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The European Union's Normative Power: Critical Perspectives and Perspectives on the Critical

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In spring 1994 I first heard Richard Whitman ask the question, 'what is the international identity of the European Union?'. The end of the Cold War, the Treaty on European Union, and wars in Kuwait and the Former Yugoslavia all raised methodological, theoretical and empirical questions over the study of the European Union's (EU) 'international identity' (Whitman 1994, 1996, 1998; Manners and Whitman 1998, 2003). In the 1990s and early 2000s I worked on projects studying the EU's international identity, the foreign policies of EU member states, and the interplay between 'English School' international theory and European integration during the 1990s with Whitman and latterly Diez (see Manners and Whitman 2000; Diez 2001; Manners 2001, 2004; Whitman 2001; Diez and Whitman 2002). During this period it became increasingly clear to me that the study of the EU in world politics needed to engage with both critical social theory and normative international theory. My work on symbolism in European integration during the early 1990s suggested that EU studies needed to engage with social theories that took physical, performative and discursive symbolism seriously (Manners 2000b, 2005, 2010b). Here the work of Berger and Luckmann, Cohen, Searle and Calhoun is important in coming to terms with both social construction and critical social theory (see, for example, Cohen 1985; Calhoun 1995; Searle 1995; Berger and Luckmann 1996). At the same time, sharing an intellectual milieu with international political theorists such as Devetak, Cochran, Mandaville, Frost and Kinnvall suggested that EU studies also needed to engage with normative theories that took international, supranational and transnational politics seriously (see Kinnvall 1995, 2006; Frost 1996; Cochran 1999; Devetak 1999; Mandaville 2001).

Critical theory seeks to provide a 'critical theory of society as it is, a theory dominated at every turn by a concern for reasonable conditions of life' (Horkheimer 1972: 198–9). Critical theory is 'critical in the sense that it stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how

that order came about' (Cox 1981: 129). Critical social theory should be seen as an 'interpenetrating body of work which demands and produces critique . . . [which] depend[s] on some manner of historical understanding and analysis' (Calhoun 1995: 35). This critical understanding of the role of theory leads to the observation that 'theory constitutes as well as explains the questions it asks (and those it does not ask)' (Hoskyns 2004: 224). In the study of the EU, critical social theory maintains 'a concern for understanding and challenging the social production of knowledge; historicizing and contextualizing subjectivity; and a commitment to progress and emancipation as the goals of research' (Warleigh 2003: 52; Manners 2007a: 81).

Normative international theory begins from the statement that 'all theory in International Relations is normative theory' (Cochran 1999: 1). By this Cochran means that 'even those engaged in positivist approaches, who aim to study world politics in a manner that resembles as closely as possible the methods of natural science, cannot avoid normative assumptions in the selection of what data is important, in interpreting that data, and in articulating why such research is significant' (Cochran 1999: 1). The problems of international relations 'are all *normative* in that they require of us that we make judgements about what *ought* to be done' (Frost 1996: 2). Normative international theory emerges from the way that 'making the moral case for new forms of political community is an important trend in recent international relations theory' (Linklater 1998b: 2). In this respect 'critical international theory . . . must distance itself from uncritical promotion of humanitarian intervention just as it must distance itself from uncritical acceptance of the sovereign state' (Devetak 2007: 153). Mandaville (2001: 2) goes further to suggest that 'critical approaches to international theory' should engage with other disciplinary projects that 'have been able to provide sophisticated accounts of how post-national, post-territorial and translocal idioms of the political are emerging out of globalising process'. Such disciplinary projects include Kinnvall's work on 'cultural diffusion and political learning' in political communities under conditions of globalisation, transnationalisation and increased international interaction and comparison (Kinnvall 1995: 205–6). Kinnvall argues the need to understand the 'mulifaceted nature of globalisation . . . in terms of a global-local nexus of dominance and resistance' using post-colonial, post-structural political theory and political psychology (Kinnvall 2006: 11–35).

Three meanings of normative power

The infusion of critical social theory and normative international theory into discussions of the post-Cold War world led to a project to interrogate the EU's international identity through the deployment of critical and normative theory, concepts and methods. The initial plan was to complete a book-length project reflecting on developments throughout the 1990s but

the nature of the academic 'profession' being what it is, an article was first to emerge followed by a further decade of research and reflection (Manners 2000a, 2002, 2004). The 2002 article in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* (JCMS) (see Appendix) had the merit of being quickly published and having an immediate impact, but the drawback of compounding three differing meanings of normative power, as well as only briefly including one out of nine case studies. The three meanings of normative power come from the crucial analytical issues of theory, concepts and methods in the social sciences.

Normative theory

The first meaning of normative power is the emphasis on normative theory, that is, how we judge and justify truth claims in social science. Normative theory is commonly believed to lie in opposition to empirical experience or positive description but following Cochran, the justification of the selection of empirical data, the value given to a particular interpretation of data and the claims regarding why such research should be judged important all involve normative truth claims (see May 2003: 46–68). The emphasis on normative theory in the study of the EU's normative power makes clear that simply focusing on empirical truth claims is unsustainable – analysis needs to also account for how we judge and justify such claims, as well as engaging in critique. This aspect of normative power was captured in the 2002 JCMS piece in the statement that 'my presentation of the EU as a normative power has . . . a normative quality to it – that the EU *should* act to extend its norms into the international system' (Manners 2002: 252). Later pieces argued the need for 'a wider and more appropriate approach in order to reflect what [the EU] is, does and should do' by rejecting 'unreflective and uncritical analysis' and instead 'attempting both to analyse and to judge the EU's normative power in world politics' (Manners 2006c: 184–5, 2008b: 45–6).

The contributions to this volume reflect normative theory in a variety of ways, ranging from political theory and international theory to neo-Gramscian theory and post-structural theory. In addition, the contributions tend to take quite different approaches to the study of the norms at work in EU external actions, reflecting a variety of understandings of social theory. The original 2000 Copenhagen Peace Research Institute (COPRI) working paper drew on four different social theories in its typology of international norms: positivism and the role of 'utilitarian norms'; interpretivism and the role of 'social norms'; critical theory and the role of 'moral norms'; and postmodern science and the role of 'narrative norms'.[1] In the paper this typology was applied to the case study of the EU's pursuit of the international norm of death penalty moratoria and abolition in order to illustrate the way in which different understandings of social theory shape the evaluation of EU external actions (Manners 2000a: 42–3).

This variety of normative theory and social theory can be seen throughout the various chapters in the volume, as five examples illustrate. Bickerton contrasts two different normative theories, cosmopolitan law and communitarian social preferences, in the study of political legitimacy. Bickerton's discussion of cosmopolitan law draws on a Habermasian framework of three sources of legitimacy: pragmatic justification related to 'utilitarian norms'; ethical-pragmatic justification related to 'social norms'; and moral justification related to 'moral norms'. In contrast, his discussion of communitarian social preferences focuses on a means of combining theories of 'social norms' with those of 'utilitarian norms' found in 'interests'. Smith explores and juxtaposes the EU as a post-sovereign 'normative power' and the United States (US) as a sovereign 'goliath' in terms of international theory in his study of global public goods. Smith suggests a number of implications of the juxtaposition, including the social role of 'self-perception'; the Gramscian perspective on hegemony; and a more utilitarian suggestion for the investigation of the provision of global public goods.

Haukkala examines the question of EU regional role in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) using Gramsci's notion of hegemony and focusing on the Ukraine. Haukkala argues that while attempting to deploy utilitarian and social norms, its current inability to grant membership is a problematic. Diez and Pace's study of EU conflict transformation identifies with a 'Foucauldian understanding of power' involving the study of the discursive construction of the EU. They focus on the notion of the 'power of reputation' and the way in which the 'discursive acceptance' of EU reputation is shared with conflict parties. Diez and Pace place their emphasis on the role of 'narrative norms' and the impact that a discourse of EU normative power has in conflict situations. Juncos uses a combination of normative theories to study EU discourses and practices in Bosnia, drawing on Diez's discursive approach; Merlingen and Ostraiskaite's (2006) use of Foucauldian 'governmentality'; hegemonic understandings of neoliberal ideology; as well as Barnett and Duvall's (2005a) constructivist approach to power as a product of social relations.

As all the chapters illustrate, engaging with normative power ensures, first and foremost, that the analyst needs to think about their understanding of normative theory, regardless of whether it is more empiricist or more critical in orientation. In this respect, as Orbie clearly states, the normative power 'idea forces us to consider questions that, while most difficult to answer, are very much worth raising'. This grounding in normative theory provides the foundation for the next two meanings of normative power – the concept of normative power as form of power and the characterisation of a type of actor (see Keene 2008; De Wekker and Niemann 2009; Forsberg 2009; Manners 2009a; De Zutter 2010). As Diez and Pace astutely point out in their chapter, 'the EU both *has* normative power in the sense of specific "abilities" in Manners' terminology (2002: 240), and *is* a normative power in the sense

of a particular kind of actor in international politics'. Björkdahl similarly differentiates between the means to exercise power and the characteristic of an actor.

Normative form of power

The second meaning of normative power is as a form of power that is ideational rather than material or physical. As a normative form of power, the emphasis is on the ability to use normative justification rather than an ability to use material incentives or physical force (see discussion of the normative form of power in Manners 2009a, 2009b, 2010a). In this respect, relations and policies with the rest of the world should be 'normatively sustainable' – that is, 'normatively' explicable and justifiable to others; 'sustainable' into the next generation. But this ability or form of power should also be understood as a conception of social power where '*power to* is prior to *power over*', in contrast to most traditional political theory (Barnes 1993: 208).[2] This second aspect of normative power was, as Diez and Pace identify, captured in the 'focus on normative power of an ideational nature' where 'the EU *acts* to change norms in the international system' (Manners 2000a: 29, 2002: 239, 252). Later pieces also argued the centrality of such ability and form of power to establish principles and apply them to different realities, and to do so in a way that prioritises normative justification over material incentives and physical force (Manners 2008b: 59–60, 2009a: 4, 2009b: 792, 800).

The contributions to this volume understand normative forms of power in differing ways, stretching from the analysis of norm promotion, including development assistance and trade relations, as well as strategic narratives and military force. Thus the chapters analyse the interplay between normative justification, material incentives and physical force, as five examples illustrate. Birchfield approaches the study of EU development assistance using normative power as 'theoretically grounded, *empirical* framework of analysis' concluding that, with the exception of two areas, the policies 'represent the normative form and the empirical function on the concept as well as the praxis of normative power'. Birchfield explores how material development assistance is related to processes of internal and external normative justification, suggesting that 'the EU seemingly undergoes an exercise in what Martin describes as an identification and legitimation internal process coupled with an external process of justification and projection'. Martin argues that a human security approach could provide a strategic narrative for the EU in order to bridge 'the apparent divide between an emphasis on norms and a readiness to use coercive force. Such a narrative could also provide a more nuanced explanation and justification for how these two types of instrument can and should be combined.' Martin's analysis examines the interplay between normative justification and physical force as part of developing a human security, with a case study of the EU's engagement in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Stewart and Björkdahl both analyse the ways in which normative justification (conflict resolution and peace support operations), material incentives (accession and economic agreements) and physical force (military force and coercive capacity) are deeply interdependent in the EU's 'neighbourhood'. Stewart focuses on EU actions in the South Caucasus, in particular on the promotion of 'constitutional norms and norms pertaining to the peaceful settlement of disputes'. She argues that 'the incentives for reform are lacking without the offer of accession' and concludes that 'a more reflective consideration of the nature of EU power in the neighbourhood' should be based on 'external empowerment, not coercion'. While Björkdahl examines EU experiences in the Western Balkans, she also looks further afield to peace support operations in the DRC and Sudan. She puts forward the argument that the EU 'can be both normative and powerful but needs to couple its traditional normative powers with its newly developed military capacity'. Orbie looks at the interaction of normative justification and material incentives with an emphasis on the 'promotion of social solidarity through European trade policies'. He suggests that the EU has relied almost exclusively on persuasion and incentives in the shape of positive conditionality rather than trade sanctions.

All the chapters illustrate the ability to use a normative form of power, in the shape of normative justification, has to constantly come to terms with the intersection and interaction of others forms of power (material incentives or physical force). In all the chapters, whether focused on norm promotion, trade practices or peacekeeping missions, this dilemma of combining normative power with material or physical forms of power arises. My emphasis on normative forms of power assumes that the prioritising of normative power may help ensure that any subsequent or parallel use of material incentives and/or physical force is thought about and utilised in a more justifiable way. The foundation in normative theory and emphasis on a normative form of power provides the basis for the third meaning of normative power – the characterisation of a type of actor. Forsberg (2009: 10) has usefully drawn on Raymond Aron to distinguish between these two meanings of power – *pouvoir* as the 'ability to cause effects' and *puissance* as 'a powerful actor' (see Aron 1986). Such a distinction between '*une nouvelle forme de pouvoir normatif*' (a new form of power) and '*une grande puissance régionale*' (a type of regional great power) facilitates a discussion of a normative type of actor (see distinction between '*pouvoir normatif*' and '*puissance régionale*' in Manners 2006b: 48).

Normative type of actor

The third meaning of normative power is as a characterisation of a type of actor and its international identity. Rather than an emphasis on the ability to use normative justification (*pouvoir*), the weight here is placed on the extent to which any actor in world politics is on a 'normative heading'

towards an 'ideal type' normative actor (*puissance*) (see discussion of 'normative heading' in Manners 2006a: 130–1). Forsberg (2009) has also suggested that normative power can be comprehended as a Weberian ideal type without idealising the EU (or any other actual actor in world politics) (see also De Zutter 2010). In this respect, a *more* normative type of actor would be one on a normative heading towards an ideal type of a normative power. An ideal type of a normative power would use normative justification to 'normalise a more just, cosmopolitical world' (Manners 2008b: 47). A more just, cosmopolitical world would be one in which communitarian, social rights of the self accommodate cosmopolitan, individual rights of others; where local politics and global politics commune (Manners 2008b: 47; see more extensive discussion of cosmopolitical theory and foreign policy in Manners 2010c). This third aspect of normative power was captured in the emphasis on the 'ontological quality [where] the EU can be *conceptualised* as a changer of norms in the international system' (Manners 2002: 252).

As would be expected from the reflective contributions to this volume, none of the chapters make absolutist claims about whether the EU is or is not a normative type of actor. All the chapters make more qualified observations regarding the character of the EU as a type of actor in world politics. For Bickerton the EU's 'quintessentially "post-national" legitimacy claim' is a part of its 'autonomy from the traditional political orders of nation-states'. Haukkala sets out how the 'character of the EU as an actor' includes almost a monopoly on 'its most essential characteristic, European-ness'. Stewart establishes the 'key EU internal characteristics' as based on democracy, rule of law, human rights and freedom, although she also observes how the 'EU is reluctant to tout itself as an actor in mediation, preferring a softer approach'. Juncos proposes that 'the EU's role in Bosnia since the 1990s could indeed be characterised as one of normative power', however in the case of Bosnia this characterisation has been undermined by inconsistencies and double standards. Björkdahl explores normative power from an identity perspective 'as describing a particular type of actor', insightfully recognising that 'the normative power concept also connotes the characteristic of the EU as an *actor*'.

Smith presents the EU as an 'ideal type' involving 'certain characteristics in its assumptions and behaviour . . . based on international governance, comprehensive security and commercial exchange/interdependence', but concludes that such an ideal type needs qualifying with empirical work. Birchfield advocates comparing the EU as a normative type of actor with 'various other characterisations of the EU's power and role as a global actor' in order to interpret 'the institutional and ideational character of the EU'. Orbie suggests that 'the constitutive principles which characterise the EU as a normative power are also, and increasingly, present in its trade policies'. Martin argues, following Javier Solana, that the EU adopt a human security approach 'reflecting its distinctive character as a polity committed to

foundational ideas of peace, democracy and human rights rather than the classic nation-state defence of territory'. Lastly, Diez and Pace seek to move beyond the question of 'whether the characterisation of the EU as a normative power' is empirically verifiable to argue that 'the far more interesting question . . . is to what extent the EU is *constructed* as a normative power'.

All the chapters illustrate the extent to which characterising the EU as a normative type of actor raises many methodological challenges. Clearly such a question is not one that can be answered without attempting to define and delimit a working understanding of what an 'ideal type' normative actor would be. Secondly, the chapters all sensibility focus on just one aspect of EU external actions, ranging from near relations to trade and development to security and conflict issues. Attempting to judge whether the EU can be characterised as a more normative type of actor would clearly be beyond the possibility of any one chapter, perhaps even book, given the wide range of principles which the EU appears to advocate (see next section). Thirdly, any such judgement of the EU as a normative type of actor would need to have a critical understanding of the differences between causal and constitutive analysis of EU external actions, as well as deploying a long-term analytical time frame capable of studying norm shifts rather than momentary fluctuations.[3] Finally, it may also be the case, as Diez and Pace suggest, that trying to definitively settle the question of whether or not the EU is a normative type of actor is really missing the point. If the notion of normative power is genuinely situated in critical social theory, then its purpose would not just be to analyse and reproduce traditional power structures as a form of problem-solving theory – its purpose would be to change existing structures of power and injustice by opening up the possibilities of different perspectives.[4] One way of doing this is, as Birchfield and Orbie do, to deploy a tripartite analytical framework for understanding the principles, actions and impact of actors such as the EU in world politics (Manners 2008a: 239, 2008b: 47, 55, 2009b: 785–6).

Principles in normative power

The first part of any normative power analysis is to examine the principles at work in the understanding of a normative form of power. As Bickerton convincingly set out in his chapter, normative power should primarily be seen as legitimate in the principles being promoted. If normative justification is to be convincing or attractive, then the principles being promoted must be seen as legitimate, as well as being promoted in a coherent and consistent way (on coherence and consistency, see European Commission 2006b; Portela and Raube 2009). Legitimacy of principles in world politics may come from previously established international conventions, treaties or agreements, particularly if these are important within the United Nations (UN) system. Coherence of principles comes from the extent to which

differing principles, and practices to promote them, can be seen to be sound and non-contradictory. Consistency of principles comes from the extent to which differing principles, and practices to promote them, are uniform both within and without the promoting entity, and are applied uniformly.

Principles in the EU and its relations with the rest of the world draw upon the principles of the UN Charter, as well as the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and UN Covenants, and the Council of Europe/European Convention on Human Rights. In practical terms such principles can be differentiated into the prime principle of sustainable peace; core principles of freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law (as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, after the Lisbon Treaty); as well as the objectives and tasks of equality, social solidarity, sustainable development and good governance (as set out in Articles 2 and 21 of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 8–11 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, after the Lisbon Treaty). Coherence and consistency in the international promotion of these principles is intended to come from the role of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, set out in the Lisbon Treaty.

All the chapters in this volume illustrate the role of principles in EU external actions. Bickerton's study of legitimacy contrasts cosmopolitan legal principles with communitarian social preferences based on principles of equality, institutionalisation and general applicability that emanate from the EU's political experience.[5] Haukkala identifies the way that membership of the EU based on respecting founding values and principles was seen as legitimate across Europe as long as enlargement was geographically open ended. Stewart's consideration of the three South Caucasus ENP action plans emphasises the prominence given to democracy, human rights and the rule of law, as the importance of compliance with European and international norms and principles. Juncos pays particular attention to the principle of local ownership in Bosnia, but is critical of the roles of the EU Special Representative/High Representative for imposing reforms over Bosnia's democratic institutions. Björkdahl's analysis of EU peace support operations pays particular attention to the principle of 'living by example' (including respect for the principles of the UN Charter) by focusing on the 'prime EU normative principle' of sustainable peace.

Smith looks at the principle vision or idea of EU normative power to argue for three core elements: secular, critical, self-reflexivity; non-coercive; and post-sovereign. Birchfield's examination of EU development policy identifies the 'key principles' as equality and solidarity, although she also identifies the way the EU's new (2005) development policy concepts of harmonisation, results-orientation, ownership and coherence align EU principles with those of the UN. Orbie's work on trade relations suggests that 'the EU's foreign policy principles of democracy and the rule of law, and respect for human rights

and fundamental freedoms' also apply to trade policies. Martin's advocacy of human security principles has much in common with EU principles such as the need for legitimacy, human rights, effective multilateralism found in good global governance, a bottom-up approach to ownership and the need for prioritisation of normative justifications over physical force. Lastly, Diez and Pace study the impact of the EU's self-representation as a normative power on conflict transformation in the context of the principle of lasting or sustainable peace.

Almost all the chapters address the challenges of legitimacy for the principles promoted through normative power, in particular with reference to questions of coherence and consistency. Bickerton focuses on the question of the search for legitimacy in the promotion of principles, concluding that 'the primary obstacle to the legitimacy of the EU as a normative power thus lies precisely in the lack of political development which scholars pointed to in the first place as the reason for the EU's predisposition to act normatively'. Similarly Haukkala also focuses on the challenge of legitimacy, concluding that 'at least in its present form the Neighbourhood Policy is far from a panacea. It suffers from a lack of legitimacy as a result of its inability to answer the neighbours' calls for full political and institutional belonging in Europe.' In arguing for a human security narrative, Martin suggests that it provides 'symbolic resonance though identification and legitimation' while addressing 'issues of consistency, coherence and effectiveness'.

Actions of normative power

Normative power should secondly be perceived as persuasive in the actions taken to promote such principles. If normative justification is to be convincing or attractive, then the actions taken must involve persuasion, argumentation, and the conferral of prestige or shame. As Keene (2008: 3) has argued, 'normative power could be understood as moral, political or social: as a function of virtue, persuasion or prestige'. Persuasion in the promotion of principles in world politics involves constructive engagement, the institutionalisation of relations, and the encouragement of multilateral and plurilateral dialogue between participants. Within these international and domestic venues for dialogue, debate and argumentation can involve reference to international principles as well as encouraging understanding and agreement (although also misunderstanding and disagreement). Similarly, such engagement and debate can also involve the conferral of prestige or shame by participants. The attribution of prestige may range from public declarations of support to membership of an international community, while the attribution of shame may involve public condemnation or the use of symbolic sanctioning.

EU actions in the promotion of principles cover a full spectrum of practices and policies, encouraging a more holistic, or comprehensive approach

to the many challenges of world politics. The EU has historically been better at addressing more structural challenges through development aid, trade, interregional cooperation, political dialogue and enlargement. In the past decade the gradual evolution of conflict prevention and crisis management policies has helped improve EU ability to deal with more immediate challenges, such as humanitarian crises and post-conflict reconstruction. This combination of EU actions marks a first step towards a more sustainable peace strategy where the EU is able to address both the structural causes and violent symptoms of conflict. However, the EU approach to the promotion of principles does not emphasise structural capacity or crisis ability, but focuses on the encouragement of processes of engagement and dialogue. Such EU engagement entails initiating and institutionalising regular patterns of communication or partnership, for example, through accession procedures, stabilisation and/or association agreements, the ENP, African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) relations, and Strategic Partnerships.

All the chapters also illustrate the types of actions taken to promote principles in EU external actions. Bickerton contrasts Eriksen's (2006: 265) cosmopolitan discussion of how EU 'enforcement mechanisms – namely capacity to make threats credible – can rightly do so only in so far as its actions are democratically regulated' with Laïdi's (2005: 265) communitarian discussion of normative power as 'disciplining the game of its [global] actors, introducing predictability in their actions'. Haukkala suggests that 'to argue that the Union's normative power is dependent on the perceived legitimacy of its actions and policies in the eyes of its partners is hardly a groundbreaking finding'. He argues instead that 'it is worth emphasising that at least in Europe the EU has an additional structural constraint [that] . . . the Union is not a state actor . . . but is a regional integration process to which the "objects" of that power can, and often do, aspire to join before accepting its norms and values as entirely legitimate'. Stewart sets out how struggles with institutional reform (leading to the Lisbon Treaty) during 2002–09 had impacted 'negatively on the EU's ability to formulate and implement coherent external action', although she also identifies how EU preference for normative mediation and persuasion 'gives the impression that the EU's enthusiasm for confidence-building is an easy substitute for more robust action'. Juncos follows Stewart in suggesting that 'consistency problems . . . affect EU external action more generally ("double standards" and consistency among EU actors and policies)', both also emphasise how 'the deployment of both civilian and military instruments in Bosnia's constitution an example of this civ-mil power in action'. Björkdahl places considerable emphasis on the way 'ESDP peace support actions in the field need to translate the declaratory politics of the EU into action' where 'military forces and individual peacekeepers' actions are guided by and in compliance with the norms championed by the EU'.

Smith differentiates between tangible resources (in material form) and 'less tangible resources in the form of commitment to agreed courses of

(collective) action', as well as between resources and operational effectiveness 'extending from diplomatic or commercial representation through to potential military action'. Birchfield stresses both the significance of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) assessment of EU-level international action in development policies, and the importance of non-instrumental aspects of development policy that 'goes beyond the instruments-only approach to EU external action'. Orbie argues that 'the prominence of ILO [International Labour Organization] conventions and the non-binding, deliberative and developmental approach fits in with the [normative power] thesis; but it remains to be seen whether the EU's actions in this area will have any normative impact', reinforcing a deliberative reading of trade policy actions. Martin's human security narrative seeks to provide 'order and consistency on diverse foreign policy actions' and to also organise 'foreign policy actions at an operational level'. Diez and Pace bring an innovative approach to the study of EU actions by assessing 'the extent to which actors make their claims in the form of securitising moves [that] . . . invoke the other party or parties as an existential threat to legitimise their actions', thus developing a discursive understanding of EU conflict mediation actions.

Many of the chapters look at deliberative practices, persuasive actions, as well as symbolic rewards and sanctions in the promotion of principles. Smith and Orbie both emphasise the 'deliberative nature' and 'deliberative approach' in EU foreign policy and external actions. Diez and Pace clarify that 'in contrast to earlier conceptualisations of EU civilian power, it is not even economic means that are at the core of EU power. Instead, power becomes an effect of norm leadership and persuasion.' Similarly, quoting Pascal Lamy, Orbie emphasises EU GSP-plus (Generalised System of Preferences) trade policy as 'built around persuasion and incentives rather than threats and demands'. However, Björkdahl argues that 'increasingly, the Union demonstrates a readiness to extent traditional, soft foreign policy methods such as persuasion, offering and granting wards, and norm diffusion to also include hard powers, such as military coercion, the threat of punishment as well as deployment of military force in its efforts to contribute to international peace and security'. A third perspective is provided by Juncos, who argues that 'the power of the EU in the Balkans has not relied on persuasion (and the power of norms), but mainly on coercion'. For Stewart it is not norm leadership, persuasion or coercion that is the problem in the South Caucasus, but 'indecision and division among the EU member states will not persuade the de facto [breakaway] states to turn away from Russia and towards the EU'.

Impact of normative power

Normative power should ultimately be envisaged as socialising in the impact of the actions taken to promote such principles. If normative justification is

to be convincing or attractive, then its impact must involve socialisation, partnership and ownership. Socialisation as an impact of the promotion of principles in world politics should be seen as being part of an open-ended process of engagement, debate and understanding. Partnership as an impact of the promotion of principles may be the result of institutionalised relationships created by the participating parties whether multilateral or plurilateral, international or transnational. Ownership as an impact of the promotion of principles involves practices of joint or local ownership as a result of partner involvement and consultation. However, such impacts of normative power should be based on the recognition that while international diplomatic socialisation is largely a mirage, the nurturing of domestic, transnational and international support for international principles can be helped by the three-part processes of normative justification conceived here.

EU impact in promoting principles can be extraordinarily difficult to judge. One way of making this judgement might be on the basis of empirical evidence, as Patton (2009) has done in her path-breaking study of EU neighbourhood and energy policies using data from a wide range of independent non-governmental organisations (NGOs).[6] Another way is to analyse the impact of the construction of the EU as a normative power, as Diez and Pace do in this volume (see also Pace 2007a; Diez et al. 2008). The book-length normative power project will use comparative, immanent and pragmatic means of judging and critiquing the impact of normative power (see discussion of judgement and critique in Manners 2009b: 786, 2010a). Beyond these practices, *clarity* of principle is important in ensuring others understand what the EU is trying to promote, as with the idea of 'never again' in the post-Yugoslav space. *Simplicity* of action space is important when the EU, albeit very rarely, is the only or predominant actor, as with the pre-accession processes of the 1990s. *Consistency* of promotion is crucial to ensure the EU avoids claims of 'double standards', as is often the case in state recognition (such as Kosovo) or UN resolutions (such as the Middle East). *Holistic*, 'joined-up' thinking is important in the broader promotion of principles through the multilateral system, such as the many challenges of the Doha Round of trade liberalisation, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and addressing climate change at the Copenhagen CoP15. *Partnership*, not EU unilateralism is important for building global consensus and ensuring success in multilateral institutions. Finally, *timescale* is important when attempting to judge EU principles, actions and impact in any normatively sustainable way.

As would be expected, given their differing empirical foci, the chapters also illustrate the varying impact of EU actions taken to promote principles. Bickerton emphasises a very broad interpretation of the EU's transformative impact on the 'global community' and 'the very dynamics of international politics', in many ways capturing the discourses of 'international society' and 'world society' within the 'English School' of international

theory (see Manners 2004). Haukkala concludes on an equally broad observation regarding the limits of EU enlargement and 'the question of how to alleviate the negative impact of relinquishing the most effective foreign policy tool at the EU's disposal'. Stewart places considerable importance on analysing impact and outcome, concluding that 'the EU acts normatively in its relations with the South Caucasus, but has a limited normative impact with regard to constitutional norms and norms pertaining to the peaceful settlement of disputes'. Juncos also emphasises the studying external impact, focusing on the importance of economic assistance, visa access to EU labour markets, the EU police mission and the role of the EU Special/High Representative, including suggesting that 'if the EU really wants to have an impact in Bosnia' it should be talking about visas not crime. Björkdahl identifies increasing tensions between power and legitimacy; between internal developments and external impact; and between norms and actions.

Smith identifies a relationship between 'the impact rather than the conception of policies that are produced through normative power' and the 'qualities of international governance, a non-coercive order and the commercialisation of international order' in EU external impact. Birchfield explicitly applies the normative power tripartite analytical framework to conclude that 'overall the bulk of the empirical evidence suggests a tentative affirmation of the congruence between the notion of the EU as a normative power and the reorientation and execution of its development policies'. Orbie concludes that 'the Union's principles, and to some extent also its activities, do indeed increasingly correspond with what would be expected from a normative power, but that its normative impact remains unclear'. Martin raises the critical issue that 'there is no consistent evaluation methodology of external action, nor any reliable assessment of how action impacts upon third countries'. Finally, Diez and Pace directly address the 'impact of the EU's self-representation on conflict transformation', gauging that the impact is mixed in Cyprus and negative in Palestine.

A number of the chapters discuss socialisation, partnership and ownership in the context of the impact of EU actions taken to promote principles. Juncos places considerable emphasis on the importance of promoting local ownership in Bosnia, arguing that 'a real partnership and a dialogue among equals has not yet materialised' (presumably because of concerns for the break-up of Bosnia and Herzegovina). However, she does suggest that while 'Bosnia has made progress in terms of democratisation and human rights', it is 'not clear to what extent Bosnian elites have internalised EU norms as socialisation channels are limited'. Birchfield also discussed the question of ownership as a 'fundamental concept' of new EU development policy, concluding that 'the EU sees ownership by EU partner countries as pivotal for the efficiency and sustainability of its initiatives'. Stewart, drawing on Schimmelfennig and Scholtz (2008), argues that EU incentives such as

partnership and cooperation do not reliably promote democratic change without the offer of membership.

Conclusion: perspectives on the critical

The deployment of a tripartite analytical framework for understanding the principles, actions and impact of the EU, at least as found in the contributing chapters, helps illustrate how analysing different forms of power might contribute to studying the EU as a type of actor. But the chapters also raised critical questions about how we analyse and understand both the EU's form of normative power and the EU as a normative power, in the context of normative theory. Such critical questioning is part of critical social theory's commitment to contextual, opening and changing and will be addressed in this concluding section of perspectives on the critical.

In order to conclude with perspectives on the critical questions raised in the book, I will begin by using the framework provided by Hay's (2002) critical introduction to political analysis. Hay (2002: 63) set out how the philosophy of social science has a directional dependence where 'ontology logically precedes epistemology which logically precedes methodology'. Hay (2002: 63) summarises that 'ontology relates to the nature of the social and political world, epistemology to what we can know about it and methodology to how we might go about acquiring that knowledge'. The contributions to this book, and much wider engagements with beliefs about 'normative power', all open up for ontological, epistemological and methodological perspectives.[7]

The ontology of shared union

For Hay (2002: 61–2), the question of the 'political' is an ontological issue in political analysis – 'what is the nature of the social and political reality being investigated?'. As a first step in the analytical process, there is a need to clarify just how can we understand the EU in world politics? Bickerton places this question at the centre of his study of legitimacy, contrasting the 'traditional political order of nation-states' with the 'lack of a unified political order' in the EU. Here there is a potential risk of a return to the 'supranational–intergovernmental dichotomy' between an emphasis on the construction of the EU as a type of supranational 'state' and as a type of intergovernmental 'regime of states' that so debilitated EU studies during the twentieth century (see discussion in Manners and Whitman 2003: 392–3). The traditional response to Bickerton's lack of unified political order is to replicate the perceived legitimacy and constructions believed to exist in state-like polities, as discussed in Morgan's treatment of 'the idea of a European superstate' (Morgan 2007). The idea of recreating the EU as a superstate might possibly address legitimacy questions, but not the many challenges of twenty-first century world politics, as

Monnet, Wight and Diez have long argued (Monnet 1962; Wight 1966; Diez 1997; Manners 2006c: 182–3, 193–4). The desire to return to the nineteenth-century popularity of 'statehood' is a psycho-social response to twenty-first century transnational challenges such as global economic crises, global warming, accelerating economic injustices and failures of global governance (for discussions of the psychology of globalisation and the return of nationalism, see Kinnvall 1995; Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking 2010). However as Devetak has argued, such 'statist anti-cosmopolitanism' places 'too much metaphysical comfort in the sovereign state' and proceeds from a dichotomisation of 'politics/morality, facts/values' (Devetak 2007, p 166).

My reading of Bickerton is that he does not explicitly suggest statehood, but instead suggests that the EU needs to develop 'the political resources necessary to introduce into the process of norm definition a set of democratic procedures', and leaves the question of polity formation open. As discussed extensively elsewhere, the EU is constructed as a polycentric, hybrid polity in which state, supranational and transnational politics coexist and compete (see previous discussions in Manners 2000b, 2006d, 2007a, 2008c: 12–15; Manners and Whitman 2000). These characteristics can be seen to be shared to a lesser or greater extent with all actors in world politics, including international organisations, NGOs, regional organisations and state-like organisations. One of the challenges for the study of world politics is to find methods for understanding the constructions of such political organisations without reifying their particularities. As set out in the 2002 article, the analytical question is to what extent 'this particularly new and different form of hybridity' constitutes a type of normative power, without confusing particular or different for unique or sui generis (Manners 2002: 240).

As an actor consisting of other actors (such as member states, transnational political parties and transnational interest groups) the EU is constituted both through its interactions with these 'internal' groups and with other global actors. In this respect the EU is not so analytically dissimilar to other global actors, for example, as states consisting of other actors (such as local-regional authorities, political parties and interest groups) that are constituted both through their interactions with these 'internal' groups and with other global actors. All of these relationships between the structures of international society, the structures of the international society of the EU, the structures of states and the agencies of interest groups, parties, local-regional authorities, member states and the EU all constitute the EU in world politics. These are dynamic social and political relationships that are evolving historically, politically and legally, thus necessitating an understanding of the EU's reality located in a social ontology.[8] All of these questions of polycentricity, hybridity, interaction, constitution, structure and agency, and social ontology are implicit in the normative power approach, as would be expected of any critical social theory.

The epistemology of social power

Secondly, Hay (2002: 62–3) suggests that the 'science question' is an epistemological issue in political analysis – 'what are the conditions of acquiring knowledge of that which exists?'. As a second step in the analytical process, there is a related need to clarify just how can we know the EU in world politics? All the contributors to the book focus on one case study with empirical evidence in their chapters, although two contributions are particularly interesting because of their differing approaches to the epistemological question. Birchfield's chapter explicitly discusses the normative power approach as 'a theoretically grounded, *empirical* framework of analysis' and proceeds with a systematic analysis of the empirical evidence from EU development policy. In contrast, Diez and Pace's chapter leaves aside the question of analysing the EU as a type of actor 'on the basis of empirical observation' and instead engages in an analysis of the discursive construction of normative power. Some contributions to the book emphasise the importance of an empirical analytical framework, such as Orbie's chapter (but also the work of Patton (2009) and De Wekker and Niemann (2009)), while others place more emphasis on discourse and discursive analysis, such as Juncos and Martin's chapters (but also the work of Merlingen and Ostraiskaite 2006). As thoughtful, critical analyses of normative power all the contributions bring a mix of analytical and epistemological positions to the empirical analysis, for example, the chapters by Bickerton, Björkdahl, Birchfield and Orbie all discus both empirical evidence and discourse surrounding the EU.

Epistemologically (and ontologically) all the chapters stand in opposition to more problematic attempts to separate interests and norms in the study of politics. In this respect interests and norms of normative power are two sides of the same coin, whether that coinage is labelled 'bounded rationality', 'social preferences', 'cultural hegemony' or 'discursive construction' (see Manners 2000a, 2004, 2007a for discussion of these four epistemological labels). But what is important is a thorough understanding of ontological and methodological suppositions of any such interest/norm distinctions. It is here that the importance of Hay's (2002) 'directional dependence' becomes crucial in the study of normative power. Outside of this volume there have been a number of studies attempting to separate interests and norms in the study of normative power. What becomes clear in most of these attempts is that they are ontologically presupposed by either a belief in the importance of the physical, objective world and the unimportance of the social, subjective world, or they are founded on a belief that it is analytically possible to separate these two human worlds. The problem of such distinctions is briefly raised in the discussion of the difference between '*discursive* acceptance' and 'serious *belief*' as an 'ontological debate' in Diez and Pace's chapter. Diez has previously addressed this distinction more directly in arguing that 'the point is not that normative power is not strategic, but that

strategic interests and norms cannot be easily distinguished, and that the assumption of a normative sphere without interests is in itself nonsensical' (Diez 2005: 625).

It is here that there are often problematic attempts to portray the study of normative power as separating norms from interests, when the question really involves understanding differing constructions of short-term self-interest, long-term intelligent self-interest, valued beliefs and identity. Similarly problematic is the tendency to compound discourses of 'force for good' with 'normative power', without too much reflection on how these have been differently constructed and by whom (see Barbé and Johansson-Nogués 2008; Pace 2008; Manners 2010a). Transatlanticist discourses of the EU as a 'force for good' emanated from the New Transatlantic Agenda (EU-US Summit, Madrid, 3 December 1995), and were incorporated into the 2003 European Security Strategy (European Union 2003) as well as subsequent prioritisation of short-term security issues.[9] All these epistemological challenges of empirical evidence, discursive construction and interest/norm distinctions necessitate an interpretive understanding of the social nature of power in the normative power approach, as would be expected of any critical social theory.

The methodology of normative power

Thirdly. Hay (2002: 63–4) sets out how responses to ontological and epistemological questions have methodological consequences in political analysis – 'how can we go about acquiring knowledge of that which exists?'. As a third step in the analytical process, there is an additional need to clarify just how we can research the EU in world politics. Although all of the contributions to the volume clearly have an implicit understanding of methodological issues, four of the chapters raise explicit questions of method. Bickerton and Martin both seek stronger and more consistent methodological approaches to analysing and assessing EU external actions, whether involving objective standards or subjective consultation mechanisms in order to judge actions and impacts. Birchfield and Orbie both respond to this call by drawing on the normative power tripartite analytical method in order to interrogate the principles, actions and impact of the EU in development assistance and trade relations. Birchfield suggests that this method may move the normative power approach 'from concept to analytical framework to research programme'.

As an analytical framework the tripartite method makes it possible to analyse the EU's normative power both causally and constitutively. Equally important, the method encourages the use of different forms of critique – by comparing the EU with other examples at all three stages of the tripartite analysis, as well as comparing claims of principles against the aims of actions and the consequences of impact. In terms of methodological practice and technique, the tripartite method opens up the possibility of using mixed- or

multi-method analysis, although the practice of 'longitudinal interpretation' is considered most appropriate for a fuller understanding of the nature of power in world politics. The practice of longitudinal interpretation is important in normative power analysis as it recognises that time and technique are determining factors in our understanding of the EU in world politics. A long analytical time frame ensures that analysis captures generational change rather than momentary fluctuation – ideally any study would include at least the origins of principles, their translation into actions, and the impact and consequences of these actions (Manners 2009b: 785–6). Unfortunately, the demands of time, funding and publication often result in short time horizons and observational rather than interpretive analysis.

Birchfield also suggests that the normative power approach may be evolving beyond an analytical framework towards a 'holistic research programme' in EU studies. As I have discussed previously,

> the first and most obvious implication for all the sciences in the era of globalisation, is that a holistic approach is really a pre-requisite for our understanding of contemporary Europe . . . [this] forces us to move beyond the conventions and conformities of linear thinking with their analyses of self interest, narrow context, isolation, and discrete questions, in order to think about holistic, contextual, inclusive, and global European studies. (Manners 2003: 78–9)

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Again, the demands of time, funding and publication have meant that most studies of normative power study one empirical case and often one EU principle. Rather than holistic, most studies are therefore focused on single examples with the methodological advantage of singularity but the disadvantage of atomism. Whether the focus of empirical research is in one of the five fields of economy, society, environment, conflict or politics, or on one of the nine principles of sustainable peace, freedom, democracy, human rights, rule of law, equality, social solidarity, sustainable development or good governance, the methodological risk is that the other four fields, or other eight principles will be overlooked.

Such a tendency to singularity and atomism often means that the political hierarchy and contestation within and between principles is frequently overlooked. While the assertion that there are nine principles at work in the EU is still subject to confirmation, for me there seems little doubt that sustainable peace is the 'prime principle' which leads to its prioritisation over the other eight principles. Similarly, it is the case that liberal principles such as freedom, rule of law and good governance have been in the ascendency over the past decade, despite the strengthening of social principles such as equality, social solidarity and sustainable development in the 1997 Treaty of Amsterdam. Such political contestation between liberal and social principles can only be understood if more than one principle is

studied through normative power. Such methodological challenges of tripartite method, critique, longitudinal interpretation and holistic analysis necessitate a normative power approach which is holistic, contextual and inclusive, as would be expected of any critical social theory.[10]

Normative theory and normative power

Hay's (2002) framework of directional dependence and my three brief perspectives within this framework illustrate the determinist aspects of responses to questions of social science philosophy. Hay usefully summarises his discussion with a final question – 'what is the nature and purpose of political science?' (2002: 64). In this final section of the conclusion, I return to my opening emphasis on normative theory in order to briefly reflect on the nature and purpose of normative power. Following Cochran (1999), if all theory is normative theory then the challenge is really to reflect on how we judge and justify truth claims about the nature of purpose of normative power in world politics. Clearly this places the emphasis on moving from absolute claims to relative judgements about how we might understand normative power. The immediate temptation would be to move to finding a definition of what 'normative' is, but this is no easy move. Normative political theory is broadly divided between two differing understandings of how 'normative' might be defined using communitarian theory and cosmopolitan theory, both of which are contestable (for a more extended discussion of how these positions relate to EU external actions, see Manners 2010c). As briefly raised in the section on principles in normative power, communitarian theory tends to be seen as involving social values, while cosmopolitan theory tends to be seen as involving concerns for humanity.

In the study of normative power, both communitarian and cosmopolitan approaches raise certain concerns. A communitarian emphasis on normative power as promoting European values raises concerns of neo-colonial hegemony. As I have discussed elsewhere, post-colonial theory and concerns for neo-colonial practices must be explicit in attempts to understand how to judge and justify normative power (see Manners 2006c: 184, 2006e: 175, 177). But as Spivak emphasises it is not just Eurocentric communitarian strategies that are problematic, but also the 'culture of capitalism' which evokes a wider critique of neoliberal cosmopolitanism (Spivak 1999: 93; Manners 2006c: 184). A cosmopolitan emphasis on promoting universal values runs the risk of entangling itself in the neoliberal culture of capitalism. As I have also suggested elsewhere, critical social theory and concerns for neoliberal practices must also be explicit in attempts to understand how to judge and justify normative power (Manners 2010c). Calhoun (2003: 111) emphasises the need for cosmopolitanism 'to disentangle itself from neoliberal capitalism' and move towards a more normative heading. In this respect the nature of normative power is more clearly set within the normative political theory of critical social theory and its emphasis on the

'cosmopolitical', that is, a 'strong sense of cosmopolitanism [which] calls for confrontation with deep and necessarily contentious differences between ways of life', involving both cosmopolitan ethics and communitarian politics (Calhoun 2003: 106; Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking 2010). Here then is the return to critical social theory – a holistic research programme that works within a cosmopolitical understanding of normative theory; that seeks to work 'within categories of existing thought' regarding EU external actions, radicalise them and show 'in varying degrees both their problems and their unrecognised possibilities' (Calhoun 1995: 23).

Notes

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1. See discussion of 'What is Normative Power' in Manners (2000a: 31–2); see also discussion of Linklater and Habermas' critical theory on page 6.
2. For more traditional treatments, see the work of Robert Dahl or Steven Lukes.
3. See discussion of the method of 'tripartite analysis'; and the practice of 'longitudinal interpretation' in Manners (2009b: 785–6).
4. See discussion of critical theory as contextual, opening and changing in Cox (1981: 128–9) and Manners (2007a: 77–8).
5. The EU's political experience comes from its historical context, hybrid polity and political-legal constitution that gives rise to principles such as equality, institutionalisation and general applicability. See Manners (2002).
6. Patton (2009) draws on data from the Heritage Foundation, Freedom House, Polity IV data, CIRI Human Rights Dataset, IO membership, Gini Coefficients and World Wildlife Fund's Living Planet Index.
7. Besides the contributors to this volume and works discussed in this chapter, see engagements by: Emanuel Adler, Lisbeth Aggestam, Federica Bicchi, Charlotte Bretherton and John Vogler, Jon Burchell and Simon Lightfoot, Robert Falkner, Orfeo Fioretos, Catherine Guisan, Guy Harpaz, Adrian Hyde-Price, Elisabeth Johansson-Nogués, Emilian Kavalski, R. Daniel Kelemen, Zaki Laïdi, Marika Lerch and Guido Schwellnus, Andrew Linklater, Sonia Lucarelli, Michael Merlingen and Rasa Ostrauskaite, Jennifer Mitzen, Kalypso Nicolaïdis, Gergana Noutcheva, Tonia Novitz, Karoline Postel-Vinay, Sibylle Scheipers and Daniela Sicurelli, Andy Storey, Nathalie Tocci, Antje Wiener, Richard Youngs and Hubert Zimmermann.
8. See discussion of the evolution of the EU's social constitution during the 1990s, including 'its historical context, hybrid polity, and political-legal constitution' in Manners (2002: 240–2).
9. The 1995 New Transatlantic Agenda stated 'we are determined to reinforce our political and economic partnership as a powerful force for good in the world', while the 2003 European Security Strategy stated that 'the transatlantic relationship is irreplaceable. Acting together, the European Union and the United States can be a formidable force for good in the world.' These different constructions

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may be seen as embodied in the symbolism of Clare Short's (former British Secretary of State for Development) discourse of good global development and her resignation over the invasion of Iraq. See Manners (2008e: 144).

10. The book-length normative power project aims to be holistic in its breadth of analysis, contextual in its longitudinal interpretation and inclusive in its outside-in/bottom-up technique.

QUERIES TO BE ANSWERED BY AUTHOR (SEE MARGINAL MARKS)

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Chapter 12

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