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"Normative Power Europe" in Conflict Transformation: The Case of Cyprus

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1.   Introduction

Most political scientists and scholars agree that the European Union is a distinctive actor in world politics. In this respect, there are extremely divergent opinions about the EU ranging from the idea of the "EU as an irrelevant factor in international relations" (Zakaria 2008) to the "EU as one of the world's three main empires in the 21st century" (Khanna 2008). As a result of these divergent opinions, different authors have used different terms to conceptualise and define the nature of the EU and its role in the international arena. Some examples include civilian power (Duchêne 1972), ethical power (Aggestam 2008) and a qualitatively different actor in world politics (Lucarelli 2008).

The starting point of this paper is Ian Manners' conceptualization of the EU as a Normative Power. The main aim is to test the applicability of the concept of 'Normative Power Europe' in the field of conflict transformation in the case of the Cyprus conflict which has still not been thoroughly examined from such a perspective. The Cyprus conflict represents a critical case study for the NPE framework because of the different relationship of the island with the EU prior and after 2004. Prior to 2004, it was a conflict at the EU's border, but, after the island's accession to the EU, it became an internal EU conflict. This differentiation in the relation between the EU and Cyprus is particularly important because it allows comparisons to be done within a single case with regards to the NPE framework which will lead to a re-evaluation of the theory per se and also a re-evaluation of the practical application of the NPE framework.

According to Manners and others, a normative actor is one who has normative goals, pursues normative policies and produces a normative impact (Manners 2009: 2). In this respect, after discussing the concept of "Normative Power Europe" and tracing the conflict transformation principle in the EU's official documentation, this paper will "examine the constitutive principles of the EU and how these became promoted as aims and objectives of the EU in world politics" (Manners 2008: 55), then it will look at "how the EU promotes its constitutive principles as actions and policies in world politics" (Manners 2008: 57) and lastly, it will "consider the impact and outcomes of EU actions taken to promote its constitutive principles in world politics" (Manners 2008: 58). This paper argues that the attribution of the 'Normative Power' characteristic to the EU is not accurate in relation to its role in conflict transformation. The case of Cyprus suggests that "Normative Power Europe" can be challenged on several grounds including the impossibility to draw a distinction between norms and interests, the promotion of conflicting norms or of norms that are not well-established in the EU acquis, the incompatibility of the interpretation of EU norms between the EU and local actors, the different understandings of what a normative power action should entail, the absence of much local ownership and the difficulties of identifying to which actor any changes on the ground should be attributed.

2.   "Normative Power Europe"

The addition of the notion of 'normative power' to the analysis of the international role of the EU permits the addition of a new dimension to the discussion over whether the EU should be described as a civilian or a military power. Discussions up to that point were concentrated on the debate between François Duchêne's notion of Civilian Power Europe (CPE) and Hedley Bull's notion of Military Power Europe (MPE). For Manners (2001: 8), however, such debates led to an entrapment in the "supranational-intergovernmental dichotomy" which was falling short of realising the degree to which the EU is a combination of both supranational and intergovernmental features. For

Manners (2002: 239), these discussions were impeded by several endeavours to measure "how much like a state the EU is". Traditional, state-centric models of international politics, however, are "unable to account for the true depth and complexity of the international system" (Ferguson and Mansbach 1996 quoted in Wright 2011: 16). In this respect, Manners suggested pinpointing EU foreign policy outside traditional Westphalian notions. Rather, the EU's foreign policy can be located in the ontological characteristics of the EU and, more explicitly, in the values that guided its creation and subsequent development (peace, reconciliation, democracy, human rights). These values are what makes the EU a unique political entity as a 'normative power' (Manners 2002: 252), that is as a power that is able to define "what passes for 'normal' in world politics" (Manners 2002: 236). The EU's power is based on a general acceptance of its aims as 'normal'. Successively, these aims set the standard for international politics. According to Manners, "the concept of normative power is an attempt to suggest that not only is the EU constructed on a normative basis, but importantly that this predisposes it to act in a normative way in world politics…" (Manners 2002: 252).

From an academic perspective, the concept of 'Normative Power Europe' has generated significant debate. Partly, this debate has been associated with broader academic discussions in the field of IR about the role of international norms. The concept of NPE has also been the subject of much criticism. Scholars have identified important limitations to the actual power of the 'Normative Power Europe' argument. Particularly, they have highlighted the inconsistency in terms of "discrimination between different external actors and of undermining certain norms from the inside" (Diez 2005: 624, Karen Smith 2001); other scholars perceive the process of EU norm diffusion as based on strategic, selfish interests (Hyde-Price 2006, Merlingen 2007). However, according to constructivists, merely rejecting the EU's efforts based on realist theories, does not answer all of our questions with regards to the EU's foreign policies which can also be explained through value-based arguments.

3.   Conflict Transformation as an EU Foreign Policy Aim

The main question to be answered here is whether and how the principle of conflict transformation became a specific goal of the European Union's foreign policy. This section argues that, although the EU does not use the term 'conflict transformation' in its official documents, its stated goals and its actions are compatible with this notion.

Before attempting to provide an answer, however, the term 'conflict transformation' needs to be defined and further explained. There generally seems to be a consensus in the literature on the two main elements of the conflict transformation approach as being: a) a long-term approach (Lederach 1995, Miall 2004) and b) focused on altering the deep-rooted structural elements that support the continuation of conflicts (Ryan 2008, Miall 2004, Lederach 2003, Mitchell 2002). Moreover, following this line of reasoning, many studies seem to agree on the importance of civil society actors in such endeavours (Marchetti and Tocci 2009, Paffenholz and Spurk 2006). This paper sides with Miall's definition of conflict transformation as "the procedure of getting involved with and altering the relationships, interests, discourses and, if needed, the structure of society that supports the persistence of a conflict" (Miall 2004: 70). Having defined the term 'conflict transformation', this paper will now proceed to investigating whether these three main elements of the conflict transformation approach can be traced in the EU's official documents and identified as explicit goals of the EU.

The foreign policy aims of the EU were firstly defined in the 1990's. The importance of conflict transformation under the Common Foreign and Security Policy (hereafter CFSP) was for the first time noted in June 1992 when the ministers of foreign affairs submitted a report to the Lisbon European Council on possible areas for CFSP actions. This report constitutes a major endeavour to define the foreign policy aims of the EU. In this Report, it was noted that the CFSP will contribute to the EU becoming more active and improve its capacities to tackle problems at their roots (European Council 1992). This idea of tackling problems at their roots is of central importance for the transformation of conflicts. Moreover, the 1993 ratified Maastricht Treaty put the development of democracy and the rule of law and the promotion of respect for human rights among the main EU's foreign policy aims (European Union 1992, Treaty on European Union: Article J.1). This means that the EU was concerned with transforming the structural features that supported the perpetuation of conflicts.

The 1997 Amsterdam Treaty expanded the scope of the EU's tasks to include "humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping tasks and tasks of combat in crisis management, including peacemaking" (European Union 1997, Amsterdam Treaty: Article 17). In 1998, the Saint Malo Declaration was signed by the President of France, Jacques Chirac and by the Prime Minister of the UK, Tony Blair. In this "Joint Declaration on European Defence", they both agreed that the European Union "must have the capacity for autonomous action backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises" (quoted in Rutten 2001: 8). A few months after this Franco-British Declaration, the EU member states decided to institute the ESDP (European Security and Defence Policy). The EU has "broken a taboo" in considering questions of defence policies (Whitman 1998: 133). Subsequently, the December 1999 Helsinki European Council explicitly stated its intention for the development of its military capabilities (European Council 1999). A few years after this decision to establish the ESDP, the EU declared that it was ready to operate on the full range of the Petersberg Tasks. The adoption of the Petersberg Tasks was aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the CSFP. As the European Commission stated in its proposal for the IGC in 1996-97, "the Union's foreign policy suffers from its inability to project credible military force" (European Commission 1996). Although many authors have heavily criticized the militarization of the EU as being incompatible with CPE or NPE, this paper takes a different view. As Börzel and Risse claimed (2009: 8), what matters is "in what type of political strategy military means are embedded, how force is used, and whether the use of force is legitimized by the international community". Even Ian Manners himself, in a 2006 article reconsidering "Normative Power Europe" theory, claimed that military means can be compatible with NPE if coupled with "critical reflection" (Manners 2006: 183).

Moreover, the European Union committed itself to the promotion of this principle by constructively engaging in conflicts through a "long-term approach, identifying and targeting needs as far "upstream" as possible" (European Commission 2001: 8-9). In this respect, it became apparent that one of the most powerful tools at the EU's disposal for addressing the root causes of conflicts is the trade and cooperation agreements (European Commission 2001: 9). Such agreements are aimed towards advancing sustainable structural change (Marantis 1994) which will encourage conflict transformation. Some examples include the South East European Cooperation Process, the Stabilisation and Association Process with Western Balkan countries and the European Neighbourhood Policy. Moreover, in the same document, the Commission stresses that "NGOs are key actors in long-term conflict prevention. They are often present on the ground in situations

where official state structures are absent. They can also function as grass roots mediators as well as reliable and neutral observers in situations where there is no international presence. Mediation activities of specialist NGOs have sometimes proved decisive in a crisis" (European Commission 2001: 28). This engagement in long-term strategies and the acknowledgement of the importance of NGO's and grass-roots mediation are essential components of the conflict transformation process (Lederach 1995, 1997).

Furthermore, the 2003 EU Security Strategy (European Union 2003) declared that the Union is ready to act in all phases of conflict resolution. Just like the previously discussed documents, the ESS placed democracy, good governance, rule of law and human rights at the centre of its endeavours. In the same vein, the 2009 Lisbon Treaty specified that "preserving peace, preventing conflicts from erupting into violence and strengthening international security" (European Union 2007, Lisbon Treaty: Article 21) are significant elements of the EU's external policies. What is more important, however, for the purposes of this paper, is that the 2009 Lisbon Treaty, as Tocci (2011: 1) has rightly observed, recognizes an association between the Union's internal nature and its external projection. It stated that the EU, in satisfying its foreign policy objectives, would be "guided by and designed to advance in the wider world, the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement" (European Union 2007, Lisbon Treaty: Article 21).

Based on the aforementioned statements, this paper perceives the EU as being first and foremost interested in promoting conflict transformation instead of conflict management or settlement. For the purposes of clarification, this paper perceives 'conflict resolution' as an umbrella term encompassing several approaches to preventing and ameliorating conflicts (Ramsbotham et al. 2005: 8-9). Under the conflict resolution umbrella, two wide-ranging and dissimilar approaches have achieved particular eminence, namely the consociational and the transformationalist approaches. Consociationalists seek to accommodate the differences between the parties involved in ethnic conflicts, while tranformationalists favour "a process of engaging with and transforming the relationships, interests, discourses and, if necessary, the very constitution of society that supports the continuation of violent conflict" (Miall 2004: 70). Based on the declared objectives of the EU in this field, it seems that it does not simply aim at the management of conflicts. The EU's intentions go deeper to the level of conflict transformation as has already been discussed. The EU's idea of peace has been wide and long-term. Moreover, the EU has placed principles like democracy, human rights, rule of law, international law, good governance and economic development (European Commission 2001) at the heart of its endeavours. This means that it is concerned with transforming the structural features of conflicts.

Such EU objectives appear to be in line with the "Normative Power Europe" argument. This contention, however, needs to be thoroughly investigated in relation to the case of Cyprus.

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4.		"Normative Power Europe": The case of Cyprus

4.1		Normative EU Objectives?

This particular section is concerned with the first dimension of the "Normative Power Europe" framework. In this respect, it aims to provide an answer to the question of whether and why the principle of conflict transformation became an aim and objective of the EU's foreign policy towards the Cyprus conflict.

In examining the EU's official documentation, it becomes apparent that it was always interested in transforming the Cyprus conflict, at least on paper. In its 1993 Opinion, the Commission was "convinced that the result of Cyprus' accession to the Community would be increased security and prosperity and that it would help bring the two communities on the island closer together" (European Commission 1993: paragraph 46). Moreover, in reference to the preferred type of solution to the Cyprus problem, the EU made it clear that the solution of the Cyprus problem should be based on the values that have inspired the creation of the European Union, which are respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and the international law. This is evidenced in several European Parliament resolutions (European Parliament 1993, 1995, 1997) and also in European Council Presidency Conclusions (European Council, Presidency Conclusions Seville 2002, Brussels 2002, Copenhagen 2002, Brussels 2003, Thessaloniki 2003, Brussels 2003, Brussels 2004). "In their decisions, the language they use with reference to the Cyprus problem is in accordance with the overall aims of the EU for peace, prosperity and respect for human rights" (Interview by the author with Praksoulla Antoniadou[1]). Placing these values at the heart of a solution to the Cyprus problem, points towards efforts to transform it and not simply manage it.

As the opening of accession negotiations for the RoC was approaching, there were demands for an enhanced EU role in the Cyprus conflict. In this respect, the EU's rhetoric towards the Cyprus conflict became more indicative of conflict transformation intentions. The Luxembourg European Council of December 1997 concluded that "the accession of Cyprus should benefit all communities and help to bring about civil peace and reconciliation" (European Council 1997: 28.). Moreover, in Agenda 2000, the European Commission pictured the EU as playing "a positive role in bringing about a just and lasting settlement" (European Commission 1997: vol. I, part II, item IV) and also stated that the accession process would provide an incentive for peace.

A solution to the Cyprus problem was not a prerequisite for the island's accession to the Union since the 1999 Helsinki European Council. From a normative point of view, the decision to dissociate the resolution of the Cyprus problem from the island's accession to the EU (which resulted in the accession of a divided island), was justified on the grounds that the European Union could not punish the Greek Cypriots for what has been considered a violation of international law by Turkey, especially since adherence to international law is a central element in the construction of the EU's normativity (Diez and Pace 2007: 8). However, the EU continued to consistently promote reconciliation through favouring the accession of a unified Cyprus. This is evidenced in speeches of Romano Prodi (Prodi 2001, 2003), the then European Commission President, and also in the conclusions of the 1999 Helsinki European Council Summit (European Council 1999). The European Parliament also favoured the accession of a unified country. In this respect, in a resolution adopted

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[1] President of the "United Democrats" Party

right before the referenda took place in Cyprus, the European Parliament characterized the Annan Plan as "a shining example of handling equally difficult international issues" and also as "a historic opportunity" (European Parliament 2004) and called upon Cypriots to seize it and reunify their country.

The EU's vigorous support of the Annan Plan, however, is somewhat problematic. The Annan Plan was based on the principle of consociationalism (Loizides and Keskiner 2004, Yakinthou 2009). However, consociationalism has been criticized as being incompatible with conflict transformation. Not only does it not help to transform conflicts, but, on the contrary, it amplifies the ethnic divisions within such divided societies (Horowitz 1985, Belloni 2004, Wilford and Wilson 2003). Consociationalism is based on the principle of 'pillarization'. Under this principle, communities are linked only at the level of the elites while they remain disjointed at the base. Consociationalism does not engage into bottom-up transformation through civil society-based approaches (Wilford and Wilson 2003). It, therefore, becomes obvious that consociationalism is not conducive to the vision of a "unified Cyprus" and of "bringing the two communities closer together" (European Commission 1993) since it supports communal separation. This incompatibility between conflict transformation and consociationalism has also been identified by research interviews for this project. With reference to the Annan Plan, a Cypriot MEP stated that this plan "contrasts the normative model which the EU has defined and set" (interview by the author) while other interviewees stated that the Annan Plan was contrary to the European values (Interview by the author with Nikos Koutsou[2] and Costas Gouliamos[3]). It can, therefore, be argued that conflict transformation and consociationalism are two contradictory principles. Their simultaneous promotion, therefore, severely weakens the 'Normative Power Europe' paradigm.

After the rejection of the Annan Plan, the EU rhetoric remained strongly indicative of conflict transformation intentions. The European Council reiterated its determination to ensure that the "people of Cyprus would soon achieve their shared destiny as citizens of a united Cyprus in the European Union" (European Council 2004) and to facilitate the reunification of the island by encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community. It therefore invited the Commission to bring forward comprehensive proposals to that end, with particular emphasis on the economic integration of the island and on improving contacts between the two communities and with the EU. In this respect, the EU established the Financial Aid Regulation which aimed, inter alia, to bring the two communities closer together. Moreover, as part of the Aid Programme towards the Turkish Cypriots, the EU made four calls in the period between 2007-2013 for proposals for the development of the Turkish Cypriot civil society. The main objective of this program is to promote "the role of civil society in the northern part of Cyprus in the development of trust, dialogue, cooperation and reconciliation between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities as an important step towards a solution of the Cyprus problem" (European Commission 2008a). Moreover, the EU established the Green Line Regulation based on the idea that economic interdependence and specifically, trade integration, could bring the two communities closer together. As Olli Rehn stated,

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[2] Parliamentary tenure: Representative of Famagusta constituency under the banner of the European Party since 2006, Founding member and Vice-president (since 1996) of the European Democratic Party

[3] Vice-Rector of the European University Cyprus

"building bridges between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot community over the Green Line is essential for the reconciliation on Cyprus" (Rehn quoted in European Commission 2005).

<u>4.1.1 Ambivalent Interests</u>

Can the EU be a normative power and concurrently have self-centred interests? The position taken here is not the typical one of being sceptical about the EU's commitment to normative values (Merlingen 2007, Wood 2009). Rather, it's argued that strategic interests can sit well with the EU's normative agenda. "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). In this respect, norms can, at the same time, serve one's interests and also be consistent with values. The mere fact that a position might produce benefits for an actor does not, ipso facto, lead to the conclusion that the interests of another actor will suffer.

With regards to the Cyprus case, certain strategic considerations were at stake. Firstly, the ramifications of the Cyprus problem on EU-NATO relations could be considered as one reason why the EU has a major interest in finding a final settlement of this problem. According to Toumazos Tselepis[4], "problems are identified in the south-eastern wing of NATO because of the Cyprus problem. These problems mainly involve the relationship between Greece and Turkey. However, they have intensified since the accession of Cyprus in the European Union" (interview by the author). In a resolution adopted on 19 February 2009, the European Parliament characterized the Cyprus problem as a major complication in EU-NATO relations, "deploring the fact that it continued to badly impair the development of EU-NATO co-operation" (European Parliament 2009a). This is mainly because, since Cyprus' accession to the Union in 2004, Turkey has been regularly barring Cyprus partaking in formal EU-NATO meetings on the grounds that non-NATO members must conclude security arrangements with NATO. The European Union, however, refuses to take part in formal collaboration with NATO if all its members cannot be present. Moreover, Cyprus has been preventing "administrative arrangements between the EDA (European Defence Agency) and Turkey as well as a signature of a security agreement with Turkey" (Latek 2012: 3). Secondly, according to a Cypriot MEP, "it is in the European Union's interest to solve the Cyprus problem because, in this way, the EU will normalise its relations with Turkey and keep it on the EU path" (interview by the author with a Cypriot MEP 1). "The EU was interested in 'packaging' the Cyprus problem with its relations with Turkey" (Interview by the author[5]). The significance that Turkey has for the EU is also evidenced in the High Representative's report on the 'Implementation of the European Security Strategy - Providing Security in a Changing World'. It identifies Turkey as a possible "transit route providing energy security to the Union" (European Union 2008). In section C of the same report, Turkey is described as an "important player that will play an increasingly significant role in the region" (European Union 2008). Thirdly, motives of an economic nature are also at stake. "Cyprus can play a pivotal role in the region and therefore the solution of the Cyprus issue should guarantee stability and peace which are indispensable factors for the stability of Europe and the effective realization of commercial and economic affairs with the markets of the Middle East" (Interview by the author with a Cypriot MEP 2).

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[4] Head of the Specialised Office of the Central Committee of AKEL on the Cyprus problem
[5] Confidential Source

<u>4.1.2 Areas of Inconsistency</u>

The agenda of different EU member states was far from being the same regarding the Cyprus question. This divergence was the result of the level of prioritization that the different EU member states attached to the issue and the fact that normative principles were often inconsistent with other policies. The lack of consistency, thus, severely challenges and weakens the normative power of the EU which should have been enunciated firmly and with more clarity.

First of all, the Cyprus issue does not occupy the same position in all the member states' agenda. To begin with, the United Kingdom has a special interest in the Cyprus problem because of the British rule in Cyprus (1878-1960) and most importantly, because of the fact that, since 1960, Britain is a guarantor power guaranteeing the constitutional and territorial integrity of the island. The UK has always been supporting the Turkish point of view on Cyprus in the European Union because it considers the accession of Turkey to the Union as a "key goal of the Government" (Great Britain: House of Commons, Foreign Affairs Committee, 12th Report of Session 2010-2012, p.73). In this respect, "the United Kingdom wants to smooth the way for Turkey's accession and thus, puts aside any concerns about human rights, democracy or the acquis communitairre. By acting this way, it allows Turkey to act à la carte in the process of harmonization" (Interview by the author with Yiorgos Lillikas[6]). However, France, Germany and Austria, who, as the main opponents of the accession of Turkey to the Union, have expressed their concerns and tend to use the Cyprus-related issues to advance their aims by discrediting Turkey. The debate on the recognition/non-recognition of the Republic of Cyprus by Turkey is another example of this difference of opinion between member states. Another issue which sparked big debate related to certain provisions of the Annan Plan. Moreover, after the island's accession to the Union in 2004, the Cyprus problem became an internal EU problem. Having this in mind, some small EU states, in order not to break the "small state solidarity", are trying to keep away from confrontations with another EU member state.

<u>4.1.3 Self-binding behaviour</u>

Research for this project has identified a major loophole in the EU's behaviour. To begin with, although the European Council decided to de-link the resolution of the Cyprus conflict from the island's accession to the EU, it is still the case that the Annan Plan, which was based on federalization and consociational power sharing, was the EU's preferred type of solution. This promotion of consociational principles, however, is problematic from a normative point of view since it does not conform to internal EU practices. There does not exist either a common model of constitutional design shared by the EU member states or a legal basis in the acquis for consociationalism. As Kymlicka noted, European organisations have been using accomodationist approaches towards national minorities in their conflict resolution practices and "they have justified this preference … by citing 'best practices' from the Western democracies" (2008: 127). With reference to the case of Cyprus, Kymlicka notes that "the Annan Plan for Cyprus, for example, explicitly drew on strategies used in Switzerland and Belgium to accommodate their sub-state national groups. Similarly, the EU's proposals for the former Yugoslavia were based on the model of autonomy for the German national minority in Italy (2008: 127)". What is being suggested here is

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[6] Leader of "Citizens' Alliance"

not that there are no other cases in the EU where the consociational model has been applied. Rather, that there is not a well-established and codified EU norm on this issue. In this respect, it is problematic from a normative point of view to promote such constitutional designs since the EU itself is not bound by them.

This absence of an EU norm on constitutional designs coupled with the incompatibility of the derogations of the Act of Adaptation with Community Law, provided fertile ground for counter-arguments to the EU promotion of the Annan Plan. An analysis of the Annan Plan in light of the provisions of EU law is beyond the scope of this paper. But it should be mentioned that the EU itself was aware of the fact that the Annan Plan contained a "request for substantial derogations from the acquis relating, inter alia, to property and residency rights" (quoted in Shaelou 2010: 246). "The European Union has always been stating that a solution to the Cyprus problem must be based on the values that have inspired its creation and, most importantly, on the principles of international law. However, the reality in practice is much different (Interview by the author with Tsielepis)[7]

4.2   Normative Actions?

The second part of the three-part analysis is concerned with the ways through which the EU promotes its principles. According to Manners (2009: 3), actions based on dialogue and constructive engagement are considered as normative. Such actions should involve persuasion (Manners 2009: 3), shaping of discourse (Manners 2002: 239) and the conferral of prestige or shame (Manners 2009: 3).

4.2.1 Persuasion

Manners (2009: 12) suggested that persuasive actions include "institutionalization of relations, constructive engagement and multi- and pluri-lateral dialogue between participants". Persuasive actions are usually defined as opposed to coercive actions. Coercive actions usually refer to actions based on military means. However, as has been previously argued, the use of military means is not necessarily incompatible with the NPE framework. "The fact that an actor possesses and even uses military force does not contradict the idea of normative power if military power is subordinated to the more fundamental normative ethos" (Diez and Manners 2007: 187). According to the same writer (Diez 2007: 180), it is plausible to use military means for backing up the diffusion of civilian norms, partly because the use of civilian means would require a preceding institutionalization of civilian principles. Analogously, Sjursen (2006: 239) argued that even the use of non-military means, like economic tools, does not automatically indicate that the actor is normative. For example, the tool of economic sanctions can also lead to unfavourable, disadvantageous results.

Prior to Cyprus' accession to the EU, this instrument was launched in the form of the so-called "catalytic effect". In the literature, many terms are used to describe this idea including the "power of attraction" (Munuera 1994).The main idea is that the EU can become a catalyst in conflicts where the country concerned is in the process of acceding to the Union, as was the case with Cyprus.

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[7] The same point was made by another interviewee who wished to remain anonymous. He stated that "in 2004, for example, the Act of Adaptation attempted to present the EU's realpolitik as a legitimate one by dressing it with a legalising cloak. What we call 'principles upon which the EU is founded' was not taken into consideration in this instance"

According to this line of reasoning, conflict transformation will occur as a result of the inclusion of a society in conflict into supranational political structures, mainly because European integration provides an opportunity for the transformation of incompatible and contradictory identities (Diez et al. 2008). Belloni had put forward a similar argument when he argued that European Institutions can moderate nationalist identities and can create identities with multiple layers which will show "acceptance to diversity, provide an antidote to divisive extremism and sustain a pragmatic attitude in addressing group differences" (Belloni 2009: 323-24). With reference to the aftermath of the EU's decision to accept Cyprus' application for membership, the idea was that the process towards EU membership -not the EU as a mediator but the process of accession by itself - would help to transform the Cyprus conflict with the two communities re-defining their interests and agreeing on a solution (European Commission 1993: 46). This idea is mostly evident in 'Agenda 2000' which was issued by the European Commission in 1997 and suggested that the accession process could provide an incentive for peace (European Commission 1997). From an EU point of view, this catalytic effect would work because the Turkish Cypriots would eventually recognize the benefits of EU membership (especially the economic benefits) and would eventually participate in the membership negotiations and would also be willing to negotiate towards a solution of the Cyprus problem. In other words, the argument was that the idea of the EU by itself would be enough to transform the conflict. This line of reasoning seems to have triggered the decision to de-link Cyprus' accession to the EU from a solution to the Cyprus problem in 1999. The following four years saw the two parties of the conflict engaging in serious negotiations towards a final resolution of the conflict prior to the island's accession to the EU. The EU strongly supported the Annan Plan through European Council conclusions and European Parliament declarations. The fact that EU officials were present in the negotiation process leading to the referenda, can be seen as representative of the EU's willingness to use its instruments towards persuading the two parties to agree to the specific plan. The Annan Plan, however, was rejected by the majority of Greek Cypriots. One of the criticisms against the Annan Plan was its incompatibility with EU values and principles (Coufoudakis and Kyriakides 2004: 8).

After the rejection of the UN Annan Plan in 2004 and the subsequent accession of Cyprus to the EU, the EU instrument of constructive engagement took a different form. While EU policies remained the same on the macro level (namely supporting UN efforts to resolve the conflict), measures were adopted on the micro level as well. The EU decided to deploy certain measures which could be seen as aiming at transforming the local structures and, therefore, the conflict. The main EU instrument in this period is the Financial Aid Regulation (FAR). The FAR's main aim was to provide financial support in order to generate economic development for the Turkish Cypriot community and to improve contacts between the two communities. The FAR is very much dependent on TAIEX (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument) which, among other things, aims to "benefit […] representatives of civil society [and] reconciliation and confidence building measures" (European Council 2006). The establishment of this association between a thriving civil society and reconciliation is indicative of the EU's commitment to use its instruments towards transforming the Cyprus conflict. However, certain drawbacks on the implementation of such projects were identified in this research. According to some interviewees the projects initiated with the help of the FAR were not always directed towards unification but rather they were directed towards the creation of separate states and were creating conflicting interests between Turkish and Greek Cypriots. According to one interviewee "such projects only serve to establish separate interests between the

two communities and further deepen the division on the island" (Interview by the author with Lillikas) while another interviewee argued that "these policies on the micro level distort the essence of the Cyprus problem" (Interview by the author with Kostas Gouliamos).

Another instrument at the EU's disposal is the Green Line Regulation which aims at facilitating trade activities between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The main objective of this Regulation is to advance economic cooperation and integration between the two sides in order to promote peace. However, trade between the two sides remains insignificant. One probable explanation for this, as suggested by interviewees, is that Greek Cypriot people do not want to widely engage in such activities with Turkish Cypriots as this would suggest an indirect recognition of the government in the north . It might, therefore, be the case that the Green Line Regulation has actually reinforced the conflicting interests, hence the division, between the two communities instead of eliminating it.

Lastly, the European Commission proposed in 2004 the establishment of Direct Trade Regulation which has been described by an interviewee as a "hindrance to the goal of reunifying Cyprus" (Interview by the author with Lillikas). From the European Commission point of view, the establishment of this direct trade will help the Turkish Cypriots to develop more easily and thus, at the end of the day, solve the Cyprus problem. If the two communities come to a similar level of economic development, it would be easier to solve the Cyprus problem. From a Turkish Cypriot point of view, this instrument is in line with the "Normative Power Europe" theory and with the EU's aim to bring the two communities closer. However, from a Greek Cypriot point of view, this Regulation comes in sharp contradiction with the theory of "Normative Power Europe" because it mainly helps the Turkish Cypriot community to operate normally and have many of the advantages of EU citizens without solving the Cyprus issue. The implementation of this instrument would, therefore, "consolidate the fait accompli" (Interview by the author)[8]. These contradictions are especially useful in attempting to test the practical application of this concept because "Normative Power Europe" is understood differently by Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. There appear to be conflicting understandings of what the "Normative Power Europe" concept entails in practice.

4.2.2 Shaming

The rejection of the Annan Plan in 2004 triggered the activation of another tool at the EU's disposal, namely the conferral of prestige or shaming. Manners (2009: 3) has defined shaming as "public condemnation or the use of symbolic sanctioning". While up until that point Turkey was seen as the main actor to blame for the non-resolution of the conflict, from 2004 onwards the blame shifted against the Greek Cypriots. An example of the use of this instrument is the attitude towards the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots after they rejected the Annan Plan in 2004. The then Commissioner for Enlargement made a speech in which he accused the Greek-Cypriot leadership of having "cheated" him and of having "taken him for a ride" when appearing willing to see the process of negotiation of a final solution to the end and thus to allow a united Cyprus to join the EU (BBC News 2004). At the same time, the Commissioner called for an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. As the Commission stated, "as the Turkish Cypriot Community expressed overwhelming support for the UN plan to reunify Cyprus, it would be unfair, to say the least, to leave it out in the cold…" (European Commission 2004).

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[8] Confidential Source

4.2.3 Shaping Discourse

For Manners (2002: 239), normative power has the ability to shape discourses. This instrument is linked to "learning, adaption or rejection of norms as a result of international norms and political learning by third countries" (Kinnvall 1995 quoted in Manners 2002: 245).

In the case of Cyprus, an oxymoron emerges with regards to discourses which is partly associated with the absence of codified EU norm in terms of internal constitutional design, as has already been discussed. The EU not only favoured but also promoted the UN Annan Plan for Cyprus. The Annan plan was, however, rejected by the majority of the Greek Cypriots on the grounds that it was not respectful of the fundamental freedoms. In this respect, notwithstanding the fact that the EU was supportive of this plan, there began to emerge in the Greek Cypriot political discourse the term "European Solution" referring to a solution that would be in line with the EU principles. An oxymoron emerges, however, with regards to what the term "European Solution" entails. The inconsistency in the definition of this term is immediately evident if someone compares what this 'European Solution' entails from an EU point of view and from a Cypriot point of view. The European Solution from a Greek-Cypriot point of view involves three main elements: a) a democratic system based on majority rule b) the respect for human rights should ensure that any settlement will guarantee the full return of Greek-Cypriot property and of the refugees back to their homes and c) that the acquis communitaire would be unanimously applied without exceptions (Ker-Lindsay 2009). However, it seems like the EU had a different type of solution in mind. Beginning with the notion of democracy, the European Commission has stated that "there is no universal model of democracy" (European Commission 2008: Annex B) while both the European Parliament (2009b) and the Council of Ministers (Joint Paper 2009) have identified the need for adjustments to be made to the promotion of the notion of democracy to country-specific contexts. Based on this understanding, different conceptualizations of democracy can be developed and applied to different cases. Moreover, the acceptance and support of the Annan Plan on the part of the EU, suggests that the EU accepts the limits on the right of residence and on the return of property. What is, therefore, observed here is a 'Cypriotisation' of European values and a "Cypriotised" interpretation of the European acquis by part of the Cypriot political elites. What is also important to examine, however, is the extent to which this 'Cypriotisation' has also emerged at the EU level. With its accession in 2004, Cyprus was in a position to shape this "Normative Power Europe" paradigm. More research needs to be done on the question of whether Cyprus' accession has caused any changes to "Normative Power Europe" with regards to the Cyprus problem.

4.3   Normative Impact?

According to Manners (2009: 3-4), the results of normative actions should involve socialization, partnership and ownership.

With regards to the first phase (1993-2004) under examination, the idea was that the accession process by itself would help to transform the conflict. The EU, although it had the goal of transforming the Cyprus problem through bringing the two communities closer together, only relied on a top-down approach which was not helpful towards realizing this goal. As Eralp and Beriker (2005: 188) argued, the EU's "structural prevention mechanisms correspond to a very rigid and

limited set of foreign policy actions, whereas the nature of the dispute required a more sophisticated and complex approach to foreign policy". This paper argues that, during this first phase, there were not adequate conflict transformation initiatives. Although the EU generated a structural prevention mechanism for the purposes of altering the incentive system in Cyprus, it ignored the conflict transformation aspect. It, therefore, decreased the likelihood of socialization and partnership emerging as results of its policies. Moreover, the fact that it did not engage in conflict transformation initiatives, means that it largely ignored civil society and consequently, reduced the probability of local ownership emerging as a result of its policies.

Since 2004, the EU has embarked upon more bottom-up approaches which are considered better-suited for the transformation of conflicts (Saunders 1999). The results are, at best ambiguous. A positive effect is that the relations between Greek and Turkish Cypriots have normalized. There is a relative freedom of movement and also co-operation, albeit limited, at the level of civil society and non-governmental organizations. This secondary, mild, EU approach seems to have yielded more results than any other policies (Interview by the author with Perdikis[9]). However, this approach did not have a spill-over effect to the rest of the society as is evident from the results of the Green Line Regulation.

Turning to local ownership, it is identified by Manners (2009: 3) as one of the main impacts that normative actions should produce. This is particularly important for this paper since local ownership is considered critical in the process of conflict transformation. Local ownership in this context emanates from the idea that any peace project that is not embraced by those who will live with it, is likely to fail. Local ownership in conflict transformation processes is particularly important because peacebuilding has been criticized by some as being an activity regulated and imposed on local populations by outsiders (Donais 2009). In this respect, local ownership comes to the rescue. However, it is a difficult task to determine the impact of the EU's normative framework in this respect. Although, civil society actors have not yet been involved in any endeavour to solve the Cyprus problem, there has been observed a degree of cooperation between Greek and Turkish civil society organisations, albeit very limited (CIVICUS 2005). However, it is not clear if this small degree of cooperation emerged as a result of the EU projects or as a result of the UN projects or as a result of the changing internal environment. What can be argued, however, is that the results of this cooperation are only observed between civil society organizations. A spill-over effect in the rest of the society has not yet been observed.

5.   Conclusion

"Normative Power Europe" theory is a very useful framework in attempting to explain the EU foreign policies. As has been argued by many scholars, the EU is not solely guided by self-centred interests but also by values. In this respect, NPE can help us advance our understanding of the EU policies and also of the reasons why the EU has not been so successful so far.

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[9] Member of the National Council, the supreme advisory body to the President of the Republic on the Cyprus problem

However, based on the above analysis, it seems like NPE is challenged on several grounds. With regards to EU objectives, problems arise from the coexistence between norms and interests. It seems that it is almost impossible to draw a distinction between norms and interests. In other words, it is not at all clear whether the EU promotes certain norms by virtue of their value or because of its own or of specific member states' instrumental interests. In our case study, normative-based arguments as well as interest-based arguments can be used to explain the EU's behaviour. A combination of Ideational and material factors can better explain the particularities of the EU's normative power. Moreover, the EU's promotion of conflicting principles, in this case consociationalism and conflict transformation, is problematic from a normative point of view. Lastly, in discussing the self-binding behavior of the EU, it becomes apparent that the absence of well-established and codified norms, weakens the normative power of the EU.

With regards to EU actions, the norm diffusion mechanisms are quite in line with the NPE framework. However, the Cyprus case suggests that the ways of EU engagement into the conflict were not always comprehensive enough, especially during the first chronological phase. Moreover, there seem to be contradictory understandings of what a normative power action should entail between the two communities. Lastly, some interesting findings emerge with regards to the 'shaping discourse' mechanism. Norms were apparent in the Cypriot discourse, albeit interpreted differently from what the EU sought to project. EU norms were not simply endorsed as such by Cyprus. Rather, a degree of localization, in this case Cypriotisation, of norms is observed.

With regards to EU impact, the main challenge is that it is not an easy task to identify the impact of the EU policies since there are no clear indicators in this respect. Moreover, a major challenge to the NPE that can be identified is that impact of the EU actions did not include much local ownership on the ground.

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