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'Normative Power Europe' and its External Relations  
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Reconsidering the European Union's Power Projection  
Endeavour and (Non-)Identity in the Light of  
Cosmopolitanism

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## Abbreviations

- ASEAN** (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)  
**AU** (African Union)  
**CEE** (Central and Eastern Europe)  
**CPE** ('Civilian Power Europe' concept)  
**EaP** (Eastern Partnership initiative)  
**ECSC** (European Coal and Steel Community)  
**EEAS** (European Union External Action Service)  
**ENP** (European Neighbourhood Policy)  
**EU** (European Union)  
**EUROMED** (Euro-Mediterranean Partnership)  
**ICC** (International Criminal Court)  
**IR** (International Relations theory)  
**MERCOSUR** (Southern Common Market)  
**NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organization)  
**NPE** ('Normative Power Europe' concept)  
**OSCE** (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe)  
**UN** (United Nations)  
**TEC** (Treaty of Rome)  
**TEU** (Treaty on European Union)  
**TFEU** (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union)  
**WTO** (World Trade Organization)

## Introduction

In 2012, the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to the European Union “for over six decades contributed to the advancement of peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in Europe”<sup>1</sup>, as explained in the statement of the Norwegian Nobel Committee. In their comment, the Committee highlighted that Europe, a continent once torn apart by wars, has found its way to peace and cooperation through the European integration process.<sup>2</sup>

The progress that started in Western Europe shortly after World War II, goes the argument, has attracted more and more states to join it in the following decades, thus contributing notably to changing the political reality within, between and even beyond its participants: “The Nobel Committee also believes that the question of EU membership is bolstering the reconciliation process after the wars in the Balkan States, and that the desire for EU membership has also promoted democracy and human rights in Turkey.”<sup>3</sup>

The statement of the Committee highlights a very important attribute of the EU, that is, its ability to exercise normative influence in international politics and through that, contribute to the preservation of sustainable peace. As some concepts in International Relations (IR) theory that build on the assumptions of social constructivism have pointed out, the capability to change norms practiced in third parties, and by large those setting the standards for international politics, is a great source of influence.

When discussing an actor’s influence in international politics two questions need to be addressed inevitably, namely the issue of identity, i.e. what constitutes the actor itself, and that of power, i.e. what constitutes the actor’s ability to exercise influence. While these

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<sup>1</sup> “Nobelprize.org – The Official Website of the Nobel Prize”, accessed 08 January, 2015, [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2012/eu-facts.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2012/eu-facts.html).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

questions are fair to say to be tricky even in the case of states, they give way to even more uncertainties when asked in relation to the EU due to its novelty and unique character.

Most attempts, therefore, try to capture the EU as some sort of a state-like actor that, in order to be influential and relevant, should aim at coherence in its identity as well as actions – e.g. form a strongly integrated political community –, and enter into relationships with the ‘outside’ world in the same way sovereign states do. Nevertheless, the EU in its current form only moderately resembles states for offering no coherent identity that would be recognised by a considerable amount of its citizens, no centralised power structure and no sufficient power projection capabilities based on traditional tools such as military or economic means due to the lack of capabilities or will.

Therefore, many advocates of the ‘European project’ have diverted their attention to what has most widely been called the EU’s ‘normative power’ to solve – in theory – the problems related to the EU’s identity, as well as power(-projection), and simultaneously escape the dilemma of how much like a state it is. The normative turn in describing the EU’s ontological foundations and theorising its presence in international politics has lately culminated in the discourse around the so called ‘Normative Power Europe’ (NPE) concept which was coined by Ian Manners, professor of European politics.

As one of its basic assumptions, the NPE theory lists three features that form the EU’s ‘normative difference’, and as such, constitute its “distinctive international identity”. These are its ‘historical evolution’, ‘hybrid polity’, and ‘constitutional configuration’, the last of which is based on a set of norms including peace, liberty, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, etc.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the EU’s ‘normative difference’, and most of all its constitutive norms, are seen to serve as the main sources of the EU’s external power, for

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<sup>4</sup> Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Volume 40, Issue 2 (2002): 252.

their diffusion both unintentionally – by setting an example –, and intentionally – as part of the EU’s foreign policy strategy – ensure the EU’s relevance and influence in international politics.

Following from this argument – namely, that the EU is constructed on a normative basis –, it is predisposed to act in a normative way, for which reason the NPE concept suggests that the “most important factor shaping [the EU’s] international role is not what it does or what it says, but what it is”<sup>5</sup>. In this view, the EU represents a unique phenomenon in the ontological sense: it is a one-of-a-kind entity in international politics that has different characteristics and acts differently to states and other recognised actors. And its power lies exactly in this uniqueness, that is, in its “ability to define what passes for ‘normal’ in world politics”<sup>6</sup> – which is bound by state centrality –<sup>7</sup> solely by its existence.

From a theoretical perspective, the specific discursive representation of the EU as a normative power in IR theory requires a refocus from the ‘traditional’ (neo-)realist understanding of international politics being characterised by either the human nature or the inherent characteristics of the international system – that is maintained by states as the main (or only) power holders – i.e. actors –, and through military as well as economic means as the main (or only) dimensions of power. Accepting the concept of normative power requires the recognition of the constructivist argument that most (or all) phenomena of international politics are socially constructed and therefore most (or all) of its aspects can be transformed by human practice, that is, by changing the underlying norms.

While the NPE theory has drawn criticism from various standpoints, the two, probably most striking critical claims have their roots in very different ends of the theoretical spectrum, namely in realism, as well as in poststructuralism and postcolonialism. Focusing

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 236

<sup>7</sup> Richard G. Whitman, “The Neo-Normative Turn in Theorising the EU’s International Presence”, *Cooperation and Conflict* Volume 48, Issue 2 (2013): 176.

on completely different aspects, both sets of criticism can be interpreted to be questioning whether the representation of the EU as a normative power in the NPE theory does in fact grasp the EU's (supposed) ontological uniqueness as intended.

According to the first such argument, it is not completely clear how 'normative' is to be distinguished from 'non-normative' in either theory or practice. In practical terms, normative and self-interested actions inform and complement each other at all times,<sup>8</sup> or worse, the former might only be used to support or justify the latter.<sup>9</sup> From this it follows that every state is a normative power too, and the only question is to what degree.<sup>10</sup>

Looking at the issue at hand from a purely theoretical point of view and building on poststructuralist and postcolonialist theories, the second argument notes that the discursive construction of the EU through its (assumed) constitutive normative feature gives it a particular identity by turning third parties into 'others' and presenting the EU as a positive power in international politics.<sup>11</sup> It is not hard to see how this can lead to both the accusation of Eurocentrism – that is the belief in the pre-eminence of the 'European culture' with an imperialistic connotation –, and again the assumption that the EU is not so unique for historical empires and contemporary global powers have followed a very similar track in their identity-construction endeavours.

Advocates of the NPE theory agree that these criticisms shed light on the existing danger that, should the EU strive for a single identity, or its militarisation go beyond a certain extent, it would inevitably part with its post-Westphalian character and thus lose its main source of power, that is, its norm-changing uniqueness, i.e. 'what it is'. They argue,

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Youngs, "Normative Dynamics and Strategic Interests in the EU's External Identity", *Journal of Common Market Studies* Volume 42, Number 2 (2004): 431.

<sup>9</sup> Adrian Hyde-Price, "Normative Power Europe: A Realist Critique", *Journal of European Public Policy* Volume 13, Issue 2 (2006): 227.

<sup>10</sup> Thomas Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others: Reconsidering 'Normative Power Europe'", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Volume 33, Number 3 (2005): 620.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 613.



however, that if the EU remains committed to its set of norms both internally and externally, that is, its interactions towards the inside and outside remain coherently bound by its norms, and its militarisation only occurs to the extent serving its normative basis,<sup>12</sup> it can keep its unique character in full.

As the main argument against the accusations of Eurocentrism and ‘othering’ being built in in the current NPE theory that might thus endorse the EU’s pursuit of (imperialistic) self-interests by normative means – including its affiliation with neo-colonial practice in its actions –, the NPE concept highlights that the norms constituting the EU itself, and through that, its source of power are ‘universal’ for being “acknowledged within the United Nations system to be universally applicable”<sup>13</sup>.

The ‘universality’ of these norms, follows the argument, grants them, and thus the EU itself as well as its actions bound by them, a cosmopolitan character that, combined with a high degree of reflexivity in the EU’s self-representation and external relationships,<sup>14</sup> provides for an “open-ended process of engagement, debate and understanding”<sup>15</sup>, and clears the way to “transcending the ‘normality’ of world politics towards world society”<sup>16</sup>. Thus, the EU can, through its normative power, “normalize a more just, cosmopolitical world”<sup>17</sup>.

While the recent paper supports NPE theorists’ intention to characterise the EU as a cosmopolitan power that has the potential to exercise normative influence in world politics with the aim to pave the way for sustainable peace, it argues that the current discursive representation of the EU as a normative power – i.e. ‘the EU as NPE’ – does not serve this

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<sup>12</sup> Ian Manners, “Normative Power Europe Reconsidered: Beyond the Crossroads”, *Journal of European Public Policy* Number 13 (2006): 194.

<sup>13</sup> Ian Manners, “The Normative Ethics of the European Union”, *International Affairs* Volume 81, Issue 1 (2008): 46.

<sup>14</sup> Ian Manners and Thomas Diez, “Reflecting on ‘Normative Power Europe’”, in *Power in World Politics*, ed. Felix Berenskoetter et al. (New York: Routledge, 2008), 185.

<sup>15</sup> Ian Manners, “Assessing the Decennial, Reassessing the Global: Understanding European Union Normative Power in Global Politics”, *Cooperation and Conflict* Volume 48, Issue 2 (2013): 318.

<sup>16</sup> Manners and Diez, “Reflecting on ‘Normative Power Europe’”, 179.

<sup>17</sup> Manners, “The Normative Ethics of the European Union”, 47.

goal for it builds vastly on the misconception of ‘universality’ with regard to the promoted norms.

As it will be discussed through the lenses of political theology, postcolonial studies and poststructuralism, the norms argued for in the NPE theory and highlighted throughout the EU’s constitutive documents are based on secularized Judeo-Christian principles. Therefore, these norms cannot be universally accepted in their current form, and by building on them, the NPE concept does not avoid constructing a particular, anti-cosmopolitan identity for the EU after all.

Furthermore, on the one hand, the current NPE concept, as well as the EU’s current actions in practice build on an inflexible, pre-given set of norms,<sup>18</sup> for which reason self-reflexivity and a truly open discussion with the outside world remain impossible. On the other hand, both refer to the United Nations (UN), an organisation predicated on the community of ‘nation states’ – that are, as it will be discussed, ‘European’ constructions –, as the guarantee for the cosmopolitan character of the EU’s ‘normative difference’ and external engagement.

This view closes the EU into its Eurocentrism from which the only way to interact with ‘others’ leads through the strategy of a ‘mission civilisatrice’ and the consequent subordination and suppression of other voices. Therefore, instead of *normalising a more just, cosmopolitical world*, this way the EU contributes to maintaining some sort of a ‘European world order’ that is based on what has been decided by ‘European’ great powers to be ‘just’.

Consequently, the diffusion of the EU’s supposedly fixed set of norms does not fully support it in transforming *what passes for normal in world politics*. On the contrary, this attempt rather contributes to constructing an exclusive, ‘nation state’-like identity for the EU, and

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<sup>18</sup> Thomas Diez, “Normative Power as Hegemony”, *Cooperation and Conflict* Volume 48, Issue 2 (2013): 203.

thus to the reinforcement of the current status quo of international politics as, with Hans Morgenthau's words, "all nations are tempted [...] to clothe their own particular aspirations and actions in the moral purpose of the universe"<sup>19</sup>.

Therefore, drawing on poststructuralist and postcolonialist literature, the recent paper argues for different premises for the "EU as NPE". Instead of building on a pre-given set of norms leading to the construction of a particular identity, it attempts to offer an approach to constructing the EU as an open, cosmopolitan entity with 'non-identity'. It further argues that the main – and for that matter only – source of a cosmopolitan EU's normative power should be looked for in its governance system – or 'hybrid polity' as formulated in the NPE theory –, and its external transfer as a model for the outside world. Following from this, it is suggested for the EU to reconsider its external engagement, and in particular its main foreign policy goal of 'effective multilateralism',<sup>20</sup> or as it is most widely referred to in the literature, its attempt to 'promote regionalism'.

While the recent paper sees itself placed within the discourse surrounding the current NPE concept, it remains, however, critical toward the concept itself. It attempts to shed light on the paradox in the concept's claim for cosmopolitanism, and reconstruct it in a way that it fits with its intention to contribute to the 'scholarship of global studies'<sup>21</sup>. As such, the paper aims to serve as a theoretical background for further empirical studies looking into the EU's normative role in international politics.

In light of the above, the first chapter provides an overview of the evolvement, as well as the current stand of the NPE discourse starting with the discussion of the concept's theoretical and practical background in the first sub-chapter, and concluding with the most

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<sup>19</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1978), 10.

<sup>20</sup> Council of the European Union, *A Secure Europe in a Better World: The European Security Strategy* (Brussels: European Communities, 2009), 9-10.

<sup>21</sup> Manners, "Assessing the Decennial, Reassessing the Global", 305.

noteworthy critical arguments to date questioning its validity in the second sub-chapter. The subsequent chapter lists three critical aims concerning the universality, acknowledgement and diffusion of the EU's supposedly fixed set of norms that, although having so far been neglected in the NPE discourse, shed light to the paradox in the NPE theory's fundamental claim for cosmopolitanism. Finally, the third chapter suggests different premises for the EU's identity to be constructed on by pointing to the cosmopolitan aspects of the evolving perception of the 'concept of Europe' in 'Europe' in the first sub-chapter, and arguing for a reconsidered multilateral engagement with the outside world in the second.

## Chapter 1: The Question of Power

*“One impression predominates in my mind over all others. It is this: unity in Europe does create a new kind of great power; it is a method for introducing change in Europe and consequently in the world [...] a way out of the conflicts to which the nineteenth-century philosophy gave rise.”<sup>22</sup>*

Jean Monnet

The role of ‘Europe’, and consequently the presence and activities of one of its late ‘products’, the European Union, in international politics has been in the focus of the interest of many academics and decision makers for a long time. Based on empirical observations and theoretical assumptions, IR theory has been attempting to interpret the events and processes of international politics – and naturally the presence of the EU within that –, while at the same time, by channelling the discourse, theory has also influenced the perceptions of those shaping these events and processes, and through that, impacted the events and processes themselves.

Evidently, this two-way interaction between theory and practice has had many implications on both. For instance, the ‘traditional’ perception of the international system as a static structure, the premises of which are seen to follow from its unchangeable characteristic features or the human nature directly, has helped to justify and thus maintain a world order with the Westphalian ‘nation state’ at its core, designed in, and profited from by ‘European’ great powers. On the other hand, the arbitrary selection and interpretation of events and processes fed such theories.

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<sup>22</sup> Jean Monnet, “A Ferment of Change”, *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Volume 1, Issue 3 (1963): 203-211, reprinted in *The European Union: Readings on the Theory and Practice of European Integration*, ed. Brent F. Nelsen et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2014), 26.

As the present chapter will highlight, the construction of the EU in the NPE concept has been an attempt to focusing on how this flawed international structure, as well as the contextual nature of knowledge about the structure can and should be transformed. The NPE theory is thus an explicitly theoretical concept,<sup>23</sup> an endeavour to restating prevailing epistemological and ontological premises. As such, it is a specific discursive representation of international politics with a special focus on the EU and its practice of power.

The notion of ‘normative power’ can therefore be used with three meanings within the NPE discourse. The first puts emphasis on ‘normative theory’, that is, on how to judge and justify truth claims in social science, and thus provides a critical approach to the study of the EU and its external power projection. The second concerns the normative form of power having an ideational character rather than a material one, while the third refers to the ontological construction of an ideal type of global actor.<sup>24</sup>

In most cases, however, there is no clear differentiation between theory and practice in the literature. Practical assumptions, such as that of the EU’s current construction or its empirically observed actions often serve as arguments for the validity or denial of the NPE theory’s propositions, such as that of the projection of the ‘EU as NPE’ – that is in fact presented as an ideal type –, or the existence of power’s normative dimension.

Nevertheless, some critical arguments challenging the NPE theory could avoid such confusions, and have pointed out certain aspects of the theory that deserve further investigation. Prior to that, however, it is worth having a closer look at the background from which the NPE concept has emerged, as well as its evolvement in the discourse surrounding it.

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<sup>23</sup> Manners and Diez, “Reflecting on ‘Normative Power Europe’”, 179.

<sup>24</sup> Manners, “Assessing the Decennial, Reassessing the Global”, 308-309.

## 1.1 The European World Order: Power and Actorness in International Relations Theory and International Politics

Power is fundamental to the study of politics and therefore its interpretation has been an important constitutive force defining International Relations theory from Thucydides to the present day.<sup>25</sup> The definition of the concept of power has broadened substantially over time, an agreement on its role and nature is, however, yet to be reached among scholars. As Kenneth N. Waltz, founder of the neorealist school of IR theory indicated, power's "proper definition remains a matter of controversy"<sup>26</sup>, with Hans Morgenthau, the leading figure in the twentieth-century classical realism, noting that "the concept of political power poses one of the most difficult and controversial problems of political science"<sup>27</sup>.

Among many attempts, Robert A. Dahl's description of power has gained the widest acceptance in the social sciences. The former long-time president of the American Political Science Association offered the following definition: "A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do"<sup>28</sup>. Power was thus seen by Dahl as the ability to exercise influence over other actors, which remains the principal understanding of political power to date. There are, however, important differences in the interpretation of power's means and use between the various schools of IR theory.

Traditionally, scholars of the realist school lay the primary focus on the relationships between sovereign states that are generally seen as the principal power holders, that is, actors in the international system. Realists thus perceive power as a property of the

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<sup>25</sup> International Relations theory as a distinct field of study and formal academic discipline emerged in 1919 with the founding of the professorship in this field at the University of Wales. Some of the fundamental questions IR theory is dealing with have been, however, discussed by thinkers and scholars since the time of the Greek historian Thucydides (ca. 460-395 BC).

<sup>26</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, "Reflections on Theory of International Politics: A Response to my Critics" in *Neorealism and Its Critics*, ed. Robert Keohane, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 333.

<sup>27</sup> Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 13.

<sup>28</sup> Robert A. Dahl, "The Concept of Power", *Behavioral Science* Volume 2, Issue 3 (1957): 202-203.

sovereign state.<sup>29</sup> According to such propositions, states tend to pursue self-interest, i.e. maintain their independence – that is, avoid unwanted influence from other states – as well as security, and seek control over resources and capabilities mostly by gaining influence over other states. For various reasons such as scarcity of resources, states naturally have conflicting interests and therefore tend to enter into competition and conflict with each other.

Based on the works of thinkers such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Clemenceau or Hegel, twentieth century classical realists of IR theory saw states as inherently aggressive entities having constant desire for the expansion and exploitation of other states. As Morgenthau argued, “international politics is a struggle for power” – that is “universal in time and space” – between independent units – and in particular states –, seeking to dominate each other,<sup>30</sup> the desire for which arises from a natural urge that has its roots in the human nature guided by the “inevitability and the evilness of man’s lust for power”.<sup>31</sup>

Just like classical realists, students of neorealism argue that states primarily aim at seizing power in international politics. Neorealists, however, do not attribute this intention to *man’s lust for power*, but to the desire for security, a necessary consequence of a world system that is anarchical, i.e. lacks a hierarchically superior leader such as a world government. As Waltz and other students of defensive realism argue, states aim to seize power in order to ensure their security to the extent necessary for their survival.

Offensive realists of the neorealist school – and in particular John Mearsheimer, their most prominent figure – on the other hand, depict states aiming to maximize their relative power and thus seek hegemony, as “Given the difficulty of determining how much power is enough for today and tomorrow, great powers recognize that the best way to ensure their

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<sup>29</sup> David A. Baldwin, “Power and International Relations”, in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes et al. (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2013), 277.

<sup>30</sup> Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 4-15.

<sup>31</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), 8.



security is to achieve hegemony now, thus eliminating any possibility of a challenge by another great power. Only a misguided state would pass up an opportunity to be the hegemon in the system because it thought it already had sufficient power to survive.”<sup>32</sup>

Thus morality, at least in the sense of a moral code that would restrain states in their relations with other states, is, to realists, completely absent from international politics.<sup>33</sup> As Morgenthau argues, “universal moral principles” cannot be applied to the actions of states as “There can be no political morality without prudence, that is, without consideration of the political consequences of seemingly moral action.”<sup>34</sup>

With morality out of the question, material resources play a very important role in realist thinking. On the one hand, it is material resources such as land, minerals, etc. that states are aiming to seize. On the other, it is again material resources – and in particular the military – , which serve as the primary means to take hold of, and also protect assets. Consequently, in realist theories, only states with the most military power, i.e. the ‘great powers’, are seen to be capable of shaping international politics.

With military being considered as the primary source of power in an exaggerating manner, economic power – although already present in the discourse – is given less credit, while other forms of power have been almost completely neglected by traditional realists. An exception to some extent was Edward Hallett Carr, one of the most influential British diplomats and IR theorists of twentieth century realism, who distinguished between economic power, military power and something he called the ‘power over opinion’.

Carr noted that economic and military endeavours of states are always accompanied by psychological ones, the main instrument of which is propaganda. Most political ideas that

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<sup>32</sup> John Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 35.

<sup>33</sup> Hedley Bull, “Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations: The Second Martin Wight Memorial Lecture”, *British Journal of International Studies* Volume 2, Number 2 (1976): 104-105.

<sup>34</sup> Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 9.

had great influence on mankind such as the ideas of the French revolution, or that of the League of Nations, had been based on ‘universal principles’ providing them with an ‘international character’ which is, however, an illusion as these ideas are in fact instruments used in the service of the national interest.<sup>35</sup>

Until after the end of the Cold War, and somewhat into the 1990’s, realist perceptions of power dominated the discourse in International Relations. It is not so surprising, as IR theory – originating in ‘Europe’ – had been designed to reflect on – and at the same time reinforce – the ‘European world order’, that is, the ‘international’, or as it is also called, Westphalian system. With its roots regarded to be in the Peace of Westphalia which ended the ‘Thirty Years’ War between the then great powers of ‘Europe’ in 1648, the newly emerged international system was built on the principle of state sovereignty acknowledging states as the sole representatives of peoples, and thus the only actual power holders, that is, actors in world politics.

With the rise of nationalism in the 19<sup>th</sup> century – again, in ‘Europe’ –, states were seen to be corresponding to, and thus legitimised by coherent national identities, and assumed national interests were regarded to go beyond those of individuals. As European influence spread across the globe, the Westphalian principles became central to international law, and thus to the prevailing world order.

Although widely accepted and having served as the basic tenet in international politics throughout the past centuries, both the idea of the Westphalian sovereignty and its applicability in practice have been challenged by scholars from various fields of the social sciences since the second half of the twentieth century. Already in 1950, Harold Lasswell, a prominent political scientist and Abraham Kaplan, a renowned philosopher, published a

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<sup>35</sup> Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 120-127.

book together in which they attempted to break with the approach seeing power as the property of an entity – e.g. a state – by defining it as a causation embedded into a relationship between more entities.

Lasswell and Kaplan defined power as “participation in the making of decisions: G has power over H with respect to the values K if G participates in the making of decisions affecting the K-policies of H”.<sup>36</sup> Thus, power was perceived by the two as the influence on the policies and, what is more, values of others. By listing respect, rectitude, affection, enlightenment, etc., as ‘forms of influence’, Lasswell and Kaplan raised awareness to power’s non-material dimensions.<sup>37</sup>

This approach saw power as multidimensional, with one of its dimensions being what was called ‘means’, that is, the various means of exercising influence. Military means, however important, was only one of the four items on the list, with economic means, diplomatic means and the so called symbolic means completing it. While the first three items had already been part of the discourse for some time, the incorporation of symbolic means was a rather progressive step. For Lasswell and Kaplan, symbolic means included appeals to normative symbols as well as the provision of information via discourses, propaganda, framing and narratives.<sup>38</sup> By using symbolic means, they argued, a state might be capable of having influence on other states’ normative attitudes and preferences, and thus influence their behaviour.

It was shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall that Joseph Nye, one of the co-founders of the neoliberalist school, developed his influential concept of ‘soft power’ that had a great impact on the views of both IR theorists and decision makers. Based on the concept of symbolic means, Nye defined soft power as “the ability to get what you want through

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<sup>36</sup> Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan, *Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), 75.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 86

<sup>38</sup> Baldwin, “Power and International Relations”, 276.

attraction rather than coercion or payments”<sup>39</sup>. The resources of soft power “tend to be associated with the co-optive end of the spectrum of behavior” as opposed to hard power’s resources “usually associated with command behavior”.<sup>40</sup> As Nye further argued, “In international politics, the resources that produce soft power arise in large part from the values an organization or country expresses in its culture, in the examples it sets by its internal practices and policies, and in the way it handles its relationships with others”.<sup>41</sup>

Consequently, to Nye and other neoliberals, power in international politics can not only be exercised through hard means such as threat and coercion – i.e. military power –, or by inducing with payments – i.e. economic power –, but also through attracting or co-opting other parties *to do something that they would not otherwise do*. What is more, to neoliberals it is not only states that are capable of exercising power in the international system, but also international organisations, even if these lack military or economic power capabilities.

By regarding international organisations as power holder actors, the neoliberal approach went well beyond the classical realist state-centric view. Although neoliberals still regard states as the dominant actors in international politics, they characterise the anarchic international system rather as a sphere for cooperation through multiple channels such as international organisations, international corporations, etc., that connect societies, than as a ‘battlefield’.

Unlike the neorealist and neoliberal concepts, both of which are positivist and structuralist in essence, constructivist scholars have been arguing that all phenomena of international politics are in fact socially constructed and thus transformable. As Alexander Wendt, one of the most prominent scholars of constructivism in International Relations notes, “the structures of human association are determined primarily by shared ideas rather than

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<sup>39</sup> Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), X.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

material forces, and that the identities and interests of purposive actors are constructed by these shared ideas rather than given by nature.”<sup>42</sup>

Consequently, by looking at international politics as a social construction, constructivists challenge the strong commitment to materialism which is, as noted above, highly emphasized throughout the realist and neorealist concepts. To constructivists, the material world is given meaning only by the cognitive acts of human beings, for which reason it is through the shaping of ideas that the international system can be transformed.

In accordance with constructivists, liberal realist scholars of the English school suggest that ideas rather than material resources and capabilities shape international politics. Liberal realists do not deny the realist assumption that states tend to follow their own interests, according to their arguments, however, states do not do that at all costs. The reason for this, they hold, is that states form an ‘international society’ defined by shared interest and identity, and are thus interested in the maintenance of shared norms, rules and institutions in the international system.<sup>43</sup>

Another important element of liberal realist theories is the concept of world society that, as Barry Buzan, one of the most prominent scholars of the English school, highlights, “takes individuals, non-state organisations and ultimately the global population as a whole as the focus of global societal identities and arrangements.”<sup>44</sup> As Buzan also notes, this concept is key in linking liberal realist theories to the debate on globalisation as well as the European Union.<sup>45</sup>

Consequently, the second half of the twentieth century saw a slow turn from the ‘traditional’ approach of International Relations theory based on the principle of the

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<sup>42</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

<sup>43</sup> Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society? English School Theory and the Social Structure of Globalisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

Westphalian inter-state structure with strong emphasis on the importance of material resources, to looking at international politics as a socially constructed system consisting of state and non-state actors that are connected via multiple channels and, in order to exercise influence in international politics, use various dimensions of power such as normative means.

Accordingly, the belief in the inherent nature of the international system – that is characterised here as a ‘European world order’ – has been heavily challenged in the past decades. In addition, with social constructivism gaining importance in IR theory, the role of norms as a source of influence has become a massively studied subject, in which discourse the European Union has been widely referred to as ‘best case’ for analysis.

## **1.2 The EU and its Power: The Normative Discourse**

Building on social constructivist, liberal realist, and to some extent neoliberal theories, the past decades have seen a normative turn in theorising the EU’s international presence and identity. Various theories have emerged in EU studies reflecting new approaches to the definition of power within the post-Cold War realities, and arguing for the relevance and powerful role of ‘Europe’ – or the EU – in international politics.<sup>46</sup> Lately, this discourse has been dominated by the Normative Power Europe (NPE) concept, coined by Manners in 2002.

As a starting point in establishing his concept, Manners chose a dispute between Hedley Bull, the pre-eminent figure of the liberal realist school, and François Duchêne, a political analyst and former director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London.

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<sup>46</sup> See for example: Andrew Moravcsik, “Europe: The Quiet Superpower”, in *Rising States, Rising Institutions: Challenges for Global Governance*, ed. Alan. S. Alexandroff et al. (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010), 151-176.; John McCormick, *The European Superpower* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Lisbeth Aggestam, “Introduction: Ethical Power Europe?”, *International Affairs* Volume 84, Number 1 (2008): 1-11.

Already in the 1970's, Duchêne famously argued that 'Europe' could best be perceived as a "civilian power" for it is a "civilian group long on economic power and relatively short on armed forces."<sup>47</sup>

Duchêne's concept was later further developed by other scholars such as Hanns W. Maull, one of Germany's most renowned political scientists, who noted that civilian power implies "the acceptance of the necessity of cooperation with others in the pursuit of international objectives; the concentration on non-military, primarily economic, means to secure national goals, with military power left as a residual instrument serving essentially to safeguard other means of international interaction; and a willingness to develop supranational structures to address critical issues of international management."<sup>48</sup>

Thus, Maull and other advocates of the 'Civilian Power Europe' (CPE) concept put emphasis on the importance of supranational institutions and diplomatic cooperation as the principal ways of regulating international issues, and saw the key power resource of 'Europe' in its economic potential, the main components of which being the giving of aid, trade relations and formalised economic relations with third parties.<sup>49</sup>

Bull, not so impressed by the CPE concept, regarded a 'Europe' leaning solely on 'civilian power' capabilities vulnerable and ineffective for lacking self-sufficiency in military power, and argued that "the power or influence exerted by the European Community and other such civilian actors was conditional upon a strategic environment provided by the military power of states, which they did not control".<sup>50</sup> Therefore, he suggested for the Community to become more self-sufficient in defence mainly by improving its conventional and non-

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<sup>47</sup> Francois Duchêne, "The European Community and the Uncertainties of Interdependence", in *A Nation Writ Large? Foreign Policy Problems Before the European Community*, ed. M. Kohnstamm et al. (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1973), 19.

<sup>48</sup> Hanns Maull, "Germany and Japan: The New Civilian Powers", *Foreign Affairs* Volume 69, Number 5 (1990): 92-93.

<sup>49</sup> Ian Manners and Richard Whitman, "The Difference Engine: Constructing and Representing the International Identity of the European Union", *Journal of European Public Policy* Volume 10, Issue 3 (2003): 388.

<sup>50</sup> Hedley Bull, "Civilian Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies* Volume 21, No. 2 (1982): 151.

conventional military capabilities, and aiming at a careful co-existence with the United States and the Soviet Union.<sup>51</sup>

Manners concluded that the approaches of Bull and Duchêne, both of which reflected the supposed realities of the Cold War, had two essential principles in common. The first is the “fixed nature of the nation-state compared with emphasis on the importance of the national interest” that contributes to the maintenance of the status quo of international politics with the Westphalian nation-state at its core, and results in a misleading focus on how much like a state the EU is. The second principle is the “importance of physical power” either as a civilian form of action and influence, as formulated by Duchêne, or as the involvement of conventional and non-conventional military resources, as expressed by Bull.<sup>52</sup>

According to Manners, the Cold War that structured these assumptions ended with the fall of the Eastern European regimes as a result of the unsustainability of their ideology, that is, “by the collapse of norms rather than the power of force”.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, Manners finds it just as important to take into consideration the power of ideas and norms, that is, the normative dimension of power when studying the EU’s presence in international politics, as it is when looking at the continent’s inner political processes.<sup>54</sup>

This is not to mean that the economic or military capabilities are disregarded by the NPE concept when discussing the EU’s influence, for its conceptualization accommodates both civilian and military means as long as they are in the service of, and subordinated to normative aims.<sup>55</sup> Therefore, the use of military power relying solely on long-term structural conflict prevention and transformation combined with the avoidance of short-

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<sup>51</sup> Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, 237.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* 238.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Vicki Birchfield, “A Normative Power Europe Framework of Transnational Policy Formation”, *Journal of European Public Policy* Volume 20, Number 6 (2013): 909-910.



term problem solving, does, for Manners, contribute to reaching the EU's main normative aim, that is, sustainable peace.<sup>56</sup> Therefore, NPE is meant to be an attempt to rather shift the focus from the traditional dimensions of power – and how much the EU does (not) lack the related capabilities – to its normative dimension, that is, to the EU's ability to shape what is 'normal' in international politics.<sup>57</sup>

In addition, by putting emphasis on the normative dimension of power, Manners provided an approach for the EU to be studied as an entity with an identity, the basis of which is what he calls its “normative difference” that follows from the distinctive features of its particular historical evolution, ‘hybrid polity’, and constitutional configuration. First of all, he argues, the EU emerged from a historical context prevailed by a general rejection of nationalism that had contributed greatly to the disasters of World War II, as well as a positive attitude towards peace and cooperation. Secondly, over time, the EU has gained a unique political character for being a “hybrid of supranational and international forms of governance which transcends Westphalian norms”<sup>58</sup>. Finally, this ‘different’ political form is attached to the “principles of liberty, democracy and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law”<sup>59</sup> – as stated in the Treaty on European Union (TEU),<sup>60</sup> one of the EU's constitutional treaties – that constitute a normative basis, that is, a unifying common ground for the EU.

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<sup>56</sup> Manners, “Normative Power Europe Reconsidered”, 194.

<sup>57</sup> Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, 239.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 240.

<sup>59</sup> European Community, Preamble to “The Treaty on European Union”, in *Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*, accessed 18 December, 2014, [http://europa.eu/eu-law/decision-making/treaties/pdf/consolidated\\_versions\\_of\\_the\\_treaty\\_on\\_european\\_union\\_2012/consolidated\\_versions\\_of\\_the\\_treaty\\_on\\_european\\_union\\_2012\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu/eu-law/decision-making/treaties/pdf/consolidated_versions_of_the_treaty_on_european_union_2012/consolidated_versions_of_the_treaty_on_european_union_2012_en.pdf).

<sup>60</sup> The Treaty on European Union (TEU) was drafted by the European Council at its meeting held in Maastricht on 9-10 December 1991, and was signed by the members of the European Community on 7 February 1992.

In addition to these normative principles, Manners lists peace, found in the Schuman Declaration of 1950,<sup>61</sup> the European Coal and Steel Treaty of 1951,<sup>62</sup> and the Treaty of Rome (TEC) of 1957,<sup>63</sup> as the first and foremost among what he regards as the EU's five constitutive 'core norms'. Furthermore, Manners identifies four minor norms that also form part of the EU's normative foundation, and are reflected in the TEU and/or the TEC. These are as follows: social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development, and implicitly the principle of good governance.<sup>64</sup>

Following from the idea that the EU is bound by these norms, as well as the 'absolute' character of the norms themselves, the EU is predisposed to act in a normative way at all times if it is to remain committed to its normative basis. For this normative basis is seen as the main characteristic feature of the 'EU as NPE', contradicting it to any extent would mean for the EU that it is not 'NPE' any longer. It is for this reason that, for Manners, the "most important factor shaping the international role of the EU is not what it does or what it says, but what it is".<sup>65</sup> The 'EU as NPE' changes "what passes for 'normal' in world politics" through its sole existence for being different to any other recognised actor – most of all the Westphalian state, but also international or regional organisations – in the international system.<sup>66</sup>

Again, following from its boundedness by, and the 'absolute' character of its norms, the EU must also place them at the centre of its relations with the outside world. As stated in the TEU, "The Union's action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles

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<sup>61</sup> The Schuman Declaration is a statement laid forward by the then French foreign minister, Robert Schuman on 9 May 1950, proposing to place the Franco-German production of coal and steel under a shared authority.

<sup>62</sup> The Treaty, establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), was signed on 18 April 1951 by France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The ECSC, creating a common market for coal and steel for its members, was the first international organisation based on supranational principles.

<sup>63</sup> The Treaty of Rome, signed on 25 March 1957, established the European Economic Community (EEC) that started operation on 1 January 1958 with the participation of France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

<sup>64</sup> Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", 242-243.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 252.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 236

which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world: democracy, the rule of law, the universality and indivisibility of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for human dignity, the principles of equality and solidarity, and respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.”<sup>67</sup>

As Manners argues, “it is one thing to say that the EU *is* a normative power by virtue of its hybrid polity”<sup>68</sup> – or we could perhaps say, ‘it is one thing to say that the EU *has* normative power due to its existence as a unique entity just by having a hybrid governance system, regardless of what it does’ –, and “it is another to argue that the EU acts in a normative (i.e. ethically good) way”<sup>69</sup> – or perhaps more precisely, ‘it is another to argue that the EU is NPE – an ideal type –, that is, always acts in a normative (i.e. ethically good) way’.

Drawing upon three major approaches in contemporary normative ethics, Manners lists three maxims that shall shape the EU’s normative power if it is to act in an ‘ethically good way’ in international politics. The first maxim, borrowing from neo-Aristotelian ‘virtue ethics’, is to ‘live by virtuous example’, that is, to be normatively coherent and consistent, or with other words, act on the same principles both internally and externally. The second, relying on neo-Kantian ‘deontological ethics’, is to ‘be reasonable’, that is, to reason and rationalise all external actions through the processes of engagement and dialogue with ‘others’. The third maxim, following from neo-utilitarian consequentialist ethics, is to ‘do least harm’ that involves the fostering of local ownership, and what Manners calls the practice of ‘positive conditionality’, i.e. the giving of rewards for ‘progress’.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> European Community, Article 6 of the “The Treaty on European Union”.

<sup>68</sup> Manners, “The Normative Ethics of the European Union”, 45.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 47.

In addition, goes the argument, if normative power is to be sustainable, it shall be regarded legitimate by those who practice, as well as those who experience it.<sup>71</sup> Thus the only reason why legitimacy is an important issue in the NPE concept is that it is key for sustainability, as normative power involves a different ‘timescale’ for changes in norms can only be reached on a long-term basis: it works like “water on stones”<sup>72</sup>.

The NPE theory, building on empirical observations, identifies two main strategies followed by the EU in the diffusion of its norms. On the one hand, the EU actively promotes them through its various foreign policy instruments. On the other, it relies on what Richard Rosecrance, professor of Political Science, calls its ‘attractive force’ that is a mostly passive one. With Rosecrance’s words, “Europe’s attainment is normative rather than empirical. Its attractive force is very great, and others will seek to be associated with it” for it “is now coming to set world standards in normative terms.”<sup>73</sup>

Correspondingly, Manners lists six possible sub-strategies for norms-diffusion. The first is ‘contagion’, that is – in accordance with Rosecrance’s ‘attractive force’ – the passive, “unintentional diffusion of ideas from the EU to other political actors”. The second is ‘informational diffusion’ which is “the result of the range of strategic communications” such as new initiatives by the EU. The third is ‘procedural diffusion’ that is the institutionalisation of relationships between the European Union and other parties in the form of inter-regional co-operation agreements, or by the enlargement of the EU. The next is ‘transference’ that takes place when the EU maintains trade relations with, or provides aid or technical assistance to other parties with its community norms and standards also being exported at the same time, and rewards or sanctions being possibly attached to its actions. The fifth is ‘overt diffusion’ which involves the formal presence of the EU in third

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>72</sup> Ian Manners, “The Concept of Normative Power in World Politics”, *DIIS Brief* May 2009 (Copenhagen: Danish Institute for International Studies, 2009), 2.

<sup>73</sup> Richard Rosecrance, “The European Union: A New Type of International Actor” in *Paradoxes of European Foreign Policy*, ed. Jan Zielonka (The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1998) 22.

parties such as non-member states or international organisations. The last form is the ‘cultural filter’ that “affects the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organizations leading to learning, adaptation or rejection of norms.”<sup>74</sup>

Accordingly, it is more and more common among top European political figures to project the EU as a normative power in international politics. As Jose Manuel Barroso, then president of the European Commission, noted in 2007, “In terms of normative power, I broadly agree: we are one of the most important, if not the most important, normative powers in the world. [...] There is not any group of countries in the world that have the same degree of homogeneity [...] Why is that? It is because we have been successful in establishing norms, and applying them to different realities. [...] It is in fact the EU that sets the standards for others much of the time.”<sup>75</sup>

In other cases, the EU is portrayed by its high-level representatives as a missionary actor guided by principles, values and norms that are seen as fundamental conditions for ‘development’. In his speech at the European Parliament, Romano Prodi, Barroso’s predecessor as president of the European Commission stated that “Europe needs to project its model of society into the wider world. We are not simply here to defend our own interests [...] We have forged a model of development and continental integration based on the principles of democracy, freedom and solidarity – and it is a model that works.”<sup>76</sup>

Indeed, the TEU clearly states that the EU shall put a strong emphasis on the normative dimension in its foreign policy. In her Joint Communication to the European Parliament

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<sup>74</sup> Manners, “Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?”, 244-245.

<sup>75</sup> John Peterson, “José Manuel Barroso = Political Scientist: John Peterson Interviews the European Commission President 17 July 2007: Complete Manuscript”, *EU-Consent: Constructing Europe Network*, accessed 31 December, 2014, <http://www.eu-consent.net/library/BARROSO-transcript.pdf>.

<sup>76</sup> Romano Prodi, “2000-2005: Shaping the New Europe: Speech of the President of the European Commission at the European Parliament, 15 February 2000”, *European Commission Press Release Database*, accessed 31 December, 2014, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_SPEECH-00-41\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_SPEECH-00-41_en.htm).

and the Council’ of 2011, Kathrin Ashton, then High Commissioner of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, stated that “human rights and democracy must run as silver thread throughout EU external policies [...] human rights and democracy should be taken into account in foreign policy making at every stage.”<sup>77</sup>

Despite the optimism and the supposedly good intentions, however, neither the NPE concept, nor the EU’s normative agenda in practice did avoid heavy criticism. As discussed above, while critical arguments on the NPE concept often do not distinguish between the ‘EU in practice’ and the ideal type of the ‘EU as NPE’, and challenge the validity of the presentation of the latter on the basis of the EU’s failures in meeting the criteria to be an ‘ideal type’ in the current practice, it is important to emphasize again that when referring to the EU’s ontological construction, the NPE concept reflects rather how it *should ideally be* and not necessarily how it currently *is*. Therefore, the recent paper discusses the critical assessment of the EU’s efficiency as well as (in)consistencies in exercising normative power, – and through that, its influence in international politics in practice –, and that of the NPE concept – to which much greater attention will be given – independently.

In addition, when discussing the EU’s external influence in practical terms, it might be reasonable to examine its norms-diffusion at the level of states separately from that at the global level, i.e. the level of global governance institutions and processes such as international, or regional organisations and regimes. Within the normative discourse, the study of the domestic impact of the EU beyond its borders has been developed mostly

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<sup>77</sup> European Commission, High Commissioner of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. *Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council: Human Rights and Democracy at the Heart of EU External Action – Towards a More Effective Approach*, accessed 18 December, 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0886:FIN:EN:PDF>.

under what Frank Schimmelfennig, professor of European politics calls the ‘Europeanisation research agenda’.<sup>78</sup>

Within the Europeanisation literature, most scholars agree that while the EU’s capability to exercise normative influence on domestic structures is high in countries that have been provided the ‘golden carrot’ of the membership perspective, its interventions have only delivered marginal – if any – benefits in other cases.<sup>79</sup> Although in a number of countries with no membership perspective such as Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and to a certain extent Armenia – all of which are dealt with by the EU under the Eastern Partnership (EaP) initiative of its European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)<sup>80</sup> –, some intended changes have been achieved at the policy-level, the EU remained rather ineffective in bringing about the democratic transformation of core areas of state institutions such as the rule of law.<sup>81</sup>

As for the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED) countries as well as those beyond the ENP, the EU’s efforts to promote political change have been running into resistance that proved to be impossible to overcome as yet.<sup>82</sup> In addition, the EU’s engagement with its partners in the ‘Mediterranean’ has often been accused of Eurocentrism for following what Federica Bicchì, associate professor in IR of Europe, calls an ‘our size fits all’-model, and thus lacking reflexivity and inclusiveness.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, the

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<sup>78</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, “Europeanization Beyond Europe”, *Living Reviews in European Governance*, Volume 7, Number 1 (2012), 6.

<sup>79</sup> See for example: Frank Schimmelfennig and Hanno Scholtz, “EU Democracy Promotion in the European Neighbourhood: Political Conditionality, Economic Development and Transnational Exchange”, *European Union Politics* Volume 9, Number 2 (2008): 187–215.; Richard G. Whitman and Stefan Wolff, “Much Ado About Nothing? The European Neighbourhood Policy in Context”, in *The European Neighbourhood Policy in Perspective: Context, Implementation and Impact*, ed. Richard G. Whitman et al., 3-26. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

<sup>80</sup> The ENP is a foreign policy instrument of the EU, covering 16 participating partner states.

<sup>81</sup> Tanja A. Börzel and Bidzina Lebanidze, “European Neighbourhood Policy at the Crossroads: Evaluating the Past to Shape the Future”, *MAXCAP Working Paper Series* Number 12 (2015): 8.

<sup>82</sup> Vera van Hüllen, *International Cooperation and Authoritarianism: EU Democracy Promotion and the Arab Spring* (Houndsmill: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>83</sup> Federica Bicchì, “Our Size Fits All’: Normative Power Europe and the Mediterranean”, *Journal of European Public Policy* Volume 13, Issue 2 (2006): 287-288.

EU's activities seem to have remained fairly inconsistent in its eastern neighbourhood for being marked by a rather 'flexible' approach to the interpretation and implementation of norms in various countries,<sup>84</sup> and the prioritisation of security and economic concerns in the case of China and Russia.<sup>85</sup>

Despite its low efficiency at the level of states, the EU has been somewhat more successful at the global level. Examples for the EU's success in diffusing its model include the African Union (AU) that is seen to have modelled itself on almost all accounts on the EU – even if many of its practices differ greatly from those witnessed in the EU –, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) marked by the spillover of EU policies and structures,<sup>86</sup> the Andean Community with its directly elected Parliament, legal integration and the acceptance of the supremacy of some form of a supranational law along with a Court,<sup>87</sup> or the ASEAN with its strong economic integration and institutionalisation.<sup>88</sup>

Nevertheless, the EU's success in diffusing its norms as part of the transfer of its governance structure shows a more diverse picture. While the WTO has indeed been established on democratic principles – in which the US played at least an equally important role to that of the EU –, the AU, for instance, could not be more different to the EU given its underlying normative basis.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Rosa Balfour, "Principles of Democracy and Human Rights: A Review of the European Union's Strategies towards its Neighbours", in *Values and Principles in European Union Foreign Policy*, ed. Sonia Lucarelli et al. (London: Routledge, 2006), 128.

<sup>85</sup> Stefania Panebianco, "Promoting Human Rights and Democracy in European Union Relations with Russia and China", in *Values and Principles in European Union Foreign Policy*, ed. Sonia Lucarelli et al. (London: Routledge, 2006), 146.

<sup>86</sup> Kalypso Nicolaidis, Robert Howse, "This is my EUtopia...!: Narrative as Power", *Journal of Common Market Studies* Volume 40, Issue 04 (2002): 768.

<sup>87</sup> Andrés Malamud and Luís de Sousa, "Regional Parliaments in Europe and Latin America: Between Empowerment and Irrelevance", in *Closing or Widening the Gap? Legitimacy and Democracy in Regional Integration Organizations: Non-State Actors in International Law, Politics and Governance Series*, ed. Andrea Ribeiro Hoffmann et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 93-94.

<sup>88</sup> Tanja A. Börzel and Thomas Risse, "Diffusing (Inter-)Regionalism.: The EU as a Model of Regional Integration", *KFG Working Paper Series* Number 7 (2009): 13-15.

<sup>89</sup> Mary Farrell, "From EU Model to External Policy? Promoting Regional Integration in the Rest of the World", in *Making History: European Integration and Institutional Change at Fifty: Volume 8 of The State of the European Union*, ed. Sophie Meunier et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 299–315.



Furthermore, it has been argued that the EU's activities do not avoid neo-colonial overtones either at the global level.<sup>90</sup> Indeed, from a rationalist perspective, it is in the EU's interest – and through that, in the interest of its member states – to shape an international environment that they are familiar with and can therefore use to their own benefit. This, goes the argument, would not only reduce the costs of adaption for the EU, but also give it an advantage over other actors.<sup>91</sup>

Turning to the critical assessment of the NPE concept, the first set of arguments discussed widely in the NPE discourse question its difference to other, earlier concepts such as the CPE or 'soft power'. Advocates of the NPE theory argue that it has been coined with the aim to go beyond the discussion of whether the EU is an 'actor' in international politics, that is, whether it is "being powerful with either military or economic resources", and thus also to remain independent of the dichotomy between soft versus hard power.<sup>92</sup>

In addition, and as noted above, the CPE concept is seen by NPE theorists to be related to the 'ontology of states' for emphasizing material assets and physical power, as well as the 'communitarian' nature of civilian resources used "in the service of national goals".<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, following from Duchêne's view on 'Europe as CPE' becoming "a new stage in political civilization"<sup>94</sup> as the 'first example' "in tune with the modern notion of civilized politics"<sup>95</sup>, CPE can be seen to be connected with the neo-colonialist, Eurocentric assumption of Europe's 'civilizing' role in the world.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Nora Fisher Onar and Kalypso Nicolaidis, "The Decentring Agenda: Europe as a Post-Colonial Power", *Cooperation and Conflict* Volume 48, Issue 2 (2013): 285.

<sup>91</sup> Dirk Peters and Wolfgang Wagner, "Die Europäische Union in den internationalen Beziehungen", in *Die Europäische Union: Theorien und Analysekonzepte*, ed. Katharina Holzinger et al. (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005), 215–272.

<sup>92</sup> Whitman, "The Neo-Normative Turn", 174.

<sup>93</sup> Manners and Diez, "Reflecting on 'Normative Power Europe'", 178-179.

<sup>94</sup> Duchêne, "The European Community", 19.

<sup>95</sup> François Duchêne, "Europe's Role in World Peace", in *Europe Tomorrow: Sixteen Europeans Look Ahead*, ed. Richard J. Mayne (London: Fontana, 1972), 43.

<sup>96</sup> Manners, "Normative Power Europe Reconsidered", 184.

On the contrary, goes the argument, the NPE concept seeks to refer to the “non-material exemplification found in the contagion of norms through imitation and attraction”, and by that, break with the ‘Westphalian culture’. As such, it attempts to reflect the ‘cosmopolitan’ nature of the EU through which it is capable to change “the status quo of an international society between states”, and move further to “transcending the ‘normality’ of world politics towards world society”.<sup>97</sup>

For being an effort to break with the tradition of realism, naturally, the NPE concept received heavy criticism from (neo)realist scholars. For instance, following from the state-centric view, it has been suggested that the EU is used by its (most influential) member states as an instrument for exercising hegemonic power, based both on soft power capabilities such as diplomatic persuasion or negotiation, as well as hard power tools such as coercive economic statecraft in the form of conditionality clauses. This way, concludes the argument, the EU is a normative power only in the sense that it is utilised by its member states to impose their values and norms on others.<sup>98</sup>

Another argument, reflecting on the portrayal of the EU as a normative power, Robert Kagan, a historian and foreign policy advisor to several former U.S. presidential candidates and a Secretary of State, famously wrote, “Europe is turning away from power, or to put it a little differently, it is moving beyond power into a self-contained world of laws and rules and transnational negotiation and cooperation. It is entering a post-historical paradise of peace and relative prosperity, the realization of Immanuel Kant’s perpetual peace. Meanwhile, the United States remains mired in history, exercising power in an anarchic Hobbesian world where international laws and rules are unreliable, and where true security

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<sup>97</sup> Mannes and Diez, “Reflecting on ‘Normative Power Europe’”, 178-179.

<sup>98</sup> Hyde-Price, “Normative Power Europe”, 227.

and the defense and promotion of a liberal order still depend on the possession and use of military might.”<sup>99</sup>

According to Kagan, it is due to the EU’s ‘relative weakness’ in traditional power-capabilities that its leaders attempt to create such an image for it.<sup>100</sup> However, Kagan regards this ironic for – in accordance with Bull’s views on the CPE concept – he sees the EU and its normative power relying heavily on the USA’s military capabilities that is always there to guard the *European paradise*.<sup>101</sup>

Such arguments, besides questioning the validity of the NPE theory by referring to (supposed) current practical examples in a somewhat misleading way, however, also seem to have remained stuck in their structuralist roots and refuse to take into consideration the basic tenets of social constructivism arguing for the changeability of the (current) international structure. Therefore, arguments based on assumptions of ‘how things are currently (structured)’ are perhaps not so interesting in case of a critical theory focusing on how the structure as well as the contextual nature of knowledge about the structure can and should be changed.

There are, nevertheless, some other critical arguments to which the NPE concept seems to be less resistant. Although these shed light on very different aspects of the concept, the perhaps somewhat hidden question connecting the two sets of criticism below is whether the representation of the ‘EU as NPE’ as constructed in the current NPE theory does in fact provide the EU with an ontological uniqueness.

The first argument suggests that it is not possible to distinguish ‘normative’ from ‘non-normative’ in either theory or practice. As normative and self-interested endeavours always

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<sup>99</sup> Robert Kagan, *Of Paradise and Power: America and Europe in the New World Order* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 3.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 24.

inform and complement each other,<sup>102</sup> any state can be characterised as a normative power, and thus the only question is, to what degree is one in fact a normative power.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, it has been argued that there is no way to establish causal relationships between norms and policy, and it is the actor's arbitrary choice to choose how it turns which norm into what kind of policy.<sup>104</sup>

As for the second argument, it has been noted that the NPE theory is rather a political than an analytical concept, as the word 'normative' has a positive connotation reflecting sympathy towards the EU, which makes its use impossible in critical analysis.<sup>105</sup> Accordingly, it has been suggested that the theoretical construction of the 'EU as NPE' based on a fixed set of constitutive norms gives the EU a particular identity through which it turns third parties into 'others' and, again, represents the EU as a positive force in international politics.<sup>106</sup>

Arguing from a poststructuralist standpoint, Thomas Diez, professor of political science and IR, initially listed four possible strategies for the EU to construct its 'Other', and through that, simultaneously its own 'Self' as well. The first is the representation of the Other as an 'existential threat', which builds on the concept of 'securitisation' formulated by the so called 'Copenhagen School of security studies' for the political act of transforming subjects into matters of security that enables extraordinary measures. The second, drawing on the concept of 'Orientalism' coined by Edward Said, the founder of postcolonialist studies, is the representation of the Other as 'inferior', in which the Self is constructed to be superior to the (exotic) Other. The next is the construction of the Other as the 'violator of universal principles', in which the standards of the Self are not simply

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<sup>102</sup> Youngs, "Normative Dynamics", 431.

<sup>103</sup> Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others", 620.

<sup>104</sup> Knud Erik Jørgensen, "Theoretical Perspectives on the Role of Values, Images and Principles in Foreign Policy", in *Values and Principles in European Union Foreign Policy*, ed. Sonia Lucarelli et al. (London: Routledge, 2006), 56-57.

<sup>105</sup> Helene Sjursen, "What Kind of Power?", *Journal of European Public Policy* Volume 13, Number 2 (2006): 170.

<sup>106</sup> Diez, "Constructing the Self and Changing Others", 613.

superior but also universal. The fourth is the representation of the Other as ‘different’ without a value-judgement that, although being less harmful than the previous ones, still imposes identities on others.<sup>107</sup>

Furthermore, borrowing from postcolonialist theories, Diez drew attention to the danger of embracing Eurocentrism as a consequence of the act of ‘othering’. Referring to the argument of Robert Cooper, a British diplomat and former special advisor at the European Commission, who portrayed ‘Europe’, and in particular the EU, as the representative and guardian of the standards of the ‘postmodern world’ against the ‘modern’ and ‘pre-modern’ ones,<sup>108</sup> Diez noted that any such interpretation of the EU’s normative power might easily lead to the justification of a ‘mission civilisatrice’.<sup>109</sup>

The main argument against these criticisms lies for Manners in the commitment of the ‘EU as NPE’ to being constructed on, and thus bound by norms that have a ‘universal’ character.<sup>110</sup> This, on the one hand, makes the ‘norms vs. self-interest question’ seem irrelevant, for, based on this approach, the ‘EU as NPE’ is predisposed to always strive for a ‘universal interest’. On the other, it seems to solve the identity question too, as the universality of the EU’s constitutive features are seen to give it a ‘cosmopolitan’ character that automatically hinders any harmful version of ‘othering’.

In addition, in case of the problem of ‘othering’, Manners and Diez have come to an agreement that two of its forms can in fact be tolerated, for, as they argue, no identity-construction is possible without it. They suggest namely that the representation of the other as ‘different’, as discussed above, and as ‘abject’ – based on the psychoanalytical works of Jacques Lacan, the famous psychoanalyst and psychiatrist, recognising an abject

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<sup>107</sup> Diez, “Constructing the Self and Changing Others”, 628.

<sup>108</sup> Robert Cooper, *The Postmodern State and the World Order* (London: Demos and Foreign Policy Centre, 2000), 23.

<sup>109</sup> Diez, “Constructing the Self and Changing Others”, 629.

<sup>110</sup> Ian Manners, “The European Union as a Normative Power: A Response to Thomas Diez”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* Volume 35, Number 1 (2006): 176.

foreigner as part of the Self – makes the establishment of non-hierarchical relationships with the outside world possible. The latter form of othering can, goes the argument, contribute to ‘Europe’ recognising its own failures within itself – such as its past, as suggested by Ole Wæver of the Copenhagen school –<sup>111</sup>, and through that, to exercising self-reflexivity. This reflexivity, they argue, is also underpinned by the NPE theory’s endeavour to spread norms most of all through example, as well as by advocating ‘ordinariness’ instead of communitarian exceptionalism.<sup>112</sup>

In contrast to striving for exceptionalism, such an EU, goes the argument, would eventually ‘vanish’ if it is successful in shaping a world established on its promoted set of norms.<sup>113</sup> The EU would thus become what Étienne Balibar, philosopher and professor of comparative literature, calls a ‘vanishing mediator’, that is, “a transitory institution, force, community [...] that creates the conditions for a new society by rearranging the elements inherited from the very institution that has to be overcome”<sup>114</sup>.

It is thus the fluid, complex, multiple, and relational aspects of the Self-Other contestations – which blur the boundaries between Self and Other, and through that, make the crystallization of the Self and the Other impossible – that define the ‘EU as NPE’ in the NPE theory.<sup>115</sup> Consequently, the NPE concept does not aim to construct a single, categorical Self for the EU that would multiply differences between itself and the outside world, but to the opposite.

As follows from the above, this cosmopolitan non-exceptionalism seen in the NPE theory as one of the EU’s key characteristic features – together with its hybrid polity and historical evolution –, making it a unique entity that is capable of changing *what passes for normal in*

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<sup>111</sup> Ole Wæver, “Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity in the West European Non-War Community”, in *Security Communities*, ed. Emmanuel Adler et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 100.

<sup>112</sup> Manners and Diez, “Reflecting on ‘Normative Power Europe’”, 180-185.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>114</sup> Étienne Balibar, “Europe: Vanishing Mediator”, *Constellations* Volume 10, Issue 0 (2003): 334.

<sup>115</sup> Manners and Whitman, “The Difference Engine”, 397.

*world politics* by its sole existence and thus exercising great influence, derives in a large part from the ‘universal’ nature of its constitutive norms. As Manners states, the ‘universality’ of these norms follows from the fact that they are “acknowledged within the United Nations system to be universally applicable”<sup>116</sup>. Surprisingly, this argument, that is at the core of the NPE theory, appears to have remained uncontested in the academia, and resonates with the EU’s image portrayed by many European decision makers.

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<sup>116</sup> Manners, “The Normative Ethics of the European Union”, 46.

## Chapter 2: The Problem with Norms

*“Do I contradict myself?  
Very well then ... I contradict myself,  
I am large ... I contain multitudes.”*<sup>117</sup>

Walt Whitman

Despite the good intention, the NPE theory’s endeavour to transform adverse epistemological and ontological premises fails to reach its aim to the extent it was hoped. As it will be shown, the attempt to construct the EU’s ontological difference, and thus its ‘international identity’ primarily on the set of norms listed in the NPE theory is highly problematic. The desire to also assign a universal character to these norms following from their acknowledgement within the United Nations – an organisation predicated on the concept of a community of sovereign ‘nation states’ – makes the argument even more questionable. In order to shed light on the inconsistencies of this approach, it is important to have a closer look at the concept of universality with regards to norms, as well as at the argument for the validity of their cosmopolitan character following from their acknowledgement by the UN, and finally, draw attention to a hidden aspect of their diffusion.

When studying the concept of universality in politics, it is necessary to discuss another concept, i.e. that of legitimacy first. Legitimacy is key in politics, as, with the words of Max Weber, one of the ‘founders’ of the discipline of sociology, "The basis of every system of authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige."<sup>118</sup> Although Weber’s descriptive approach – famously distinguishing between three sources of legitimacy, that is,

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<sup>117</sup> Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass: The Original 1855 Edition* (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2007), 67.

<sup>118</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Free Press, 1997), 382.



tradition, charisma and legality-rationality – excludes any recourse to normative criteria, it highlights that it is the faith in a particular social order that produces stable social regularities.<sup>119</sup>

Taking a step further, the so called normative concept explains political legitimacy as the consequence of the justification of the use of political power and authority, which provides the moral grounds for societal obligations as well. As David Beetham, a renowned social theorist argues, “power relationship is not legitimate because people believe in its legitimacy, but because it can be justified in terms of their beliefs”<sup>120</sup>. Accordingly, John Rawls, one of the most influential contemporary moral and political philosophers, noted that if the conditions for legitimacy are not fulfilled, political institutions exercise power in an unjustifiable way and therefore the commands they produce do not entail any obligation to obey.<sup>121</sup>

The question that arises then is on what premises do the beliefs that justify legitimacy stand? When referring to the contemporary secular state, Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, a legal philosopher and former judge of the Federal Constitutional Court of Germany, famously stated that it “lives by prerequisites which it cannot guarantee itself”<sup>122</sup>. More specifically, Böckenförde argued that the positive right of secular states is based on social cohesion resting on premises that precede law.

For a better understanding, it is enough to mention the relationship between law and justice. Logically, law has the roots of its legitimacy in, and is thus preceded by society’s general concept of what is ‘just’, that is, of justice. The concept of justice, for not emerging from a ‘vacuum’, follows from pre-existing values that are, consequently, not of legal

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 124.

<sup>120</sup> David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1991), 11.

<sup>121</sup> See: John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).

<sup>122</sup> Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, *Recht, Staat, Freiheit* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1991), 112.

nature. It is thus not the law that serves as the prerequisite for society's values, and through that, justice, but the other way around.

The values that are pre-existent to justice might then either derive from 'nature', or, as Böckenförde suggests, be normative constructions.<sup>123</sup> The reason why Böckenförde leans towards the latter option becomes evident in the following example. Take the concept of equality that serves as a basic premise to the norms of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, etc. The equality of human beings in nature cannot be confirmed by empirical means. What can be empirically confirmed is in fact the de facto inequality of humans in nature.

Accordingly, when writing on human rights, Jack Donnelly, professor of international studies, states that "Science reveals a list of empirically validated needs that will not generate anything even approaching an adequate list of human rights."<sup>124</sup> The source of human rights, he argues, is therefore the 'moral nature' of humans that is a social project more than a pre-social given.<sup>125</sup>

György Geréby, professor of medieval history and theology, highlights that the authors of the US's Declaration of Independence of 1776 have also recognised this, namely, that values such as equality or liberty cannot be confirmed through scientific observations of nature.<sup>126</sup> Instead, they looked for equality's legitimacy somewhere else and, perhaps not so surprisingly, found it in God: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Jack Donnelly, *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 13.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 14-15.

<sup>126</sup> György Geréby, *Isten és Birodalom: Politikai Teológia* (Akadémiai Kiadó, 2009), 20.

<sup>127</sup> The 'United States Declaration of Independence' was adopted by the so called 'Continental Congress' on 4 July 1776, and is considered a major statement on human rights.

Thomas Jefferson and his partners, argues Geréby, drew attention to the fact that the basic norms on which modern secular states are constructed are in fact of theological origin, and did rightly so. Building on the political theology of Carl Schmitt, a controversial jurist and influential political theorist, who stated that "all significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts"<sup>128</sup>, Geréby suggests that it is the Bible that serves as the source of the beliefs justifying the legitimacy of 'Western' secular political norms.

For instance, the modern understanding of the principles of equality and universality can be traced back to the Old Testament where it states: "So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."<sup>129</sup> This message is then restated in the New Testament in various places such as the Acts of the Apostles: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth"<sup>130</sup>, as well as in the letters of 'Paul the Apostle': "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."<sup>131</sup>

Consequently, it is the Judeo-Christian tradition where the legitimacy of most of our political norms is grounded. Naturally, ancient Greeks, and in particular the Stoics with their concept of the 'citizen of the world', were an important influence too. It is, nevertheless, through the integration of various influences into theology with its powerful claim for legitimacy – in God –, as well as their 'restoration' through the successful

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<sup>128</sup> Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 35.

<sup>129</sup> "Gen 1:27", in *The Bible: Authorized King James Version with Apocrypha* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

<sup>130</sup> "Acts 17:26", *ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> "Galatians 3:28-29", *ibid.*

rationalisation endeavours of the Enlightenment, that they have an impact on the contemporary politics of the ‘West’.

Accordingly, Micheline Ishay, professor of international studies, regards the concept of human rights, which is based on the premises of equality, universality and inalienability, to be part of “a secularized version of Judeo-Christian ethics”.<sup>132</sup> She points out that, although modern ethics is indebted to a wide spectrum of traditions starting with Hammurabi’s Code of ancient Babylon, through the teachings of Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and the natural laws endorsed by the ancient Greeks and Romans to Islam, the concept of human rights as we understand it today is an outcome of the European Enlightenment and its secularized theological principles.

It was the Age of Enlightenment when Europe saw the secularisation of both politics and everyday life supported by the scientific revolution, the rise of mercantilism, the launching of maritime explorations around the globe, and the emergence of an educated middle class. It was also the era of religious wars throughout the continent from which thinkers attempting to break with religious dogmas and introducing the idea of a ‘common humanity’ – such as Hugo Grotius and Renée Descartes – emerged. The centrality of the principles of freedom, tolerance and democracy, faith in progress, reason and individual free choice, as well as the rise of the public sphere made a good setting for the development of the concept of human rights, the universality of which was then first announced in the ‘French Declaration of the Rights of Men and of the Citizen’ in 1789.<sup>133</sup>

The declaration of the universality of Judeo-Christian principles, even if they have been secularised with time, is, nevertheless, not unproblematic. As Joseph Ratzinger, who was inaugurated as the pope of the Catholic Church under the name Benedict XVI in 2005,

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<sup>132</sup> Micheline R. Ishay, *The History of Human Rights: From Ancient Times to the Globalization Era* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 64.

<sup>133</sup> The original French title of the Declaration was ‘Déclaration des droits de l’homme et du citoyen’.

noted in 2004, other ‘cultures’ such as Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or the Latin American and African tribal cultures clearly challenge, and in certain cases oppose Judeo-Christian norms as well as their claim for universality.<sup>134</sup>

In addition, the European Enlightenment also saw influential endeavours for the justification of the existence and pre-eminence of the ‘nation state’. As it has been briefly discussed in Chapter 1.1, the concept of state sovereignty that regards the modern state as the sole representative of peoples, as well as the ideology of nationalism providing for societal cohesion – both of which serve the aim of political control –, originated in ‘Europe’ and its prevailing norms.

Influenced by the work of Immanuel Kant, the central figure of modern European philosophy who attempted to reconcile rationalism and religion, as well as individual freedom and political authority, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, the most influential philosopher of the late Enlightenment, attempted to integrate rationality, theology and the role of the state under his concept of ‘Spirit’. For Hegel, the process of the Spirit’s actualisation in the world culminates in the state: “The state is the spiritual Idea externalised in the human will and its freedom.”<sup>135</sup> At the same time, reason and truth reveal themselves exclusively in the state, as “Only in the state does man have a rational existence”, and “the truth is the unity of the universal and the subjective will, and the universal is present within the state, in its laws and in its universal and rational

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<sup>134</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, “Stellungnahme” (speech held at the debate between Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and Jürgen Habermas, organised by the ‘Katholische Akademie in Bayern’ on 19 January 2004), accessed 12 December 2015, [http://www.kath-akademie-bayern.de/tl\\_files/Kath\\_Akademie\\_Bayern/Veroeffentlichungen/zur\\_debatte/pdf/2004/2004\\_01\\_habermas.pdf](http://www.kath-akademie-bayern.de/tl_files/Kath_Akademie_Bayern/Veroeffentlichungen/zur_debatte/pdf/2004/2004_01_habermas.pdf).

<sup>135</sup> Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 120.

properties.”<sup>136</sup> Consequently, Hegel argued that “the state consists in the march of God in the world”<sup>137</sup>

As the European influence then spread across the globe – including through the violent act of colonisation –, the principles of state sovereignty and nationhood became central to the prevailing world order. This, however, was not a harmless process. As Benedict Anderson, professor of international studies, has famously argued, ‘nations’ can best be described as ‘imagined communities’. The members of such communities do not know, and have not even heard of most of their fellow members, and yet the image of their communion is (expected to be) present in the minds of each of them. Therefore, these communities are but ‘imagined’ social constructions, the biggest problem with which is that they require narratives supporting other identities to be suppressed.<sup>138</sup>

Thus, as a consequence of the promotion of the ‘European’ model of the ‘nation state’ – more often than not serving imperial ambitions –, traditional local cultures, regional inequalities or cross-border connections were marginalised in favour of an ideology that emphasized unity within, and difference across arbitrary state boundaries. Furthermore, most representatives of the elite taking up the leading positions in politics and the academia in ‘nation states’ outside of Europe – and in particular those in the newly established, postcolonial ones – had been students of the ‘European’ educational system – that was often introduced directly by colonial powers on site –, and living very differently to the majority.<sup>139</sup> The ‘nation state’ and its new elite have then become the sole representatives of peoples under international law, and accordingly, in the United Nations.

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 136.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>138</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6-7.

<sup>139</sup> Heather Sutherland, “The Problematic Authority of (World) History”, *Journal of World History* Volume 18, Number 4 (2007): 500.

Consequently, despite the fact that international law acknowledges only sovereign states as the representatives of peoples, the idea that (nation) states, and in particular those established on the territories of past colonies, do in fact represent the interest, as well as the culture – and the resultant norms – of various peoples has constantly been challenged by many. As scholars of postcolonial studies have pointed out in several occasions, the true beneficiaries of this have been the ‘European’ – or ‘Western’ – powers, whereas others often remained voiceless and suppressed.<sup>140</sup>

Finally, another problem with norms, as it will be perhaps even more understandable in light of the above, concerns the concept of ‘epistemic violence’ introduced by Michel Foucault, one of the main figures of poststructuralist philosophy and social theory. Foucault’s concept refers to the hierarchy of knowledge and morality that is produced and maintained through the ‘normativisation’ of the discourse by the ‘epistemic sovereign’. Epistemic sovereignty constitutes knowledge as the unified network of truths picked up from the circulation of conflicting statements and put forth to suppress ‘error’ and ‘irrationality’ of conflicting statements.<sup>141</sup>

Thus, through Foucault’s concept, norms can be seen to contain and entail arbitrary constraints that limit the difference of expression. In this view, norms are a means of control imposing constraints on the human agency in order to ‘improve’ target societies on the basis of an arbitrary interpretation of what constitutes ‘normal’. Therefore, any claim to the knowledge of ‘truth’ or ‘the normal’ entails not only the act of othering, but that of subordination as well.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> See e.g. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 1977); Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. "Can the Subaltern Speak?", in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. Cary Nelson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313.

<sup>141</sup> Joseph Rouse, “Power/Knowledge”, in *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*, ed. Gary Gutting (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 106.

<sup>142</sup> Michael Merlingen, “Everything is Dangerous: A Critique of ‘Normative Power Europe’”, *Security Dialogue* Volume 38, Number 4 (2007): 443.

Consequently, the NPE theory constructs the EU's identity on the large part on a particular set of secularized Judeo-Christian norms that are often incompatible with that of peoples – many of whom are 'voiceless' and suppressed – in other parts of the world. It also suggests that such an EU is a cosmopolitan entity for its constitutive norms are acknowledged to be 'universal' by a community of 'nation states' that had been designed, and benefitted from, directly or indirectly by 'European' powers. Finally, it argues for the diffusion of these norms that opens the way to the subordination of any narrative not compatible with that composed in 'Europe'. Therefore, if the EU, following the hypotheses of the NPE theory, would succeed in transforming what *passes for normal in world politics* to the fullest extent, and thus *vanish* in this new order, it would do so in a 'European world order' that is certainly a non-cosmopolitan one.

Nonetheless, when formulating such critical claims, it is important to keep in mind the following argument of Rodolphe Gasché, professor of comparative literature: "By depicting Europe and the West as a homogenous power of domination over the rest of the world, postcolonial criticism of European imperialism, and its construction of non-European cultures, knows perfectly what Europe is. Indeed, it knows so well that it indulges in the same lack of differentiation of which it accuses the West in its relation to its others"<sup>143</sup>

Therefore, it needs to be emphasized that the above description of a certain world order as 'European' does not imply homogeneity in case of 'Europe' or its 'culture', nor does it aim to define clear geographic boundaries for 'Europe'. Instead, it reflects the fact that the constitutive norms of an order defined as 'European', including that of the pre-eminence of the 'nation state', have been constructed by 'European' great powers to serve their own interests, and suppress any other truth claims when projected to the outside world.

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<sup>143</sup> Rodolphe Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 16.



This leaves us, however, with some questions unanswered, the first of which is: what is 'Europe' then? And, for that matter, what constitutes the EU's 'normative difference', that is, its ontological uniqueness if it is to be 'cosmopolitan'? Also, what does the EU's power lie in? What connects these questions is another question, namely the question of identity.

### Chapter 3: The Question of Identity

*“And what if Europe were this: [...] An opening and a non-inclusion for which Europe would in some way be responsible? For which Europe would be, in a constitutive way, this very responsibility?”<sup>144</sup>*

Jacques Derrida

When discussing the question of identity with regard to the European Union, it is the TEU as well as the so called ‘Copenhagen criteria’ that one might want to look into for guidelines as to how the EU defines itself. These two documents – drafted by the European Council at its meetings in Maastricht in 1991, and in Copenhagen in 1993 respectively – prescribe the rules, however vaguely, that determine whether a country is eligible to become an EU member state. As such, these criteria, that set out the attributes one must be in the possession of in order to be able to join the ‘collective’, at the same time illustrate the image the EU projects of itself to the world.

Although rather briefly, Article 49 of the TEU addresses the question of membership, and begins with referring to the normative principles that, as discussed above, the NPE theory also draws onto. In addition, it adds a ‘geographical’ criterion according to which it is only ‘European’ states that may be admitted to the EU: “Any European State which respects the values [of human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities] referred to in Article 2 and is committed to promoting them may apply to become a member of the European Union”<sup>145</sup>

The Copenhagen document partially repeats the set of normative criteria found in the TEU, and completes it with economic ones: “Membership requires that the candidate

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<sup>144</sup> Jacques Derrida, *The Other Heading: Reflections on Today's Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), 17.

<sup>145</sup> Article 49 of the “The Treaty on European Union”.

country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union.”<sup>146</sup>

What is perhaps most striking about the list retrieved from the two documents is that it sets out two distinct categories of requirement. While the necessary attributes for the fulfilment of the normative and economic criteria can in theory be acquired by any state, the characteristic of being ‘European’ is – at least at first sight – something inherent, and applicable only to a restricted number of states.

As it has been discussed in the previous chapter, the normative principles highlighted in the EU’s foundational documents and the NPE theory are problematic if seen as (co-)constitutive elements of the identity of an EU that is to be cosmopolitan. Similarly, the economic criteria – that are in fact not necessarily separable from the normative principles – might trigger similar concerns, which will, however, not be discussed here as they are not examined in detail in the current NPE concept.

In addition, the fact that the EU admits only ‘nation states’ – and is in fact primarily based on the community of ‘nation states’ – might, in light of the above chapter, also raise some questions. To be fair, however, it is perhaps not so surprising if the EU cannot entirely break with the current international system overnight, even if it aims to transform it. An important question that remains is thus that of the concept of ‘Europe’ and its supposedly exclusive character drawing the boundaries for the EU too.

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<sup>146</sup> European Council, *Presidency Conclusions: Copenhagen European Council – 21-22 June 1993*, accessed 1 March 2016, [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/cop\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/enlargement/ec/pdf/cop_en.pdf).

### 3.1. The European World History: A European Identity in (De-)Construction

Just as much as the European Union cannot be separated from the concept of ‘Europe’, ‘Europe’ is tied to cosmopolitanism. While it is in Ancient Greece where one shall look for the origins of this concept, and it is indeed Ancient Greece that one might call ‘Europe’ for the first time in history, we know from Aristotle that the ‘Greeks’ did not consider themselves Europeans but as the people located between Europe and Asia: “Those who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit [...] Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive [...] But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent.”<sup>147</sup>

As Gasché notes, Europe did in this context not signify a specific geographical area, but a direction toward an obscure western region. Indeed, the name ‘Europe’, that is of Semiotic origin, and was passed down to the Greeks by the Phoenicians living on the coastline of what is called today the Middle East, referred to ‘darkness’ or ‘evening’, that is, the land where the sun sets. What is most striking about this name is, however, that it was not invented in ‘Europe’, but in a place other than that. Therefore, when referring to itself as Europe, ‘Europe’ calls itself by the name of the Other.<sup>148</sup> As such, it looks at itself and understands itself from the first moment through the Other.

Europe’s Phoenician, that is, ‘other’ origin is highlighted in the Greek mythology too. The mythographers told that Europa was a woman with Phoenician origin of high lineage who was abducted to Crete by Zeus appearing in the form of a white bull. As Herodotus noted, Europa was “an Asiatic” who had never even visited “the country which we now call Europe”.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Aristotle, *Politics* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 1999), 161-162.

<sup>148</sup> Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task*, 10.

<sup>149</sup> Herodotus, *The Histories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), 285

Further to these references, Gasché lists the argument of Jean-Luc Nancy, a renowned contemporary philosopher, according to which Europe's etymological origin can also be retracted to the Greek word 'Euruopa' that appears in Homer as a companion adjective to Zeus. It means 'wide-looking', 'wide-eyed' or 'far-seeing', that is, someone looking far into the distance. For Gaché – through Nancy – this reading of Europe's name indicates reference to 'an idea of a vision' at what is other than itself – that is, its Self –, as well as a look at the 'universal'. As such, it is a movement (of vision) that is always ahead of itself.<sup>150</sup>

Consequently, the 'original' concept of Europe does not – as it cannot – refer to a particular geographical entity. Keeping the myth of Europa's abduction by Zeus in mind, 'Europe', in geographical terms, can best be understood as a movement of tearing away (from Asia) toward the unknown and boundless (West). It is a movement of separation – that leaves everything proper behind – toward the indeterminate foreignness.<sup>151</sup>

Despite numerous attempts to bind 'Europe' to Christianity and Ancient Greece, it does not – as again, it cannot – refer to a particular culture either. For instance, Jean-Paul Sartre, one of the key figures in existentialism and phenomenology, stated when referring to the West, and in particular 'Europe', – somewhat in accordance with the Schmittean political theology – that “we are all Christians, even today; the most radical disbelief is still Christian atheism”<sup>152</sup>, with Emmanuel Levinas, the renowned 20th century philosopher, adding the Greeks to the definition when he famously argued that “Europe is the Bible and the Greeks”<sup>153</sup>.

One step ahead, Martin Heidegger, one of the most impactful 20th century philosophers, referred to Ancient Greece, as well as Christianity only as the sources of the event that

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<sup>150</sup> Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task*, 12.

<sup>151</sup> Denis Guénoun, *Hypothèses sur l'Europe: Un essai de philosophie* (Belfort: Circé, 2000), 42.

<sup>152</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'idiote de la famille* Volume 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), 2124, cited and translated in Robert Cumming, *Starting Point* (Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press, 1979), 225.

<sup>153</sup> Emmanuel Levinas, *Is it Righteous to Be?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 182.

brought ‘Europeans’ into being.<sup>154</sup> For Heidegger, this event is still on-going, thus leaving space for other influences too. Accordingly, Karl Jaspers, the renowned psychiatrist and philosopher, argued that ‘Europe’, besides *the Bible and the Greeks*, is also Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe; Spinoza, Pascal, Kant and Hegel; Leonardo, Raphael and Rembrandt; Jerusalem, Athens, Rome, Paris, Oxford and Weimar, and so on, that is, it contains an immeasurable richness of ‘spirit’, ‘morality’ and ‘faith’.<sup>155</sup> As such, ‘Europe’ entails so much culturally that it is impossible to find anything that could possibly unify it under one theme.

As a concept that does not let itself be described with, or restricted by the terminology of geography or culture, ‘Europe’ has most favourably been grasped as a phenomenon of philosophy. As such, however, it does not only concern ‘Europeans’ – whoever they might be –, but humanity as a whole. The idea of ‘Europe as a phenomenon of philosophy’ also has a history that goes back, yet again, to the Enlightenment. What is more, however, in this view, Europe itself refers to history, that is, to the history of humanity.

The roots of the history of this idea, and consequently, that of this idea referring to history, is to be found in Kant, and was further elaborated by Hegel. As it has been discussed above, both thinkers attempted to connect and reconcile ‘rational intelligibility’ and ‘religious truth’ in their work. Following from this effort, the unfolding of (world) history was seen by Hegel to be presided over by God, and leading to a final end. At the same time, however, this teleological and theological process was conceived to be following the dictates of reason, that is, to be rational.

In this narrative, the full sweep of the cultural and intellectual history of humanity was seen as a manifestation of (the godly) ‘Spirit’ that is constantly reworking itself to keep up with

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<sup>154</sup> Martin Heidegger. *Being and Time* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 48.

<sup>155</sup> Karl Jaspers, *Rechenschaft und Ausblick: Reden und Aufsätze* (Munich: Piper Verlag, 1951), 238.

societal changes, and at the same time produces those changes through, what is called in Hegel, the ‘cunning of reason’. This process, that is, the actualisation of the ‘Spirit’ as in God’s ‘ultimate design of the world’, was in fact conceived as the movement of (world) history into European modernity that, as it has been mentioned above, was closely bound up with the concept of the ‘European nation state’ too.

The role of ‘Europe’ here has thus been that of an avant-garde in the movement towards the realisation of an ideal end, where humanity can unfold its true potential of peacefulness, rationality and freedom. At the same time, ‘Europe’ itself is (at) the end of this transition – running from a low origin to the highest end –, that is, of (world) history. In this linear trajectory, human beings around the world find themselves at different stages of development.

With Hegel’s words, “The Orientals have not attained the knowledge that Spirit — Man as such — is free [...]; They only know that one is free [...], [the] Despot [...]; The consciousness of Freedom first arose among the Greeks, and therefore they were free; but they, and the Romans likewise, knew only that some are free [...]; The Greeks, therefore, had slaves [...]; The German nations, under the influence of Christianity, were the first to attain the consciousness that man, as man, is free: that it is the freedom of Spirit which constitutes its essence. This consciousness arose first in religion, the inmost region of Spirit”<sup>156</sup>.

What is perhaps immediately noticeable in Hegel’s train of thought is his universal anthropology, i.e. his concept of ‘Man’ that refers to all human beings, who are equal in essence and have the same potential to reaching the ‘high end’. Indeed, Hegel argues that it is first and foremost due to geographical and climatic differences – and not as a result of inherent differences in humans – that different peoples are at different stages of unfolding

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<sup>156</sup> Georg Friedrich Wilhelm Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (Kitchener: Batoche Books, 2001), 31-33.

their potential: “Men are constantly impelled to direct attention to nature, to the glowing rays of the sun, and the icy frost. The true theatre of History is therefore the temperate zone; or, rather, its northern half, because the earth there presents itself in a continental form, and has a broad breast, as the Greeks say.”<sup>157</sup>

This narrative, although – or because of – being undeniably Eurocentric – and for that matter ‘nation state’-centred too –, and is not free of a particularly Judeo-Christian heritage either, at the same time assigns ‘Europe’ a cosmopolitan character too, however limited it is. ‘Europe’ refers here less to a particular geographical or cultural entity – or a particular identity –, and much more to a historical stage that is open to, and to be reached by all of humanity eventually. ‘Europe’ is thus the state of being where the whole of humanity – who are inherently equal – overcome their temporary, extrinsic differences.

Nevertheless, ‘Europe’, that is the leader, and at the same time the final stage of this movement (of ‘world history’) towards a cosmopolitan end, has in Kant – and through him, in Hegel too – its limits. Namely, and as mentioned above, the obstacle that is posed by the international structure consisting of ‘nation states’ to the coming into being of a truly cosmopolitan world where ‘perpetual peace’ prevails. As Kant writes, “for states, in their relation to one another, there can be, according to reason, no other way of advancing from that lawless condition which unceasing war implies, then by giving up their savage lawless freedom, just as individual men have done, and yielding to the coercion of public laws. Thus they can form a State of nations (*civitas gentium*), one, too, which will be ever increasing and would finally embrace all the peoples of the earth.”<sup>158</sup>

Kant continues, however, that states “in accordance with their understanding of the law of nations, by no means desire this, and therefore reject in *hypothesi* what is correct in *thesi*.”

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<sup>157</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, 97.

<sup>158</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Essay* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1903), 136.



Hence, instead of the positive idea of a world-republic, if all is not to be lost, only the negative substitute for it, a federation averting war, maintaining its ground and ever extending over the world may stop the current tendency to war and shrinking from the control of law.”<sup>159</sup>

Thus, somewhat in accordance with the opinion of the students of the realist school of IR theory, for Kant too, the international structure seems very hard to be changed – if at all –, however unfortunate it is. And the reason for this – just as in classical realist arguments – can be traced back, on the one hand, to the human nature: “A state of peace among men who live side by side is not the natural state (*status naturalis*), which is rather to be described as a state of war [...] Thus the state of peace must be established.”<sup>160</sup>, and on the other, to the supposed analogy between the behaviour of states and that of humans.

Hegel, as discussed above, saw the (nation) state not as an obstacle, but as something that *consists in the march of God*. So much so that he voiced his total rejection of the idea of a *civitas gentium*, even if Kant himself regarded it to be beyond the bounds of possibility in his time for the very same reason Hegel did; Hegel wrote: “the relation of states to one another has sovereignty as its principle, they are so far in a condition of nature one to the other. Their rights have reality not in a general will, which is constituted as a superior power, but in their particular wills. [...] Kant’s idea was that eternal peace should be secured by an alliance of states. This alliance should settle every dispute, make impossible the resort to arms for a decision, and be recognized by every state. This idea assumes that states are in accord, an agreement which, strengthened though it might be by moral, religious, and other considerations, nevertheless always rested on the private sovereign will, and was therefore liable to be disturbed by the element of contingency.”<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 117-118.

<sup>161</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, 263-264.

Consequently, both Kant and Hegel regarded 'Europe' as a model for the world, with the only difference being that while for Hegel, 'Europe' and its structure consisting of sovereign (nation) states has reached, and was thus in itself the end stage of the transition of world (history), for Kant, although 'Europe' undoubtedly remained the head of the movement, it had yet to reach the ideal end stage.

Nevertheless, Kant wrote optimistically about Europe's future in his essay, the 'Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose', where he stated that "Although this political body exists for the present only in the roughest of outlines, it nonetheless seems as if a feeling is beginning to stir in all its members, each of which has an interest in maintaining the whole. And this encourages the hope that, after many revolutions, with all their transforming effects, the highest purpose of nature, a universal cosmopolitan existence, will at last be realised as the matrix within which all the original capacities of the human race may develop."<sup>162</sup>

As much as this approach to the world and 'Europe' within – or ahead of, or as the head of – it had been used to serve 'European' great powers to justify their missions of exploitation, it has, at the same time, opened the way for a cosmopolitan motive too. This remained true to the 'name' of Europe negating any geographical or cultural borders, and indicating that its 'Self' is inseparable from the 'Other'. What is more, Europe as a phenomenon of philosophy, the 'avant-garde' concerning the whole of humanity, was in this narrative conceived as a normative model for the world.

The cosmopolitan character of Europe (as a phenomenon of philosophy), as well as its role as a model was perhaps most brightly presented by Jacques Derrida, one of the major figures associated with poststructuralism. Just like Jaspers, Derrida rejected the prevailing concepts associating 'Europe' solely with its Greek and Judeo-Christian heritage, and

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<sup>162</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 51.

suggested to look for its identity elsewhere too: “One should, more prudently, say ‘Greek, Christian and beyond’, to designate those places towards which we are still timorously advancing: Judaism and Islam at the very least [...] but above all starting from and still in Nietzsche’s wake [...] the entire passage beyond whose movement bears in mind. That is to say, everywhere [...], in every place where a tradition thus tends of itself to break with itself”<sup>163</sup>.

As Simon Glendinning, professor of European philosophy, suggests, Europe – for Derrida – is thus not only the *Bible and the Greeks*, nor is it, however, merely the short and incomplete list with an ‘*and so on*’ tagged onto it. Instead, it indicates a kind of fundamental and irreducible readiness to take in any input that may come.<sup>164</sup> Europe – for Derrida – means thus the openness towards any change of the Self, or we can say, of the ‘identity’ of oneself.

Derrida suggested to break with the discourse associating ‘Europe’ with ‘end’ – that has started with Hegel – too, for he considered this approach “dated”.<sup>165</sup> Instead, he recommended to describe it as a “project” or “task” or “idea” that is infinite.<sup>166</sup> With his concept of an unfinished ‘Europe’, Derrida left space not only for the ‘Self’, as well as its ‘Other’ that is known to it already, but also for the unknown otherness which is yet to come: “there is another heading, the heading being not only ours but the other, not only that which we identify, calculate, and decide upon, but *the heading of the other* [...]. [However], it is necessary to recall ourselves not only to [...] the *heading of the other*, but also perhaps to the *other of the heading*, that is to say, to a relation of identity with the other that

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<sup>163</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Politics of Friendship* (London: Verso, 2005), 103.

<sup>164</sup> Simon Glendinning, “Europe, for Example”, *LSE ‘Europe in Question’ Discussion Paper Series* Number 31 (2011): 19.

<sup>165</sup> Derrida, *The Other Heading*, 27-28.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

no longer obeys the form, the sign, or the logic of the heading, nor even of the *anti-heading*<sup>167</sup>.

In this context, Europe has a task, or to put it differently, Europe is a task with great responsibility attached to it: “And what if Europe were this: the opening onto a history for which the changing of the heading, the relation to the other heading or to the other of the heading, is experienced as always possible? An opening and a non-inclusion for which Europe would in some way be responsible? For which Europe would be, in a constitutive way, this very responsibility?”<sup>168</sup>

As Jaspers argued, ‘Europe’ has developed counter-positions to every position, and it is only properly ‘*what it is*’ insofar as it is capable of the possibility of being everything.<sup>169</sup> For Derrida, this attitude, that is, to be able to relate in a negative, critical way even to the own Self, and at the same time remain open to the yet unknown Other, is exactly what constitutes the ‘identity’ of ‘Europe’.<sup>170</sup> This is the heritage that ‘Europe’ (as a phenomenon of philosophy) leaves to us. And this heritage entails, as mentioned above, great responsibility too: “it is necessary to make ourselves guardians of an idea of Europe, of a difference of Europe that consists precisely in not closing itself off in its own identity and in advancing itself in an exemplary way toward **what it is not**”<sup>171</sup>.

Consequently, only if it completely frees itself from teleological connotations and takes the necessary step further from its Greco-Judeo-Christian legacy – not rejecting it though, but integrating it to the extent possible together with all that has, and may come – towards opening to the unknown Other, will ‘Europe’ remain truthful to its name. Only this way will the idea of ‘Europe’ be a cosmopolitan one with an identity – or perhaps we can say

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>169</sup> Jaspers, *Rechenschaft und Ausblick*, 240.

<sup>170</sup> Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task*, 7.

<sup>171</sup> Derrida, *The Other Heading*, 29.

‘non-identity’ – that, while in the need for constant reconsideration and reinvention, clears the way for the openness to the world. Only this way can ‘Europe’ serve as a cosmopolitan *exemplary* option – that is, a cosmopolitan normative model – for the world.

### **3.2. The EU and its (Non-)Identity: External Relations Reconsidered**

If the European Union chooses to obtain a cosmopolitan character, it could perhaps best present itself as a project ‘in the name’ of the ‘Derridan concept of Europe’. Consequently, its current self-definition based on the TEU as well as the Copenhagen criteria – on which the NPE concept also draws – would have to be revisited. First, the listed normative and economic criteria should not any longer form an inflexible, pre-given set, and second, the content of the norms should be subjected to disputes between different readings.

Similarly, the geographical criterion – that is implicitly a cultural one too – should be deprived of its exclusiveness, and the EU should break with its current tendency of creating a geographical and cultural Other. It is perhaps needless to say that there has never been an agreement as to where Europe’s – and therefore, the EU’s – geographical borders should be drawn, and, as Balibar notes, there are no absolute borderlines between the historical and cultural territory of ‘Europe’ and the surrounding areas anyway. ‘Europe’, “a superimposition of heterogeneous relations to other histories and cultures, which are reproduced within its own history and culture”, is in fact a ‘borderline’ itself.<sup>172</sup>

Internally, the EU has achieved spectacular successes in moving beyond many of its inside/outside, Self/Other distinctions, and towards permeable boundaries as well as layered sovereignty.<sup>173</sup> Reflecting on the prevailing mind-set beyond concrete political actions, Yasemin Soysal, professor of sociology, notes for instance that not only the

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<sup>172</sup> Balibar, “Europe”, 322.

<sup>173</sup> Barry Buzan and Thomas Diez, “The European Union and Turkey”, *Survival* Volume 41, Issue 1 (1999): 56.

‘national’, but also the ‘local’ and ‘regional’ have been re-articulated within the EU. Soysal, after having studied how Europe is portrayed in various schoolbooks, gives the example of the historical Alsace-Lorraine region that has lost its contested existence in the French national imaginary, and is now displayed in the new narrative as a region ‘in the heart of Europe’ with promising prospects.<sup>174</sup>

Accordingly, the literature in EU studies, including that of the NPE concept with its notion of ‘hybrid polity’, focuses extensively on the EU’s internal structures and dynamics, and studies closely its ‘post-modern’ character. Wendt, for instance, characterises the EU as a peculiar example for ‘collective identity formation’ in which states have begun to see each other as an extension of Self rather than as Other.<sup>175</sup>

Nevertheless, when it comes to its external relations, the EU follows another direction in its current practice. Bahar Rumelili, associate professor of IR, argues for instance that, as opposed to its internal tendencies, externally, the EU as a ‘collective’ does in many ways replicate the modern, Westphalian ‘mode of differentiation’. She contrasts the example of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) with that of Morocco and Turkey. The CEE countries, perceived to be constructed as similar on the basis of historical, cultural and geographical – that is, inherently exclusive – characteristics, have been considered as potential members of the European project from the beginning. While it can be argued that this has never been an equal relationship for being constructed as a one-way exchange between the group of the ‘superior’, ‘developed’ and ‘stable’, as well as the ‘underdeveloped’, ‘lacking’ and

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<sup>174</sup> Yasemin Soysal, “European Identity and Narratives of Projection” (paper presented at the conference ‘Whose Europe? National Models and the Constitution of the European Union’, University of Oxford, 25-27 April, 2003).

<sup>175</sup> Alexander Wendt, “Collective Identity Formation and the International State”, *American Political Science Review* Volume 88, Issue 2 (1994): 384-396.

‘inadequate’, the admittance of the ‘inherently similar’ CEE countries seemed always to be the ‘obvious’ choice based on the claim that they form part of ‘Europe’.<sup>176</sup>

Things look, however, very different for Morocco and Turkey. Morocco’s application for membership in the European Community was immediately rejected in 1987, with the explanation that it is not ‘European’, or with other words, it is inherently and unchangeably different. The question of Turkey’s membership, on the other hand, has been causing intensive debate. While those in favour of Turkey joining the EU usually argue that it belongs to ‘Europe’ both in geographical and cultural terms – or at least not posing a challenge in the latter case –, and thus its ‘otherness’ is solely based on temporary differences, others see it inherently and permanently different.<sup>177</sup>

With the easing of the inside/outside, Self/Other distinctions between states within the EU, and, simultaneously, their increase towards the EU’s ‘outside’, another tendency of ‘othering’ has emerged below the state-level and beyond the *regional* and the *local*. The ever growing immigrant communities present in EU states, and in particular those perceived as ‘non-Western’, have in many ways become more important facilitators of differentiation than ‘extra-territorial’ *imagined communities*. As Martin Kohli, professor of sociology, notes, within the EU, ‘inter-state nationalism’ has been replaced by ‘intra-state orientalism’.<sup>178</sup>

Undoubtedly, none of these forms of ‘othering’ – be they constructed on inherent or acquired characteristics –, or any other attempt to construct an exclusive identity could naturally be embraced by the EU if it is to be cosmopolitan. As discussed in the previous chapters, however, the NPE theory, while advocating cosmopolitanism, at the same time operates unintentionally against openness and toward exclusivity for reinforcing the EU in its endeavour to diffuse a fixed set of particular norms.

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<sup>176</sup> Bahar Rumelili, “Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference: Understanding the EU’s Mode of Differentiation”, *Review of International Studies* Issue 30 (2004): 28-41.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-45.

<sup>178</sup> Martin Kohli, “The Battlegrounds of European Identity”, *European Societies* Issue 2, Number 2 (2000): 128.

What is more, the NPE theory, as mentioned in Chapter 1.2, permits two types of ‘othering’ too. First, it acknowledges that of the representation of the Other as ‘different’ in case of the absence of a ‘value judgement’. This critical constructivist standpoint assumes that nothing can be given meaning unless being put in relation to its opposite. Therefore, holds the theory, in order to define any phenomenon in the world, it has to be looked at in the context of its extreme differences to other phenomena.

However, while constructing the (identity of the) Self against a ‘different’ Other, one cannot avoid to simultaneously – and in an uninvited way – construct an identity for the Other too, as recognised by Manners and Diez as well. Furthermore, some argue that, following from the fact that this type of othering looks for the ‘opposite’ in the Other – e.g. democracy is constructed against a non-democratic Other –, as well as from the nature of moral values, the construction of a moral superiority against the inferior is inevitable in this context.<sup>179</sup> In addition, and as discussed above, if any type of ‘othering’ is applied in case of the construction of an identity based on a fixed set of exclusive moral values, it is hard to see how it could be possible to remain open toward a ‘different’ Other.

The second mode of differentiation allowed in the NPE theory constructs the identity against an ‘abject’ Other that is part of the Self. Here, Manners and Diez give Wæver’s example, according to which the ‘European security discourse’ tends to see the (threatening) Other first and foremost not in the Middle East, Russia or the Balkans, but in ‘Europe’s’ own past. Consequently, those further away from the ‘European’ core, that is, in places where peace, democracy, etc. are not yet guaranteed, are not seen as ‘anti-Europe’, but as ‘less Europe’.<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> See e.g. Roxanne Doty, *Imperial Encounters* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

<sup>180</sup> Wæver, “Insecurity, Security, and Asecurity”, 100.



This rhetoric, however, resonates very much with the Eurocentrism seen in Kant and Hegel, which the NPE concept clearly aims to avoid. As discussed above, while this worldview has indeed opened the way for a restricted form of cosmopolitanism by recognising only temporary differences and rejecting the idea of inherited, permanent ones, it builds on the unquestionable superiority of the Self and thus, again, hinders complete openness toward the Other, without which any claim for cosmopolitanism is unimaginable.

While in the current NPE concept, identity-construction is always bound to some form of ‘othering’ that contradicts cosmopolitanism, poststructuralist approaches in IR theory do in fact offer other possibilities too. For instance, in some approaches based on the sociological perspective of ‘symbolic interactionism’, the Other is not necessarily regarded as the representative of the different alternative to, or the opposite of the Self. In this view, the Self arises out of the social interaction with the Other, in which relationship the Other simply refers to naming, recognising and validating the Self.<sup>181</sup> Or, with other words, the Self refers to the ability of oneself to reflect on the way it is perceived by the Other.<sup>182</sup>

Another view, offered by Wendt from a liberal constructivist standpoint, holds that societies can be based just as much on a self-organising, homeostatic, ‘corporate’ identity that is exogenous to Otherness, as on a socially constructed one in which the Self only exists in relation to a particular Other. To sum up his hypothesis, Wendt notes that “If a constitutive process is self-organizing then there is no particular Other to which the Self is related. Having a body means you are different than someone else’s body, but that does not mean his body constitutes yours in any interesting way”.<sup>183</sup>

While such deliberations might be conceived as idealistic and criticised for various reasons, it is nevertheless clear that ‘Europe’ – and therefore the EU too – does not innately exist

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<sup>181</sup> Rumelili, “Constructing Identity and Relating to Difference”, 30.

<sup>182</sup> See e.g. George Mead. *Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

<sup>183</sup> Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics*, 224-225.

against an Other. For instance, if one recalls how ‘Europe’ gained its name from the Other, the basic premises of ‘symbolic interactionism’ can perhaps give a better understanding as to how the ‘identity’ attached to it has been constructed. Similarly, looking at the evolution of the EU’s political identity, and in particular its governance system, one might find ways to make use of Wendt’s conclusions.

What is more important for the EU than studying its own past and etymology, however, is that it has to be future-oriented, and always look far beyond itself if it is to claim a cosmopolitan character. In the wake of Kant, the EU shall continue striving for some form of a *civitas regnum* that, being the opposite of any type of exclusiveness, aims to *finally embrace all the peoples of the earth*. Although its current ‘hybrid polity’ can, and shall be perceived to have transcended what is defined in Kant a *negative substitute*, that is, a loose agreement of sovereign ‘nation states’ to be bound by international law, it is clear that the way towards a ‘cosmopolitan world’ is still very long, if it is ever to be reached.

Nevertheless, the EU’s current governance system remains so far the furthest step in international politics towards cosmopolitanism. The Kantian idea of *perpetual peace* has become a reality within the EU, where the current state-centred international order has been transcended and transformed into something not previously seen in international politics. Therefore, there is no doubt that the main external goal of an EU striving for cosmopolitanism shall be to transfer its unique governance system to other parts of the world, while internally, it shall aim for its advancement.

Nevertheless, in case of this transfer, the use of only certain strategies can be allowed. From the list offered by Manners, it is the strategy of *contagion* – or with Rosecrance’s notion, the use of *attractive force* –, that is, the passive diffusion of the EU’s model, that fits most with the cosmopolitan character. In addition, *informational discussion*, that is, the result of the EU’s strategic communications, as well as *procedural diffusion*, i.e. the

institutionalisation of relationships between the EU and other parties, might also be considered from this list.

When following these strategies, one shall, however, never overstep the boundaries of what Schimmelfennig calls the mechanism of ‘socialisation’. Contrasting it with ‘conditionality’ that refers to the EU’s sanctioning impact over third parties – mostly states –, exercised through the provision of financial aid, market access or institutional ties on the condition that beneficiary states follow the EU’s demands, ‘socialisation’, for Schimmelfennig, comprises all EU efforts to ‘teach’ EU policies to outsiders, and persuade them that these policies are appropriate, with the aim that they adopt them in the end.<sup>184</sup>

Nevertheless, as Schimmelfennig notes, the EU’s governance structure cannot be separated from certain democratic ‘attributes’ such as accountability, transparency and participation. Therefore, the transfer of the EU’s structure entails the transmission of some underlying norms – such as democracy – as well.<sup>185</sup> Although an indirect one, it is still a form of norms-diffusion that takes place mostly at the level of sectoral policy-making, and its effects might then spill over into the general polity and create a demand for the transformation of the entire political system.<sup>186</sup>

Thus, while the break with the current practice of the active and direct diffusion of a fixed set of norms – as supported by the NPE concept as well – is unavoidable for an EU aiming at cosmopolitanism, the transfer of its other main source of normative power, that is, its governance structure, might not be completely free of a ‘mission civilisatrice’-like connotation either, even if only in an indirect way. It is for this reason that the EU’s effort

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<sup>184</sup> Schimmelfennig, “Europeanization Beyond Europe”, 8.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>186</sup> See e.g. Tina Freyburg, Tatiana Skripka and Anne Wetzel, “Democracy Between the Lines? EU Promotion of Democratic Governance via Sector-Specific Cooperation”, *Challenges to Democracy in the 21st Century* Number 5 (Zurich: National Centre of Competence in Research, 2007); Tina Freyburg, Sandra Lavenex, Frank Schimmelfennig, Hanno Scholtz, Tatiana Skripka, Anne Wetzel, “Neue Wege der externen Demokratieförderung: Demokratisches Regieren in der Europäischen Nachbarschaftspolitik”, in *Externe Faktoren der Demokratisierung*, ed. Gero Erdmann et al. (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2009), 169–193.

to transfer – with Manners’ words – *what it is* to other parts of the world shall be combined at all times with the openness to also embrace – in Derrida’s wake – *what it is not*.

This would then leave space only for a conditionality-free exchange with the outside world in which the EU’s normative power relies on presenting itself, with the words of Kalypso Nicolaïdis and Robert Howse, as a ‘laboratory’ where new kinds of political deals are arranged between and beyond states.<sup>187</sup> In this context, it is then always left to the others to reject, follow or join in shaping the outcomes.

This is of course not to mean that the EU should immediately reject the norms underlying its governance system, nor is it suggested that it should stop presenting its ‘hybrid polity’ as a model. To sum up the above, what is important – and not reflected either in the NPE theory, nor in the current practice –, is that the EU – if aiming at cosmopolitanism – should only exercise normative power in the context of a two-way socialisation process, enabling it to practice strict self-reflexivity, including an open attitude toward the list, and the various readings of its norms. The first step in this direction, that shall end with the transformation of the current ‘European world order’, is the awareness of the particular, that is, non-universal character of the EU’s norms, as suggested in Chapter 2.

Thus the EU – through its model projected to the outside world – could offer itself as an example for inclusivity as opposed to any form of exclusivity, be it based on religion, ideology or anything else. Or, to put it differently, the EU would – and could only – this way become – with Derrida’s words – *the guardian of the idea of Europe*.

Accordingly, as Nicolaïdis and Howse argue, the EU’s “power lies less in showing off its outcome than its process, less in engineering convergence among its members towards higher standards of human rights and more its capacity to manage enduring differences within a normative and institutional framework that reflects a commitment to democracy,

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<sup>187</sup> Kalypso and Howse, “This is my EUtopia...”, 768.

the rule of law, and peaceful settlement of disagreements, contracts instead of power politics, positive sum instead of zero sum games.<sup>188</sup> Consequently, the role foreseen for the EU here is rather to present a model for solidarity based on shared projects, instead of on a shared, exclusive, 'nation state'-like identity.

Following from the above, this intergovernmental structure shall be based on the principle of subsidiarity to the extent possible, as well as evolve toward becoming multi-centred. More precisely, instead of maintaining a hierarchical multi-level governance system established on the shared structure of state-sovereignty, as well as the pooled sovereignty of some form of a central authority, the aim should be to give more prominence to the empowerment of the local, regional and other possible levels. This would lead to the shift of the emphasis from the 'vertical' to the 'horizontal' in the relationships between governance structures situated at different territorial levels.

With an ultimate cosmopolitan aim in mind, the logical external extension of the transcending of the strict (vertical) boundaries between the local, the regional and the 'national' levels within the EU is the overstepping of the separation between the EU and the 'global'. While this is surely not a short-term, or even mid-term goal, there is evidence that such aim has been on the table in Brussels for a longer time. For instance, in 2001, the European Commission released its 'Report of the Working Group Strengthening Europe's Contribution to World Governance' as an appendix to the 'White Paper on Governance', offering the EU's 'own governance' – although admittedly still in the need for further improvement – to be implemented at the global level.<sup>189</sup>

Another, and perhaps better known indication for such ambition can be found in the EU's Security Strategy published in 2003, which sets what it calls 'effective multilateralism' as

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<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 771.

<sup>189</sup> Commission of the European Communities, *Report of Working Group No. 5, 'Strengthening Europe's Contribution to World Governance'* (Brussels: European Communities, 2001).

one of the main strategic objectives for the EU. The importance of this concept becomes duly highlighted in the text when it concludes that the EU's "security and prosperity increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system."<sup>190</sup>

As the document reveals, the EU's ambition for effective multilateralism covers its willingness to enhance the cooperation with the United Nations as well as other international and regional organisations such as NATO, OSCE, the Council of Europe, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, AU, ICC, WTO and further international financial institutions. The declared desire with this is to improve the "condition of a rule-based international order", as well as the "quality of international society", with the long-term goal being to make the world a more 'just' place, as "A world seen as offering justice and opportunity for everyone will be more secure for the European Union and its citizens."<sup>191</sup>

Indeed, in the current international structure, international and regional organisations – all of which are intergovernmental and thus initially state-centred entities – form the most important target group for the transfer of the EU's governance system. Naturally, the direct diplomatic exchange with individual states cannot, and shall not be avoided here either. It is, however, equally important to also engage with actors beyond the state-level, for which there are also some promising signs in the EU's foreign policy endeavours. Although not recognised as sovereign actors by international law, representatives at the regional, local or other levels, as well as those of various minorities, the NGOs, etc., might have and equally legitimate – or in certain cases even more legitimate – claim to represent peoples' interests.

Most empirical studies on the EU's multilateral relations with regional organisations are carried out under the term 'regionalism' that, however, refers again to the cooperation with intergovernmental entities, or to that with states directly. Nevertheless, the EU's approach

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<sup>190</sup> Council of the European Union, *A Secure Europe in a Better World*, 9-10.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

to promote regionalism that is highlighted throughout its agreements with third countries, has indeed been a consistent strategy for the diffusion of its governance system.

The results are, however, mixed. For instance, the EU has been widely criticised for its policies often address ‘regions’ that have few regional characteristics and do not see themselves as a ‘community’ of any sort. Examples include the ‘Mediterranean’, or the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) countries that form regional communities ‘only in the EU’s policies’.<sup>192</sup> Furthermore, the literature highlights that although regional organisations such as the AU, ASEAN, Mercosur or the Andean Community have emulated EU institutions and policies – as discussed in Chapter 1.2 –, the EU did not directly encourage, or contribute to their establishment.<sup>193</sup>

Nevertheless, the EU, with its ‘overlapping forms of authority’ and ‘non-exclusive forms of territoriality’,<sup>194</sup> remains a unique example for supranational integration in international politics. Despite the moderate successes so far, the EU’s hybrid governance system has great potential to serve as a model in a world moving inevitably toward stronger global interdependence and cooperation, as portrayed in all contemporary concepts of IR theory. Should the EU be able to efficiently showcase its model while at the same time maintaining a cosmopolitan character, international politics would not witness the emerge of a new great power, but with Balibar’s words, that of ‘a new type of power’,<sup>195</sup> with more legitimacy and capability to change *what passes for normal in world politics*. Hence the normative power and relevance of a cosmopolitan European Union in global politics.

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<sup>192</sup> Bicchi, “Our Size Fits All”, 288.

<sup>193</sup> Schimmelfennig, “Europeanization Beyond Europe”, 15.

<sup>194</sup> John G. Ruggie, “Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations”, *International Organization* Issue 47, Number 1 (1993): 172.

<sup>195</sup> Balibar, “Europe”, 327.

## Concluding remarks

The ‘European project’, that was started on the ruins of World War II, had been initiated with the aim to guarantee permanent peace on a continent shattered by wars. With the passing of years and decades, many saw the project’s validity confirmed for its evolvement had been positively altering the continent’s political realities at a pace never seen before, while also allowing for prosperity unknown to most parts of the world. This has led a great number of academics as well as decision makers to the conclusion – the roots of which have been present in the ‘European psyche’ for a long time – that the ‘European model’ should be adopted in other parts of the world too.

In the meantime, the project has of course not reached any clearly formulated ‘target’ for it has never had one, and kept on evolving. While it did indeed arrive at an important milestone with its materialisation in the EU, its future remains subject to constant disputes to date. The discussions on the possible directions it might choose to take are formulated along the lines of a great number of topics and opinions, the principle behind which has been one of the project’s ‘built-in features’, as indicated already by its name.

From all the questions left open, those concerning the EU’s external power and identity are among the most debated ones. While everyone attempts to provide the best answer to the ever changing circumstances and challenges of international politics, the various solutions proposed in case of the EU often contradict each other. For instance, some argue for the necessity of an exclusive ‘European identity’ if the EU is ever to become an important actor in international politics, while others see the EU’s relevance in its ability to transform the current international structure – and the standards for actorhood within it – by the exhibition of its unique model based on inclusiveness.



Nevertheless, those arguing in favour of the second option cannot avoid facing the tension between ‘unity’ and ‘diversity’ either, for it is at the core of the post-Westphalian paradigm.<sup>196</sup> Any form of solidarity beyond the ‘nation-state’ requires shared commitment to some sort of a common aim or direction on the one hand, while it must, at the same time, be underpinned by openness towards the ‘new’ and ‘unknown’ on the other. Therefore, a political agenda that is to be cosmopolitan must somehow find the right balance between the two requirements.

There are some indications, however, that this is only one of the difficulties the EU has to face, and perhaps not even the biggest one. As certain tendencies show, the post-national narrative in which such discussions are carried out runs parallel to – among many others – another one, in the underlying principles of which the importance of (nation) state-sovereignty is not at all questioned. The United Kingdom’s referendum of 2016 on whether to stay in, or leave the EU has pointed out how irreconcilable these two narratives are. While those voting to leave the EU might have regarded the final result as a cause for celebration,<sup>197</sup> for others, arguing in the post-Westphalian narrative, even the idea to vote on this question was close to being ‘unintelligible’.

Naturally, such turn of events do harm to the ‘European project’ and its appearance in the world. However, the EU’s normative power is not only threatened by internal tendencies but also external ones. Other, often opposing narratives and opinions exist elsewhere too, the bridging of which cannot be achieved in the short term. Therefore, wherever the EU might choose to keep the balance between ‘unity’ and ‘diversity’ when engaging with the outside world – that is, whether to vest its normative power with a cosmopolitan character

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<sup>196</sup> Kalypso and Howse, “‘This is my EUtopia...’”, 784.

<sup>197</sup> The ‘United Kingdom European Union Membership Referendum’ was a non-legally binding referendum that took place on 23 June 2016 in the UK and Gibraltar. It resulted in an overall vote to leave the EU by 51,9%.

or not, both of which are equally possible scenarios —, any considerable result of its normative endeavours remains to be seen in the distant future.

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## **Abstract**

Drawing onto social constructivist, liberal realist and neoliberal approaches of International Relations theory, the past decades have seen a ‘normative turn’ in the literature studying the European Union’s international presence. Within this new narrative, the concept of ‘Normative Power Europe’ (NPE) – an attempt to restate prevailing epistemological and ontological premises – has triggered an expansion of research into the EU’s power projection endeavour and its normative component, and sparked the discussion on its ‘international identity’. One of the central arguments of the concept is that the EU’s power lies in its unique, cosmopolitan character, through the sole existence of which it is capable of structurally transforming international politics, and pave the way for sustainable peace. The recent paper argues, however, that the EU’s discursive representation in the NPE concept suggests in a rather misleading way that its supposed underlying norms vest it with a cosmopolitan character. Building on poststructuralist and postcolonialist arguments, the thesis provides a critical assessment to the concept, and in particular its characterisation of the EU’s norms as ‘universal’, in order to shed light on the paradox in the NPE concept’s fundamental claim for cosmopolitanism. Finally, it attempts to offer a framework for the reconstruction of the EU’s cosmopolitan (non-)identity as well as to the reconsideration of its external relations with the aim to provide a theoretical background for further empirical studies into its multilateral engagement with the outside world.

## Zusammenfassung

Im Laufe der letzten Jahrzehnte fand eine „normative Wende“ in der Literatur über die internationale Präsenz der Europäischen Union statt, die auf die sozialkonstruktivistische, liberal-realistische und neoliberale Theorien der internationalen Beziehungen zurückgriff. Das Konzept ‘Normative Power Europe’ (NPE) – ein Versuch der Umformulierung der vorherrschenden epistemologischen und ontologischen Prämisse – dient im Rahmen dieser neuen Narrative die Ausweitung der Forschung auf die Machtprojektion der EU und deren normative Komponente, sowie die Diskussion über die „internationale Identität“ der EU. Eines der Hauptargumente des Konzepts ist, dass die Macht der EU liege in ihrem einzigartigen, kosmopolitischen Charakter, durch dessen Bestehen sie fähig sei, internationale Politik systematisch zu transformieren, und den Weg zum nachhaltigen Frieden zu eröffnen. In dieser Arbeit wird jedoch behauptet, dass die diskursive Darstellung der EU durch das NPE-Konzept in irreführender Weise auf den kosmopolitischen Charakter ihrer zugrundeliegenden Normen hindeutet. Bezug auf poststrukturalistische und postkolonialische Theorien nehmend wird eine kritische Zusammensetzung mit dem Konzept, und vor allem dessen Behauptung der Universalität der EU-Normen geboten, um dadurch dessen paradoxen Anspruch auf Kosmopolitismus erkennen zu lassen. Schließlich wird die Arbeit den Versuch unternehmen, ein Framework zur Neugestaltung der kosmopolitischen (Nicht-)Identität der EU, sowie zur Neubewertung ihrer Außenbeziehungen zu bieten, mit der Absicht, neue theoretische Grundlagen zu den empirischen Studien ihres multilateralen Engagements mit der Außenwelt zu liefern.