners in seizing the benefits of progressive integration into the global economy. Overarching principles guiding DG Trade can be seen: a belief in the benefits of regional integration, stemming from the EU's own experience. According to Mandelson, "My overall philosophy is simple: I believe in progressive trade liberalization. I believe that the opening of markets can

²⁰ Notably, EPA regionalization overlaps many already existing region groupings in the ACP and in Africa in particular.

deliver growth and the subsequent reduction of poverty” (Elgström 2008: 4) The DG of EU Trade policy further stipulates that special trade preferences, that is non-reciprocal agreements that have allowed ACP countries to export to the EU without having to open their own markets to EU goods, is not right morally nor compatible with international rules (Mandelson et al in Ibid: 5). “There is absolutely no question of arm-twisting ACP governments into signing agreements they do not want to” (Ibid :5)

The defending of the EU position not only adamantly proclaim the advantages of the EUs approach, they also verbally disregard their critics, warning that NGOs “campaigning zeal” may lead them to “oppose innovation”. Stating that they “are not only wrong....they are playing poker with the livelihoods of those we are trying to help” (Mandelson et al 2005: 34)

3.2 The NGOs/ACP EPA Hostility

The most unequal trade negotiation in history began three years ago...EPAs...could unleash a development disaster...threatening jobs, industries, government revenues and public services in some of the poorest countries of the world. (Open letter to Mr. Mandelson from Civil Society Organizations-The Guardian 2005)

NGOs tend to regard the EU as pedaling a “self serving trade and investment liberalization agenda” (Oxfam 2008) behind its rhetoric of comradely partnership. The commission is seen as having the interests of “the commissions approach to global trade” at heart and not “the interests and needs of the ACP countries” and that this approach is “aggressive and mercantilist” (Terraviva 2007 in Elgström :5). Commission negotiators are just quite simply not interested in the ACPs development. (All Africa 2007) The EU “has lied from the beginning, there will be no development programs, there is only the European Development Fund and there is no new money there.” (All Africa. 2007) “Opening ACP markets to a flood of cheap European goods will do nothing but undermine the development process” (Celsias 2008)

3.3 Unraveling the nature of the debate

It is obvious that the two images depicted above rely upon and depart from two widely contrasting definitions of the situation at hand, perhaps most notably concerning worldviews and casual beliefs. On the one hand, regarding the EU as a benign helping hand, exists the belief of the overall good in a neo-liberal world economy and free trade. That is, the belief in international trade theory. Quite simply, liberalization of trade flows precurses economic growth, and economic growth leads to development. For developed and undeveloped countries alike, this vision is hailed as truth, though it is to some degree in certain instances accepted that weaker economies may fare well with some protection during a transition period. Though from this perspective, such protective measures should be kept to a minimum to ensure that the advantages of free trade competition are not put in peril.

On the other hand there are those who perceive the EU as a purely self-interested and neo-colonial actor whose great power can be much attributed to its history of ACP exploitation and weak, highly dependent developing states. This viewpoint interprets the effects of liberalization in a completely different way. According to them, the consequence of allowing EU firms to compete on the domestic markets of the ACP countries is that local firms will be driven out of business and that local farmers will be unable to compete with subsidized European products. Put concisely, there is an underlying profound skepticism towards the benefits of free trade for developing countries.

Although it seems unbelievable, my research produced very little, almost a complete lack, of nuance in the EPA discourse and negotiations. The consequence of such polarized vision may have damaging ramifications for the actors and those dependent on the actors outcomes by becoming rhetorically trapped and then path-dependent on this trap, and as so hindering a constructive dialogue and furthering more fundamentalist rhetoric and subsequent. Authenticity, and as such, value in articulation and action could then be called into question. Though clearly, most notable is the lack a common soluble definition of development.

4. Problematizing the ‘championing’ ideology

The previous section has sought to briefly illustrate the disparity between the two polarized ‘sides’ of the EPA formulation and ratification process. It has done so with the intent of concisely presenting the complexity behind the EU-ACP negotiations/relationship and development assistance, with foremost intention of introducing the crucial lack of a universally held definition of development. This section now seeks to problematize both the lack of a homogeneous conception of what constitutes as development, as well as the solubility of the EPAs in their pending implementation, currently as an interim agreement²¹ in the case of Kenya and many other ACP countries.

4.1 The Ambiguity of Development

Development is an elusive notion. In researching this paper I reviewed vast proportions of articles and books pertaining to development and emerged with a wide assortment of perspectives and not one homogenous definition, though I do not see a presentation of these definitions as necessary to this paper in that my paper focuses on the *assumed* notions behind development and not the articulated. The previous sections introduction to the cleft in a homogenous²¹ conception of what development means in the ACP context can be seen as the ideological rift in the pre-intellectual determination of value, by way of regarding such a development tool for what it is vs. what it means. As such, it can be useful to keep an axiological framework in mind when addressing the deeper construction of development. In this respect, the issue becomes ‘Whose development?’ There is no one ‘development’ universal and neutral as there is no one ‘good’ universal and neutral. There are many developments, all ideologically constructed. Some are privileged and dominant and others are even demeaned. In this way, development takes on an extremely elastic definition and incorporates a wide amount of ideological values. Any development advocate will be aligning him/herself with one development agenda against others. As one critical axiological scholar problematizes development;

²¹ Having signed the Interim agreement and still negotiating the details of the full EPA, "We are still negotiating and we shall achieve the goal. We want an agreement where everybody wins," Cyrus Njiru, Kenya's Trade Ministry Permanent Secretary. (The Standard, April 2009)

Development discourse is embedded in the ethnographic and destructive colonial (and post-colonial) discourses designed to perpetuate colonial hierarchies rather than to change them. It has defined Third World peoples as ‘other’, embodying all the negative characteristics (primitive, backward and so forth) supposedly no longer found in ‘modern’ western societies. This representation has provided the rationale for development experts’ socially constructed belief in modernization and the superiority of the values and institutions in the North. (Parpart in Singer 2002: 253)

The fact that ‘development’ is a social construct gives further weight to problematization of development. There are many different ‘developments’, and depending on one’s values, many variations in the quality of these developments. Development agendas can vary remarkably depending on the government or organization and even contest each other. Hence, the ambiguity of the term development lies within problems of incomparability and incommensurability related to diverse and complex values, which can be seen as the basis for economic and political appeals. “That our crisis problems are essentially value problems should be clear to everyone. But that values are misunderstood is not so clear.” (Bahm :8)

4.2 The Institutional & Societal Crux

This section presents a further problematization of development by bringing the discussion into the context of Kenya itself by presenting my empirical observations as well as interview findings. The purpose of this problematization structure is to highlight insufficient awareness of the real dimension and design of the societal and institutional challenges stemming from the EPAs, beyond (though not ignoring or glossing over) weak economies and unsteady infrastructures and highlighting indigenous capacity.

Before leaving for Kenya, I had what I certainly thought was a relatively solid conception of the Kenyan context of political corruption and the socio-political contextual gap between it and the North. I have traveled rather extensively in developing countries and prepared myself for my journey to Kenya by reading researching a bit of Kenyan history and current affairs, as such, I was certainly not ignorant to what awaited me. However, I had not anticipated just how very different

the political and social/societal structures would be. Institutional infrastructure was clearly lacking in transparency and efficiency beyond how I had envisioned it... as was later confirmed by the opinions of the NGO representatives and tea workers I interviewed. Political leaders were too engaged in a very public power battle²² for anything but their power battle to be reformed or given attention to by the media. Taking this into account, along with the antecedent knowledge of Kenya being not just a developing country, but its *own* developing country. As such, of utmost pertinence is the external environment Kenya faces which differs significantly from the circumstances in which development took place in the EUs Western Europe. As Williams points out, this certainly makes the link between externally created EU Trade and Development policy internally placed in the ACP problematic. He maps out the following disparities between the context of Western European development and that of currently developing countries;

- The coexistence of very rich and very poor countries in a globalized world. This presents political elites with opportunities to access unearned incomes (for example, natural resources rents, inter-governmental transfers) and invest these abroad or use them to build a repressive security apparatus with damaging implications for their need and willingness to engage with their own citizens.
- The ability in present times of the skilled and monied middle classes, who would otherwise bring increasing pressure to bear on their political leaders, to move themselves and their capital to more congenial environments, or buy services abroad.
- A country's exposure to the influences of globalization, in particular the role of direct foreign investors and transnational companies." Larger and more volatile capital flows mean that the rewards and punishments for good and bad policy performance are much stronger.

²² One year ago, a new Kenyan coalition government came into power in which the president and prime minister share power 50/50. For more information on current Kenyan state of affairs, cf. Kenyan news sources and independent political coverage.

- The potential of international aid to weaken domestic accountability, impose unsustainable demands on weak administrations and possibly reduce incentives for domestic revenue mobilization. This needs to be balanced against the potential of aid to support measures that strengthen state-society relations.

Taking these points into consideration and embedding them into practical knowledge and implementation while avoiding the potential pit-falls of over reliance on institution building is the base from which CAS launches itself and also the institutional and societal crux of development presented here. Functional institutions, be they formal or not, are indeed a crucial element of development perspectives, regardless of their value base. The heavy emphasis on quotes above aims to highlight just how important this research believes them to be. As North proclaimed in his 1994 Nobel Prize acceptance speech, “institutions are the formal and informal rules of the game” (Lusthaus 1999: 6) However, the ‘institutional building’ aspect of development design which starts from scratch to build institutions based on supposedly universal models taken from industrialized countries of the west should not be over-emphasized. One Eco News Africa representative demonstrated the importance of this by saying:

We have found that many of our technological and economic solutions taken from the West...with our prior experience with modernization and trade liberalization... have not adequately changed the conditions within which large numbers of Kenyans are living. We (in Kenya) have a problem learning in our own way how to create appropriate roles for development and how to organize and manage these systems so that we can identify priority problems, formulate policies and come up with a way to implement these policies in a good way. (Peter N. Aoga, Eco News Africa)

This quote reveals a number of important factors. It presents a formal observation of the contextual gap revealed in the North created technological/economical instrument transplantation as well as revealing the underlying value assumption and ascertainment embedded in the words ‘a good way’. Here, we can see a direct struggle with both the theory and approach to development. It is difficult determine exactly where institutional change and capacity development begins.

By looking in another direction than the normative ideology of the growth benefits of the liberalization of markets advocated by international free trade theory, and in light of their pending implementation, both SEATINI and Eco News Africa are working with national indicative programs²³ to include support for ongoing democratization processes and governance reforms in order to establish the capacity aspect of development. It is this element that aims to help Kenyan people and institutions realize their own objectives of development. Reiterating the need for institutional and societal capacities tailored to the needs of Kenya, Meyn observes that;

Lack of capacity has also hampered the effective consultation, involvement and participation in the EPA process of ACP civil society, private sector and parliamentarians. As a result, the EPA process has generally not been effectively embedded in national policy processes in the ACP and in extreme cases it has generated public hostility towards the EPAs. (Meyn 2008:14)

This is further cemented and expanded upon by one SEATINI employee;

Even though the EPAs, unjust in our eyes, have been signed, the road map to their full implementation is still to be concluded. We believe that we can still make them better by playing a part in their design and implementation. For this we are using and advocating CAS to our government. (Yvonne Lumumba, SEATINI)

The experience of copy-paste North style institutional reform as an indispensable precondition for the ‘success’ of development (Borrman et al 2007: 2) has left an impression on those I met with in the Nairobi based NGOs. For them, this approach ignores existing capacities in developing countries, and tries to replace them with knowledge and systems produced elsewhere. Development in this case is not transformation, but rather replacement or displacement. CAP then, is utilized as a response to the structural and functional disconnection between informal, indigenous institutions and formal institutions mostly transplanted from outside. Though despite the growing recognition of indigenous capacity and institutions, subsequent emphasis on partnership²⁴ still reflects a norm and value export, as seen in many bank, UN and

²³ See the EU partnership instrument for political dialogue.

²⁴ ‘Partnership’ is an explicitly defined emphasis of the EPAs.

EU documents by terminology used. Specifically, the word ‘recipient country’ can be seen as concrete discourse evidence of the asymmetric EU-ACP relationship, even in specifically articulated policy areas of partnership. (Arceneaux 2007: 14) This element of partnership is further supplemented by the civil society enhancing principle of NSA participation in political dialogue process between the ACP and EU, clearly enshrined in Article 4 of the Cotonou Agreement²⁵ (on NSAs) and Article 8 (on political dialogue). However, the modalities of participation are not spelled out in any detail. It seems to be practice which clarifies the terms of engagement. For SEATINI and Eco News Africa, practice is taken up by way of the CAS approach.

CAS and capacity building are consistently linked to development literature, not only those of SEATINI and Eco News Africa, but also that of the UN in the form of participatory process, which emphasizes the ‘means’ to achieve development as much as the ‘end’.

We believe that development should be people-centered. Non-higherarchical. We need means that are ours. Unless it (capacity development) is made participatory, we, Kenya’s civil society, can not be empowered. We need to feel some ownership in the process. Otherwise there will be no development. Impositions of foreign models just don’t work. We are not the West. And it is a pity, the lack of clearness about development and, institutional reform and capacity building makes the word ‘development’ more of a slogan than a concept with meaning sometimes. Even here in Africa. (Beatrice Aluoch: Eco News Africa)

As this remark demonstrates, linkages between institutions, capacity development, participation and empowerment are blurry. There are undoubtedly numerous definitions to be taken into account. Though one key consideration emerges and further problematizes development, the notion of empowerment in itself implies a particular vision of development. We now have quite a complex macro picture of the EUs articulation and action in the EPAs and development, a critical assessment established by many NGOs and those opposed to the EPAs, a value problematization of developments value roots, and finally, an institutional and societal dimension of

²⁵ See <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/FindByProcnum.do?lang=en&procnum=AVC/2005/0071> for the agreement

the problematization. However, a crucial element is missing.

5. How is Development Perceived by Kagwe Tea Workers?

This section seeks to augment the rift illustrated in section three and problematized in section four by contributing the perception of development and the development process in the Kagwe tea industry. It does so by giving voice to a group who have never had the chance make themselves heard in regards to their perception of and experience with development.

5.1 The Three C's of Development

One of the best known jargon words in the EU development cooperation is the concept of the three 'C's'²⁶. It refers to the EU commitment to promote coordination, complementarity and coherence in its development action. Though in relation to the Kagwean tea workers I interviewed, the three 'C's' would probably refer more closely to complexity, confusion and chaos.

5.1.1 Complexity

Many of the Kagwe tea industry workers expressed the complexity of dealing with the outside forces that formulate and implement the policies that directly impact their ability to make a living²⁷. As one worker put it:

even if I we knew about what was going on in political decisions, we can't do anything about it. You're here, you see how it is. We have one radio to share at night and they don't tell us about decisions that affect us farmers. We hear about the fight for power, the president and the prime minister. We know it's not working. But we don't know about other things political, nothing about tea. And if we did, what could we do? The people don't get to decide. There's a lot of corruption. There was an NGO working in the next village, but we found out they were conartists. And we couldn't go there, we have to work. We have to eat. (Peter Mbugja Njuguna, Kagwe resident and worker)

²⁶ See the Treaty on European Union (Maastricht 1992)

²⁷ "Making a living" were the words several workers used to describe development, sometimes elaborating that better pay and working conditions (for the tea factory workers) were also development.

We don't always know who we can trust, in the village we do, but not strangers. Not all NGOs are real you know. Everyone is trying to survive and some people pretend to be something they are not for money or support, you never know, they can trick you. (Merciline Njuguna, Kagwe resident and worker)

As these quotes demonstrate, the Kagwe context has seen an artificial element of civil society, or at the very least, a perceived one. Though even if it were merely perceived, the perception becomes a form of reality if it impacts the feeling of trust or reliance one can have in NSAs and using them for knowledge or to campaign in order to make their voice heard. The lines seem to be blurred between state and civil society, neither are to be trusted and they are both impossible to reach from the seclusion that the information gap and lack of time and transportation resources one has a worker or farmer on a tea plantation. This seems to complicate not only the issue of development itself, but the societal drivers for change²⁸ and the limits of civil society in facilitating change.

Development? Development is a change, something different, something better. To be able to live better. But we don't have development, nothing gets better, it stays the same. Well, things change but for us it is the same. We earn as much as we did five years ago and things are more expensive now.... The drought makes it harder too. (Peter Mbugja Njuguna, Kagwe resident and worker)

In your country you pay a lot for coffee and tea, the price keeps going up, for us it's always the same 40ks²⁹ per kilo tea we pick and bring to the buying center at lunchtime, 20 is for the farmer, 20 for the picker, so development would be a better wage, if you pay so much and we earn so little, development must be somewhere in the middle. (William Kemboi, Kagwe resident and worker)

These definitions of development, though seemingly simple, complicate the notion of development. In light of rising prices, greater scarcity due to drought, one would think that the tea commodity would become more precious, and this that this would be reflected in a tea farmers/workers wage and as such, contribute to the farmers sense

²⁸ Empirical observations as well as interviews seem to suggest that 'change' is the most fundamental aspect of development for the tea workers/farmers.

²⁹ As of May 30 2009 40KS=4 SEK

off 'well-being'. This has inherently led to a state of confusion among workers about what is happening with their tea and who is benefiting.

5.1.2 Confusion

There is no shortage of confusion as to what happens with the tea after it has been processed at the local factory, just five kilometers from the local buying station and four kilometers from the plantation I was stationed at.

I don't know what happens to the tea after the factory, it is processed and put in boxes there, and then it's taken away. I have friends who work there and no one knows, but I think it gets exported everywhere. (Merciline Njuguna, Kagwe resident and worker)

I don't think our government is interested in helping us develop, they are so greedy. They make a lot of promises before the election and then do nothing. Or maybe they do, but only for their own tribe. All of the subsidies go to their own tribes. I think someone else would have to help us if we will ever develop....The EU tries to help? I didn't know that. I think it is our town official who tries to help, but you know, he is representing a small town and no one listens to him so I don't know what he can do. Sometimes people want to come and buy land in the town, a lot of land, but for us the land is everything, we don't want to sell. Sometimes big companies come to the region and pay a lot but then they make a big profit somehow. We don't know how. (Francis Njuguna, Kagwe resident and worker)

The end of the single actor approach to development the world over means that the development stage is now occupied by a large number of actors: central governments, locally elected governments, civil society in all forms, the private sector, and varying social and economic actors. Not surprisingly, there is confusion about 'who does what' and where the input/output is coming from, compounded by tribal/territorial disputes and the afore mentioned masquerading for funding. It is a major challenge for EU-ACP cooperation to properly manage this type of multi-actor trade for development partnership and moreover, an even greater issue of lack of information and channels being connected to the people whom it affects most.

5.1.3 Chaos

The last 'C' reflects the prior two 'C's in combination with the potential conflicts linked to the end of the single actor approach as well as CAS participatory development approaches. There is much (dormant) conflict (potential) within Kenyan civil society. These tensions often surface when dialogue or funding opportunities arise in many areas, though specifically subsidies and 'development assistance'

Here in central Kenya, we live well compared to other tribes in other regions. Because you know, the president is also from Nyeri, (Kenya's central province) he is also Kikuyu (the central provincial tribe). A lot of Kenyans can be hateful against us for that. They think we get special treatment. It can really cause conflict sometimes. But I do pity the easterners, they are very, very poor and don't get help and have less chance to be listened to. (David Odongo. Kagwe resident and worker)

At the end of the day, the workers clearly feel that there is a lack of transparency and absence of dialogues. Here we can see the conflict behind worker participation in the development process being linked to fundamental processes such as the exercise of power, the use of resources, or the promotion of 'good governance' in poor and fragile political environments.

The three 'C's' of development, no matter which way you see them, are very complex, particularly when linked to trade negotiations. Sociologically and technically demanding area, taking place at different levels and involving a wide range of institutions and actors with different interests and embedded conflict or resentment, spread over a long period of time. This makes it difficult for civil society organizations (including trade unions, farmers organizations the informal sector, etc) to participate meaningfully, as they often tend to suffer from inadequate information flows and lack the human and financial resources required to produce and defend credible alternative proposals.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has sought to delve into a macro problematization of the EPAs and a deeper problematization of the development which they are aimed to facilitate,

illustrating 'development' for the elastic and value based term it is. I have done so with the purpose of contributing to an encouragement of a wider conception of the term 'development' than the standard growth=development and Northern norm transplant ideology which hegemonically normative international trade theories advocate. By outlining the very divided debate on the EPAs, I have demonstrated the lack of a shared vision of development, that is, the ideological rift between the polarized views of the EUs intertwined trade and development policy. This rift was then problematized by assessing it as a value based social construction . My participant observation and interviews with Kenyan NGOs working within policy advocacy and capacity development has provided a more indigenous way of looking at development which takes into account the need for trade and cooperation suited to the context Kenya. It did so by pronouncing the current global environment in which there exists a great divide between 'developed' and 'developing' nations and the context within their development takes/took place within, as well as outlining the approach used to treat 'development' not only as a goal, but a sensitive process. By finally analyzing the perception of development by those the issue of development is most pertinent to, the workers whose voices are typically overlooked by EU decision makers, academics, and even NSAs, I gave weight to the scope of seeing development through yet another perspective.

This brief study of the elusive nature of this elusive term 'development' and the EUs role in development, has distinguished many interrelated and overlapping factors contributing to its complexity. It advocates development strategies and the way we think of them to be wider in scope. To be more aware of the contextual and indigenous, and in turn, their own formal and informal institutional realities and the time scales required for 'development'. Development goals are often illusive, its process is not standardized, and the concept itself seems to change over time.

It seems as though much of the dissonance between what constitutes as development, what the 'problem' is, why it exists, and what the 'solution' is, is the result of a clash between theoretical models and the informal concepts of how things get done in a particular context. Thus, it is difficult seeing the EPAs functioning as a tool for a form of development that would suit the values, norms, and voices involved in conceptualizing development. Tailor made, rather than one-size-fits all means and

processes will need to be designed. Though even this design can not harness the ambiguity of development, however, it can contribute to a greater understanding and subtle influence. Development, if definable at all from the results of this study, should be seen as an emergent process, a means, not a state or end.

7. Suggestions for Further Research

First and foremost, taking the basis of this study more deeply into each aspect presented, in order to give a micro to the macro perspective, would be optimal. Also, during the course of this study and particularly my time in Kenya, I became increasingly aware of the nuances of the EU-WTO-ACP-Kenya relationship. Throughout my interest in the topic, I have generally kept my research and thought formulation on EU and WTO action and its incentives, though certainly the ACP and Kenyan governmental dimension, as well as its cultural legacy is fundamentally crucial aspect of the success of any trade and/or development agreement, be it inherently benign, hostile or something in between. One idea for further research would be to develop the scope of the political incentives for the varying development ideologies and investigate the relationship between the holders of political and economic power in Kenya (or any ACP state), and in turn, the collective preference factors influencing those incentives. This has come to strike me a vital element of any development strategy and must also be taken into account. Though in sum, more interdisciplinary and inter-scientific research on the whole in regards to ‘political’ studies is my greatest appeal to further research.

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