

The concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’ in global politics

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The social sciences have many different understandings of ‘normative power’, but in European Union studies normative power has three particular meanings. The first meaning of normative power is its emphasis on normative theory, that is, how we judge and justify truth claims in social science. The second meaning of normative power is as a form of power that is ideational rather than material or physical. The third meaning of normative power is as a characterisation of an ideal type of international actor.

The paper focuses on the second meaning of normative power – a form of power or ability to cause effects conceptualised as ‘pouvoir normatif’. The paper uses the distinction between ‘une nouvelle forme de pouvoir normatif’ (a new form of power) and ‘une grande puissance régionale’ (a type of regional great power) to facilitate this conceptualisation of a normative form of power that may be of wider use in the study of global politics. The paper clarifies these meanings developed over the last decade by focusing on the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’ in global politics. The paper looks at (I) three meanings of normative power; (II) the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’; (III) ‘pouvoir normatif’ in action; (IV) theorising ‘pouvoir normatif’; and (V) Concluding comments on the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’ in global politics.

International Studies Association Annual Convention 2012
Power, Principles and Participation in the Global Information Age
San Diego, California, USA: 1-4 April 2012

SD35: Sunday 4:00 PM - 5:45 PM Panel
Normative Power Europe: Empirical and Theoretical Perspectives (Panel 2 of 2)
Sponsor: European Union Studies Association
Chair: Richard Whitman, University of Kent
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Developed in the late 1990s, the ‘normative power’ approach asks how can we best understand the European Union (EU) in global politics? The most popular approaches to this question seek to answer it in a number of ways – by comparing it with other actors such as states, regional organisations or international organisations – or by declaring it unique and beyond comparison. Both political and scholarly assessments argue that ‘we are one of the most important, if not the most important, normative powers in the world’ (Barroso in Peterson, 2008: 69) and that ‘Europe has tremendous normative power’ (Moravcsik, 2010: 18). The normative power approach makes it possible to explain, understand, and judge the EU in global politics by rethinking the nature of power and actorness in a globalising, multilateralising and multipolarising era. The EU uses normative power in global politics but the question is whether it is more prone than other actors to do so? In areas which are core to the ‘European project’, it seems clear that the EU is more disposed to use normative power.

The infusion of critical social theory and normative international theory into discussions of the post-cold war world led to the interrogation of the EU’s ‘international identity’ through the deployment of critical and normative theory, concepts, and methods (see Whitman 1994; 1997; 1998; Manners and Whitman 1998; 2003). The 2002 article in the *Journal of Common Market Studies* (JCMS) (see Manners 2000, 2002) 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. Over the past decade there have been wide ranging debates over the meaning of the EU’s ‘normative power’ in global politics. These evolving debates have been covered in numerous volumes (Lucarelli and Manners 2006; Adler *et al.* 2006; Sjursen 2006; Laïdi 2008a, 2008b; Aggestam 2008; Tocci 2008; Gerrits 2009; Manners 2010a; Sicurelli 2010; Whitman 2011; Whitman and Nicolaïdis 2013). But the distinction between the three different understandings of normative power has not always been clear. This paper clarifies these meanings developed over the last decade by focusing on the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’ in global politics. The paper proceeds by looking at (I) three meanings of normative

power; (II) the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’; (III) ‘pouvoir normatif’ in action; (IV) theorising ‘pouvoir normatif’; and (V) Concluding comments on the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’ in global politics.

[I] Three meanings of normative power: What does ‘normative power’ mean?

French has two words to translate ‘*Macht*’ and ‘power’: ‘*pouvoir*’ and ‘*puissance*’.... One has the *puissance* to do something, and one exercises the *pouvoir* to do it.... This distinction would be roughly that between potential and act. It is not unhelpful to recall that in English ‘power’ depending on the particular case, is applied to either a ‘potential’ or an ‘act’ (Aron 1986: 255-6).

The social sciences have many different understandings of ‘normative power’, but in EU studies normative power has three particular meanings. Tuomas Forsberg (2011: 8-9) has drawn on Raymond Aron to help differentiate between these meanings. Aron distinguished between *puissance*: the potential to do something and *pouvoir*: the act of doing something. This distinction is the similar to that I have made between ‘une nouvelle forme de pouvoir normatif’: a new form of normative power, and ‘une grande puissance régionale’: a type of regional great power (Manners 2006a: 48). Thus a distinction is made between a normative form of power, or *pouvoir*, and normative ideal type of actor, or *puissance*. While this conceptualisation of a normative form of power is made in reference to the EU, it may be of wider use in the study of global politics.

The rest of this section briefly sets out the three meanings of normative power, before the next section more fully develops the concept of ‘pouvoir normatif’. The first meaning of normative power is its emphasis on normative theory, that is, how we judge and justify truth claims in social science. The second meaning of normative power is as a form of power (*pouvoir*) that is ideational rather than material or physical. The third meaning of normative power is as a characterisation of an ideal type of international actor (*puissance*). This differentiation is briefly expanded upon here.

theory

Normative theory is commonly believed to lie in opposition to empirical experience or positive description. 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, however, all involve normative truth claims (see Cochran 1999: 1; 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 engage in critique. Thus engaging with normative power suggests, 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. This aspect of normative power was captured in the 2002 JCMS piece in the statement that the '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 2006b: 184-5; 2008: 45-6). An example of the deployment of such normative approaches is found in the argument that 'an EU capable of acting as a normative power and a major player on the global scene is a basic prerequisite if our goal for the EU is to secure peace, maintain stability, foster economic prosperity and preserve our lifestyle over the next 50 years' (Bonino 2007).

pouvoir

The emphasis of a normative form of power, or *pouvoir*, is on the ability to use normative justification rather than an ability to use material incentives or physical force (see Manners 2009a; b; 2010a and fuller discussion below). This 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 other forms of power (material incentives or physical force). Whether focused on EU norm promotion, trade practices, or peacekeeping missions, this dilemma of combining normative power with material or physical forms of power arises. The 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. In this respect, relations and policies with the rest of the world should be 'normatively sustainable' – i.e. '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). This second aspect of normative power is, as Diez and Pace identified, 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). Other pieces also argue 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 2008: 59-60; 2009a: 792, 800). The EU's use of security-community practices in the Euro-Mediterranean represent an example of the application of 'normative power' (*pouvoir*) in international relations (Adler and Crawford, 2006: 4).

puissance

A normative ideal type of actor, or *puissance*, places the focuses on the extent to which the EU or any actor in global politics may be characterised by its use of non-coercive normative forms of power in the promotion of international norms. 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 2006c: 130-1). Forsberg (2011) 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, cosmopolitan world' (Manners 2008: 47). A more just, cosmopolitan 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 2008: 47). 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). In order to assess this, analysis of the principles, actions and impact of norm promotion is necessary. Such analysis makes it possible to disaggregate the role of international norms and use of non-coercive actions in order to judge whether actors in

global politics can be characterised as *more* or *less* normative types of actors. One example of normative *puissance* can be seen in the EU's civilian missions (EU Police Mission, EUPOL Proxima, EU Police Advisory Team, and EULEX Kosovo) in the former Yugoslavia since 2003, although this is qualified by inconsistencies over time in a difficult environment (Juncos, 2011: 97).

[II] The concept of 'pouvoir normatif': What form does normative *pouvoir* take?

Le pouvoir normatif de l'UE s'appuie sur la persuasion et l'argument, et non pas sur l'action ou la création de structures de changement. La puissance est dans ce cas une forme discursive qui renvoie à la légitimité et le caractère cohérent d'un argument. Dans son analyse, Manners met l'accent sur l'impact idéal de l'identité et du rôle international de l'Union européenne. Il introduit la notion de puissance normative (normative power), qui serait enracinée dans un contexte historique, un système politique hybride et une construction politico-légale ayant contribué à l'engagement de mettre les normes et les principes universels au centre des relations extérieures de l'UE (Saurugger 2010: 368-9).¹

As introduced in the previous section, normative *pouvoir* takes a form of power that is ideational rather than material or physical. As the extract from Sabine Saurugger's book on *Theories and Concepts of European Integration* illustrates, it makes sense to differentiate between 'le pouvoir normatif de l'UE' and 'la notion de puissance normative'. Thus 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; b; 2010a; 2011).

trinity of power

In order to more fully understand the concept of 'pouvoir normatif' it is necessary to differentiate the ability to use normative justification from that of the use of material incentives or physical force. This differentiation involves examining the historical evolution of the 'trinity of power' as it has emerged over the past 100 years. The most common and long-lasting conception of power in the social sciences is the 'trinity of power' – a distinction between three forms of power resources. Writing in 1914 Max Weber suggested that a trinity of parties, classes, and status groups were three dimensions of the multiplicity of power forms found in society (Weber 1968). In his 1919 lecture on 'politics as a vocation' Weber argued that dominant powers used three means to maintain their dominance –

physical violence, material reward, and social honour (Weber 1991: 80-81). Almost a century later, Gianfranco Poggi asserts that Weber's trinity of power still has relevance, with 'party' reflecting 'political power'; 'class' reflecting 'economic power'; and 'status' reflecting 'ideological/normative power' (Poggi 2001: 15-28). Poggi argues that similar trinities of power can be found in the works of at least six major social scientists beside Weber (Poggi 2006: 135-49).² Three other interesting examples of such trinities include the work of Amatai Etzioni, John K. Galbraith and Kenneth Boulding. Etzioni's work in 1961 suggested a three-fold typology of compliance structures and strategies in complex organisations: coercion, utilitarian power, and normative power (Etzioni 1961). Galbraith's 1983 study of the trinity of power differentiated between 'condign power' (the imposition of preferences), 'compensatory power' (the offering of reward), and 'conditioned power' (the changing of belief) (Galbraith 1983: 4-6). Similarly, Boulding's 1989 *Three Faces of Power* contrasted 'destructive power' (the power of threat), 'productive power' (the power of exchange), and 'integrative power' (the power of love) (Boulding 1989: 23-29). Interestingly, a similar classification for the study of the European Community was suggested, although not used, by Johan Galtung in 1989 when he stated that there were 'three classical types of power: the stick, the carrot, and the idea: coercive, remunerative, and normative power' (Galtung 1989: 15). The concept of 'pouvoir normatif' draws on these trinities of power to examine the EU in global politics. Such an approach is particularly attractive in helping to overcome the many problems presented by popular dichotomies such as civilian/military power; soft/hard power; Kant/Hobbes; or Venus/Mars.³ In order to use such a trinity of power it is necessary to more fully define the three types of power as used in the concept of 'pouvoir normatif'.

material incentives

Material incentives represent the most common understanding of the EU's ability to exercise power in global politics. General examples of the use of material incentives by the EU might include trade preferences, trade sanctions, technical assistance, or development assistance. All of these policies involve the offer or denial of material benefits for the receiving parties. The most obvious exercise of material incentives can be found in the use of 'transference' when the EU trades goods, or provides aid or technical assistance with third parties through largely substantive or financial means. Such transference may be the result of the 'carrot and stickism' of financial rewards and economic sanctions. Examples of transference and

material incentives have been seen in the impact of pre-accession assistance to countries joining the EU, as well as development assistance to Cotonou states. An example of the combination of material incentives and normative persuasion is found in the EU's promotion of labour standards through trade (Orbie, 2011: 179).

physical force

In contrast to material incentives, physical force involves the physical presence and/or overt use of coercive force by the EU in global politics. General examples of the use of physical force by the EU might include the deployment of EU rule of law, border, police, or military operations. All of these operations are capable of using physical force such as imprisonment, policing activities, or military action. The 'overt presence' of the EU in third states and international organisations may also contribute to the emphasis placed on physical force. Such physical presence, including the role of the European External Action Service or EU member states' participation in UN peacekeeping missions, may lead to greater concern for, and use of, physical force in global politics. An example of the interplay of normative justification and physical force is found in the EU's emphasis on human security in its engagement with the Democratic Republic of Congo (Martin, 2011: 207).

normative justification

The third form of power is that of normative justification which, if it is to be convincing or attractive, must involve persuasion, argumentation, and the conferral of prestige or shame by the EU in global politics. General examples of the use of normative power by the EU might include the promotion of UN conventions, the creation of fora for dialogue and persuasion (such as association councils), or the socialisation of candidate countries into international norms. Normative justification may be facilitated by 'procedural diffusion' involving the institutionalisation of a relationship between the EU and a third party, such as an inter-regional co-operation agreement, membership of an international organisation or enlargement of the EU itself. Examples of these three procedural factors might be the inter-regional dialogue with the African Union, membership of the EU in the World Trade Organisation, or the current enlargement negotiations taking place with the accession countries of south-eastern Europe and Turkey. There are examples where normative power discourse may allow EU actors to have positive influence in conflict situations (such as

Cyprus and the Middle East), but these are not without problems such as inconsistency in the Israel/Palestine case (Diez and Pace, 2011: 211 & 223).

It is worth noting that the concept of normative power is important across the social sciences, although with slightly different meanings in differing disciplines as three examples illustrate. In political philosophy 'normative power is understood as the power to affect the extant norms and beliefs that directly or indirectly affect how individuals perceive and are able to attend to their ... needs' (Hamilton 2003: 71). In legal studies 'normative power is the ability to take decisions that change what a person ought or ought not to do, or may or may not do, or what a person is able or unable to do, in the framework of some normative order, with or without the other person's consent to this change' (McCormick: 1998: 496).⁴ While in negotiation studies 'normative power has no strategic function. In essence, normative power stems from beliefs about what constitutes a just or fair distribution' (Polzer *et al* 1995: 124-5).

(III) 'pouvoir normatif' in action: What are the mechanisms of norm diffusion?

[W]e rely on moral persuasion, the power of argument, and the power of shaming ... Other factors in these circumstances of voluntary compliance are also important, such as the domestic salience of the norm, its legitimacy and coherence, and the extent to which it fits with other prevailing and well-established standards; but norms are expressed through language and the process of argumentation and debate can shape what is said subsequently in both domestic and international venues (Foot 2000: 9 in Manners 2008: 57).

In 2000 it was suggested that there were six means by which EU norms were diffused, drawing on Whitehead (1996), Manners and Whitman (1998), and Kinnvall (1995). As Rosemary Foot has suggested - in the case of the engagement between the global community and China - persuasion, argument, and shaming, in the context of salience, legitimacy and coherence, are all critical aspects of norm diffusion (see discussion in Manners 2008: 57-8). For over a decade these six 'mechanisms of normative power' (Forsberg 2011: 1195) have been used to analyse 'pouvoir normatif' in action (Manners 2000: 35-6; Manners 2002: 244-5; 2006a: 46-7; 2006d: 76-81). The six mechanisms of norm diffusion – contagion, informational, procedural, transference, overt, and cultural filter – are

briefly revisited here. The social and political understandings of these mechanisms of norm diffusion will be briefly introduced, then returned to in the next section (see Manners 2008: 57; 2009a: 793; 2011: 235 for overview).

contagion diffusion

The contagion diffusion of norms takes place almost entirely through the diffusion of ideas from the EU to other political actors. An example of *pouvoir normatif* in action through contagion can be found in the ways in which ideas and means of regional integration have diffused to other continents. Hence ideas such as the creation of a ‘common high authority’, ‘four freedoms’, and even ‘single currency’ are seen in other regions of the world as being so strong that they are worthy of imitation. Thus in both South America (Mercosur created in 1991, and UNASUR in 2011) and Africa (the move from the Organisation of African Unity to the African Union in 2002) we see regional organisations being created in order to imitate the perceived worth of the EU. The African Union (AU) is particularly interesting in the way it sought to imitate the EU model – ‘during the Lusaka Summit several references were made to the African Union being loosely based on the European Union model, in which respect it was said that Africa “should not re-invent the wheel”’ (South African DFA 2002; Babarinde 2007: 8). Institutionally the AU mimics the EU, with its administrative Commission, Executive Council of member states’ foreign ministers, Permanent Representatives Committee, Pan-African Parliament, and Court of Justice. Contagion diffusion can sometimes be difficult to determine because the EU is actively engaging in inter-regional diplomacy through which it implicitly and explicitly promotes *mimétisme* (regional replication) in places such as south America (Mercosur, UNASUR), Africa (SADC, AU), and south-east Asia (ASEAN, ASEM) (Manners and Whitman 2003: 385). Contagion diffusion relies on a number of mechanisms of imitation, emulation, and mimicry/*mimétisme* including the persuasive attraction of ideas, as well as the prestige and status associated with regional integration organisations.

As three examples illustrate, the contagion diffusion of norms from the EU can be seen in action in the cases of the Kyoto protocol, the UNESCO declaration of cultural diversity, and the Ottawa landmines convention (Schreurs 2013; Chan 2013; Flowers 2013). The role of the EU in promoting the 1997 Kyoto protocol to the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change suggests that the ‘environmental imperative’ drove the EU to adopt measures that

and 'lead by example' (Manners 2000b 39-49; Vogler 2005; Baker 2006). In the case of cultural diversity, the lead taken by the EU on issues of 'cultural exception' since the 1994 Marrakesh ministerial meeting found form in the 2000 Council of Europe declaration on Cultural Diversity and the unprecedented adherence of the EU to the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions as a regional organization of economic integration (Ferri 2005; Chan-Tibergien 2006). The third example of contagion diffusion suggests that the role of six EU NGOs from 1992 onwards was crucial in encouraging member states to commit to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and agree to the 1997 Treaty of Ottawa (Long 2002; Dover 2006; Flowers 2013).

informational diffusion

The informational diffusion of norms occurs through references to a range of strategic communications, such as new policy initiatives by the EU, and declaratory communications, such as initiatives from the presidency of the EU or the president of the Commission. An example of EU *pouvoir normatif* in action through informational diffusion can be found in the December 2003 European Security Strategy with its reference to the 'complex causes' of terrorism, including 'the pressures of modernisation, cultural, social and political crises, and the alienation of young people living in foreign societies'. The informational diffusion of such norms, both inside and outside the EU institutions, relies on a number of mechanisms of initiation, declaration, and communication including the persuasive attraction and argumentative promotion of ideas.

Four examples of strategic communications initiated by the EU that spread informational diffusion of norms will be briefly discussed here: the October 2003 Commission communication; the December 2003 European Security Strategy; the September 2004 Human Security Doctrine; and the December 2008 Report on the Implementation of the European Security Strategy. The October 2003 Commission communication on 'the choice of multilateralism' marked the first conscious step after the March 2003 unilateral invasion of Iraq to convey the centrality of the UN system to the EU: 'effective multilateralism ... means taking global rules seriously, whether they concern the preservation of peace or the limitation of carbon emissions; it means helping other countries to implement and abide by these rules; it means engaging actively in multilateral forums, and promoting a forward

looking agenda that is not limited to a narrow defence of national interests' (Commission 2003: 3). By December 2003 the European Council went further to agree a European Security Strategy (ESS) which announced the strategic objective of effective multilateralism: '[i]n a world of global threats, global markets and global media, our security and prosperity increasingly depend on an effective multilateral system. The development of a stronger international society, well functioning international institutions and a rule-based international order is our objective' (Solana: 2003: 9). The September 2004 Barcelona Report proposed a new human security doctrine for the implementation of the European Security Strategy including the principle of effective multilateralism which has three basic aspects: '[f]irstly, it means a commitment to work with international institutions, and through the procedures of international institutions.... Secondly, multilateralism entails a commitment to common ways of working including agreed rules and norms: creating common rules and norms, solving problems through rules and co-operation, and enforcing the rules.... Thirdly, multilateralism also has to include coordination, rather than duplication or rivalry' (Barcelona Study Group 2004: 16-17. See also Martin 2011 and Remacle 2013). The December 2008 Report on the Implementation of the 2003 ESS, in the section on 'Partnerships for Effective Multilateralism' argued that 'the ESS called for Europe to contribute to a more effective multilateral order around the world. Since 2003, we have strengthened our partnerships in pursuit of that objective' (Solana 2008: 11) .

procedural diffusion

The procedural diffusion of norms takes place through the institutionalisation of relationships between the EU and third parties, involving political partnership as found in inter-regional cooperation agreements, membership of an international organisation, association agreements, or enlargement of the EU itself. An example of *pouvoir normatif* in action would include the way that, since 1995, EU relationships with over 120 countries have systematically included an 'essential elements' clause referring to human rights and democracy, although in cases such as India and Burma these prove extremely controversial. Procedural diffusion relies on a number of mechanisms of partnership, cooperation, association and membership, including the persuasive attraction of ideas, the argumentative promotion of ideas, as well as the prestige and status of associating with the EU.

Examples of procedural diffusion in the EU's normative power can be found in the 20 association agreements identified by the External Action Service in May 2011 – including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, South Africa, Turkey, and the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreements. The EU's layers of institutionalised relationships include accession procedures, Stabilisation and Association Agreements, the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), and Generalised System of Preferences 'plus' (GSP+) arrangements. Although these relationships include a variety of different procedures, they all include discussion and diffusion of human rights, the environment, and core labour standards to varying degrees. Examples of the procedural diffusion of norms include the essential element of effective implementation of UN core human rights conventions, ILO core labour standards conventions, and key environmental conventions in the EU's relations with its ENP partners (Commission 2004: 12-13; 32-5; Manners 2009a). Similarly, the arrangements applying a scheme of GSP+ for non-LDC developing countries include the promotion of the principles found in the core UN and ILO human and labour rights conventions, as well as international conventions related to the environment and good governance (Council of the European Union 2005).

transference diffusion

The transference diffusion of norms occurs when the EU is involved in the transference of material and immaterial assets such as humanitarian aid and technical assistance. As an example of *pouvoir normatif* in action, such transference may be the result of exportation through 'conditionality clauses', but is equally likely to be the result of more 'grass roots' engagement of EU agencies and support for NGOs on the ground without such conditions. Transference diffusion relies on a number of mechanisms of aid and assistance, engagement and support, including dialogue on, and transference of, ideas.

An controversial example of transference diffusion can be found in the April 2006 decision by Benita Ferrero-Waldner, External Relations Commissioner, to suspend payments to the newly-elected Hamas government, but to increase aid to the Palestinian people through direct payments for aid to refugees and for fuel costs (Diez and Pace 2011). Transference diffusion is thus most obvious in development aid and peacebuilding activities, with examples such as Aceh, Darfur, and Palestine illustrating how these two policy areas are

often deeply intertwined (Manners 2007a). This transference diffusion can be seen in the role of the funding provided by the Rapid Reaction Mechanism, humanitarian aid provided by ECHO, and the launching of a monitoring mission and an election observation mission in post-tsunami Aceh. Here the achievement of rule of law, human rights and democracy were part of the overall peace process and humanitarian effort.

overt diffusion

The overt diffusion of norms occurs as a result of the physical presence of the EU in third states and international organisations. Examples of *pouvoir normatif* in action through overt diffusion include the role of European External Action Service delegations and embassies of member states, or it may involve the presence of one of the many presidents (European Council, Presidency, Commission or Parliament), the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, or peacekeeping/peacebuilding missions (see Björkdahl 2011 for example). Overt diffusion relies on a number of mechanisms of presence, diplomacy, or actions, including dialogue, transference, or enforcement of ideas.

Attempts at the overt diffusion of human rights can be seen in the EU support for the creation of the UN Human Rights Council in 2006 and the more EU human rights mission to the Philippines in 2007. Alongside Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, the EU and its associated countries had pushed hard for the replacement of the discredited UN Human Rights Commission (HRC) by a new, strengthened UN Human Rights Council in 2006. However within a year the overt presence of the EU at the UN was felt again as the EU members of the HRC threatened to pull out in order to prevent rights abusers on the Council, such as China, Cuba, Russia, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia, from significantly weakening it. The adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 65/276 in May 2011, marked a step forwards for the EU in terms of overt presence. The June 2011 EU Priorities for the 66th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations set out how the EU intends to promote good global governance through reform of the UN system, including the revitalisation of the General Assembly and the comprehensive reform of the Security Council, with the aim to enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and representativeness of the system. The EU's overt diffusion goes beyond its physical presence in international organisations to include delegations and missions in third

countries. An example of this practice was the June 2007 EU human rights mission to Manila to identify the necessary technical assistance to help the Philippines find and prosecute state agents responsible for the extra-judicial killings and abductions of anti-government activists and leftist sympathisers.

cultural filter

The final factor shaping and transforming the diffusion of EU norms is the cultural filter. The cultural filter is based on the interplay between the construction of knowledge and the creation of social and political identity by the subjects of norm diffusion (Kinnvall 1995: 61–71). The cultural filter involves on a number of mechanisms of identity, domestic salience, and the construction of knowledge, including the persuasive engagement, venues for dialogue and argument, as well as the transference and status of ideas.

Three examples of EU global engagement serve as examples of the cultural filter at work in biodiversity negotiations (Feditchkina 2013 and Sakaguchi 2013), climate change negotiations (Ohta 2013) and on environmental agreements (Schreurs 2013). The refusal of the USA to ratify the 2000 Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity, or the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change suggests that the local knowledge and identity construction regarding the environment is a powerful cultural filter. In the environmental arena the USA is not unique in this respect, as Australia refuses to ratify the Cartagena and Kyoto protocols while Russia has not ratified the Cartagena protocol. Furthermore the cases of landmines (Long 2002; Dover 2006; Flowers 2013), Responsibility to Protect/R2P (Manners 2006b; Coleman 2013) and the International Criminal Court (Scheipers and Sicurelli 2007, 2008; Sicurelli 2010; Lee 2013) suggest that the construction of sovereignty acts as a strong cultural filter to norm diffusion promoting global institution building.

[IV] Theorising ‘pouvoir normatif’: How can we best understand normative forms of power?

All theory in International Relations is normative theory. By this I mean 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 in Manners 2011: 227).

The brief discussion of the social and political understandings of the six mechanisms of norm diffusion in the previous section raises the question of theorising *pouvoir normatif* - how can we best understand normative forms of power? This question is particularly critical in the context of Molly Cochran’s observation on IR – if all IR theory is normative theory, then what are the consequences of normative assumptions regarding theory selection?? As set out in the 1990s, there are at least four perspectives to theorising and understanding *pouvoir normative* in global politics – 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’ (Manners 2000a: 31-2; 2011: 228).⁵ A fuller discussion of these four perspectives helps illustrate how they might help understand *pouvoir normative*.

The study of international norms in academic circles had exploded during the 1990s, a reflection of both the impact of the end of the Cold War and the popularity of social constructivism in IR (Manners 2000a: 31-2). By 2000 there were several surveys of this US-IR literature which gave a sense of the way in which the debate had developed, for example Ann Florini, ‘The Evolution of International Norms’ (1996), Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink, ‘International Norm Dynamics and Political Change’ (1998), Vaughn Shannon, ‘Norms Are What States Make of Them’ (2000); and Hendrik Spruyt, ‘The Normative Basis of the Modern State Order’ (2000). What was strange about much of this literature was the tendency to overlook the centrality of international norms in the study of international relations prior to the mid-1980s, and in particular the concern which the English School placed on solidarist international norms in international law, humanitarian intervention and human rights.⁶ Using a series of theoretical surveys from the period 1996-2007, four

theoretical perspectives on norms can be identified (Manners 1996: 35-50; 2000a: 31-2; 2000b: 22-35; 2007b).

positivism and utilitarian norms

Situated within notions of positivism are ‘utilitarian norms’ which ‘help states coordinate and collaborate so as to maximise utilities’, assist ‘order and constrain behaviour’, and which ‘serve functional purposes: they regulate behaviour, reduce uncertainty by institutionalising conventions, signal expectations, and reveal information’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 891, Shannon 2000: 295; Spruyt 2000: 69). As such, utilitarian norms help understand processes of international institutionalisation (Manners 1996: 41-3; 2000b: 28-9). Similarly, there are aspects of utilitarian norms at work in the institutional processes of *procedural diffusion* and *transference diffusion* discussed previously.

interpretivism and social norms

Located within constructions of interpretivism are ‘social norms’ which are ‘constitutive of actor identity and interests’, help ‘create new actors, interests, or categories of action’ and which can be ‘understood as a matrix of constitutive principles that govern the behaviours of members of a given social group’ (Finnemore and Sikkink, 1998: 891; Shannon 2000: 294-5; Spruyt 2000: 68). Social norms help the understanding of the constitution of communities and identities found in epistemic communities and role playing (Manners 1996: 40-1, 43-4; 2000b: 27, 29-30). Social norms are important in understanding the way the mechanisms of norm diffusion work, particularly in the constitutive processes of *contagion diffusion* and the *cultural filter* already discussed.

critical theory and moral norms

Prescribed within the domain of critical theory are ‘moral norms’ which are ‘irreducible to rationality or indeed to any other form of optimising mechanism’, represent the ‘prescriptive quality of ‘oughtness’’ and which ‘refer to rules that distinguish moral from immoral actions and behaviours’ (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 891; Shannon 2000: 295; Spruyt 2000: 67). Within critical theory it is further possible to identify a number of different strands to thinking about such norms including Antonio Gramsci’s ‘historical materialism’, Jürgen Habermas’s ‘deliberative theory’, and Craig Calhoun’s ‘critical social theory’ (Manners 2007).

Moral norms are important in understanding the way the mechanisms of norm diffusion work, particularly in the communicative and persuasive processes found in *informational diffusion* and *procedural diffusion* already discussed.

These three perspectives suggest that it might be possible to distinguish between utilitarian norms situated in a rational context, social norms situated in an intersubjective context, and moral norms situated in a prescriptive context. In the study of the EU's normative power Christopher Bickerton (2011a, 2011b) has contrasted 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'.

postmodern science and narrative norms

Ordered within the strictures of postmodern science are 'narrative norms' which legitimate certain narratives and recognise that 'the ability to define normality interferes with virtually all aspects of the international' (Bleiker 1998: 447). Finnemore and Sikkink appeared to recognise this when they suggest that 'one logical corollary to the prescriptive [moral] quality of norms is that, by definition, there are no bad norms from the vantage point of those who promote the norm' (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998: 892), thus bad norms are not normal. Florini put this well when she argued that it doesn't really matter how a norm arises, what is important is that it arises: 'No matter how a norm arises, it must take on an aura of legitimacy before it can be considered a norm' (Florini 1996: 365). Within postmodern science it is further possible to identify a number of different strands to thinking about narrative norms including Friedrich Nietzsche's genealogy, Michel Foucault's governmentality, and Jacques Derrida's deconstruction (Manners 2006c, 2007b). Narrative norms provide an understanding the way the mechanisms of norm diffusion work, particularly the structuring and order of discourses in all six of the mechanisms of norm diffusion discussed in the previous section.

In the study of EU normative power, Thomas Diez and Michelle Pace's place their emphasis on the role of 'narrative norms' and the impact that a discourse of EU normative power has in conflict situations. Their work on 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 2011).

(V) Concluding comments: The concept of 'pouvoir normatif' in global politics

The normative power of the discussion introduced in Manners' seminal article cannot be underestimated.... The NPE concept has enabled the EU studies community to escape the focus on specific institutions, policy domains and case studies, by engaging in a critical account of 'what the EU is and should be doing in world politics'. It has shifted attention to cross-cutting objectives pursued by the EU... while also sparking a meta-theoretical debate on the nature of the EU and its power in the world. The NPE idea forces us to consider questions that, while most difficult to answer, are very much worth raising. (Orbie 2011: 160-1).

The paper has focused on the concept of *pouvoir normative* in order to contribute to a better understanding of the EU in global politics. To do this the paper first distinguished between three meanings of normative power, before proceeding to examining the concept more closely and differentiate between material incentives, physical force and normative justification. The paper then revisited the six mechanisms of norm diffusion and four different theoretical perspectives on *pouvoir normatif*. Jan Orbis reminds us that the real normative power of this discussion is in the way in which it moves the analytical focus from institutions, policies and cases towards a critical discussion of the EU in global politics. While examples have been used throughout the paper, there is no doubt that the ongoing work of analysis remains the way to progress the normative power of this discussion.

Having briefly set out the concept of *pouvoir normatif*, the question immediately arises of the best method of *analysis* to study the EU (or any actor) in global politics. The normative power analytical approach combines a tripartite analytical framework which can be used causally or constitutively to understand the EU's normative power (Manners 2008b: 47, 55; 2009a: 785-6; 2009b: 239; 2011: 243-5). Two examples of doing this include Jan Orbis's work

on EU trade policies and Vicki Birchfield's work on EU development assistance. 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 (Orbie 2011). 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 2011). The tripartite analytical framework involves examining the principles the EU promotes, the actions it takes in their promotion, and the impact of such promotion. The framework provides a causal method of explaining how principles can lead to actions; how actions may have an impact: and how any such impact might change the principles. Following a different approach, the framework provides a constitutive method for understanding how principles, actions and impact construct the EU as an actor in global politics. This framework helps the process of beginning to answer difficult questions that are very much worth addressing.

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¹ The normative power of EU is based on persuasion and argument, and not the action or the creation of structures for change. The power in this case is a discursive form that refers to the legitimacy and the character of a coherent argument. In its analysis, Manners focuses on the ideal impact of identity and international role of the European Union. He introduced the concept of normative power (puissance normative), which is rooted in a historical context, a hybrid political system and a political and legal construction committed to contributing to the norms and universal principles in the center of External Relations of the EU.

² Amatai Etzioni has also identified similar triple-typologies in the work of six further social scientists (Etzioni 1961: 5, fn. 4).

³ On civilian power see Duchêne 1973 . On soft power see Nye 1990. On Kant see Tulley 2002. On Mars see Kagan 2003.

⁴ For a contrasting view see Raz 1998.

⁵ See similar four-part distinction in Manners 2003: 257.

⁶ None of the authors mentioned here seriously considered any literature written prior to 1983, most seeming to agree that the study of international norms began with Stephen Krasner, Friedrich Kratochwil, or Robert Keohane in about 1983 or 1984. Interestingly, this roughly ties in with the ending of the British Committee of the English School which had explicitly studied international norms for the previous twenty-five years.