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Politics of the European Union

Final Paper Prospectus

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The European Union has succeeded in creating a political and economic entity that crosses borders and unites the twenty-seven member nations in Europe. Though it is not free of problems and issues such as sovereignty, external and internal efficacy, as well as international potency, the EU is an unprecedented sign of hope to the international community that countries are able to join together and form a peaceful and comprehensive institution if their economic and political interests coincide.

Historians and political scientists today constantly question and attempt to answer if (and if so, then why) the unification in Europe is a success. My question in response to theirs is: why is this unified European political and economic institution (polity) seemingly impossible in the Latin American and the Middle Eastern regions?

All three of the regions have a long and crushing history of violence; there have been civil wars, border disputes, world wars, military coups and countless other internal problems for all of the regions. Many of the nations in the respective regions have important commonalities, such as religion, language (not dialect), political systems, and economic systems. Economically, a system like the EU’s would benefit many of the developing nations in Latin America and the Middle East. Also, from an international viewpoint, a conjoined and peaceful political institution would give both of the regions in question more international recognition and power; this is something for which they both strive. The idea of unification is not a new one to the nations in both the Middle East and Latin America, but the possibility of it happening is almost unimaginable to the international community.

Essentially, most political scientists agree that the answer to my question is largely affected by the lack of democratic institutions in the regions. This poses another question that is crucial to answer in order to answer my question: why is democracy difficult to achieve in these regions and why was it able to flourish in Europe? There are many more subtle and highly important reasons attributing to the failure of unification; some of these reasons incidentally are explanations for the absence of democracy as well. The goal of my final paper is to provide a comprehensive compare and contrast analysis of the European Union in Europe in relation to Latin America and the Middle East. I will examine the political, economic, religious, and cultural/societal aspects, as well as the influence the United States has had in each region in order to attempt to explain and give an answer to my question.

Creating the EU as it is today was a difficult task, and a lot of the international community was skeptical and believed that the EU would fail. This is not to imply that the EU has finished developing; the continuing development of the EU still takes a lot of negotiation and causes a lot of conflict. Nonetheless, the member states of the European Union do work together and still maintain many aspects of their sovereignty. For the purpose of my essay I must take into account the fact that Europe is a region that has been historically volatile, was completely decimated by two world wars, has internal religious issues, and has interstate rivalries. It was also a region that once consisted of many different economic and political systems. These issues are central to my topic and I will need to carefully examine the conception of the EU to answer my question.

The first step to understanding why democracy and cross-border institutionalism does not work in Latin America is to define what Latin America is. This itself is an intellectual debate that many argue over, but for the sake of this essay Latin America will be defined as the nations below the United States and in the western hemisphere that were colonized by the French, Portuguese, and (most likely) the Spanish. From the beginning of the independence from European colonizers, revolutionary leaders wanted unity among Latin American countries but were unfortunately unsuccessful. More recently, Che Guevara, an incredibly powerful figure in Latin America and around the world, was an advocate for Latin American unity. However, the concept of a polity is far different from implementation in Latin America because of regional and intrastate problems that exist there.

The Middle East consists of countries in Asia, Europe, and Africa. Instead of basing the definition of the region solely on geographic boundaries, it will be far easier to name the individual countries. The countries that are considered part of the Middle East are: Israel, Jordan, Turkey, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and Cyprus, and Egypt. The countries that are considered part of the Greater Middle East are: Morocco, Algeria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Mauritania, Western Sahara, Libya, Tunisia, Somalia, Sudan, Eritrea, and Djibouti. Unification has also been an idea in the minds of leaders in the Middle East. Pan-Arabism was a movement for the unification of Arab nations however, the few attempts at any sort of unification failed. In the Middle East religion, the oil-driven economy and the influence of the west are incredibly important to examine and will definitely be a central focus in this part of my essay. Rentier states... economy... lack of democracy, theology... colonialism... influence of the United States... role of NATO

The importance in answering the question I posed is incredibly relevant to securing international peace. Both these regions are incredibly volatile now and securing peace would be an extraordinary feat. Being able to explain why polities cannot and do not function in Latin America and the Middle East could provide solutions that allow those peaceful institutions to form.

Because there are so many different aspects to my topic that I must include in my paper, I have far more than four or five sources. However, I can give brief explanations of four sources that I have used the most.

1. **War, Rivalry, and State Building in Latin America”** Cameron G. Thies; *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 49, No. 3 (Jul., 2005), pp. 451-465; Midwest Political Science Association <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3647725>

This article gives an analysis of interstate and intrastate conflict within Latin America and how these conflicts affect the governments in the region. It is a comprehensive analysis that really helps to understand how conflict in Latin America is different than conflict in other regions of the world and why it is different. This article is incredibly relevant to my topic because it deals a lot with the politics of Latin America and helps to explain why democracy is difficult to develop. It also helps in understanding how the United States influence affects Latin America, which is important to know when answering my question.

1. **“The Diffusion of Democracy, 1946-1994”** John O'Loughlin, Michael D. Ward, Corey L. Lofdahl, Jordin S. Cohen, David S. Brown, David Reilly, Kristian S. Gleditsch and Michael Shin; *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (Dec., 1998), pp. 545-574; Taylor & Francis, Ltd. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2564092>

This article examines the reach and influence of democracy as it spreads to developing nations. The reason I chose this article is because it gives a good overview about the topic and it takes into account regional and global trends. It specifically targets how democracy is affected by regional differences. This is obvious helpful to my essay because it gives a lot of reasons other than politics that help to explain why democracy does not work. It also takes into account that democracy does not have the same meaning to all regions of the world. The article gives examples from both Latin America and the Middle East.

1. **“The European Union and Democracy in Latin America”** Richard Youngs; *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (Autumn, 2002), pp. 111-139; Distributed by Blackwell Publishing <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3177049>

This article is about the influence of the EU in Latin America and how they are trying to promote democracy there. It gives an analysis of both U.S. and EU in Latin America and how they have affected the region. This article directly mentions differences between the EU and Latin America so it was incredibly useful. It also talks about why EU policy in spreading democracy in Latin America is ineffective at times and why it is ineffective. I can use this information when writing the portion of my essay that deals with United States and European intervention in Latin America.

1. **“The Clash of Civilizations?”** Samuel P. Huntington; *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No. 3 (Summer, 1993), pp. 22-49; Council on Foreign Relations <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20045621>

This was an incredibly interesting article that discussed how in the future countries with similar characteristics such tradition, language, religion, and history will eventually join together and that there will be a battle between the groups that are dissimilar. It is an interesting take on peace and working together that specifically mentions the Middle East. Not only was this article interesting but it was also very useful for the core idea behind my question. When understanding why democracy does not work in the Middle East it is very relevant and helpful to read Huntington.