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“ANALYSING NEW EUROPEAN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICES IN TIMES OF CRISIS AND TRANSITION: THE EU EXERTING AN IDEATIONAL POWER BEYOND ITS FRONTIERS?”

Dr. Francis Espinoza Figueroa

Abstract

Even though, European integration and Europeanisation of higher education are expected to face increased obstacles at times of crisis, the EU as an ideational actor has a significant impact on non-European countries. Europe is considered as a 'model-maker' or 'model-offerer' impacting on Latin American HE from the 'birth' of universities there, whilst Latin America has been seen as a traditional 'model-taker'. The EU seen as a 'global teacher' (Adelman 2009, 170) refers to a notion of the Union spreading and exporting its model beyond the geographical boundaries of Europe. It presents a powerful image of the EU as an international actor, endorsed it with a special capability, a force that manifests a pedagogic potential for establishing its (external) relationships. Therefore, its power is not 'deposited' in its material capabilities for exerting physical strength, but rather is to be found in its ability to structure/organise (to shape) knowledge. This paper examines the growth of European ideas circulating throughout the field of Latin American Higher Education (HE), as part of the Bologna Process, which has manifested itself in a set of procedures, methods and tools that have contributed to the transformation of Chilean and Mexican HE. This phenomenon requires a rigorous analysis of European ideational factors present within Normative Power Europe (NPE), not only through a cluster of ideas, norms, principles and values but also through analysing language.

Keywords: Public Diplomacy, Ideational Power, Europe of Knowledge, Bologna Process, Tuning Project, Latin American Higher Education.

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Introduction.

The EU as an ideational actor has a significant impact on non-European countries. According to the current literature, it could be exerting Public Diplomacy. Cull (2013) defines Public Diplomacy (PD) as international actors seeking to engage with foreign publics as opposed to traditional PD seeking state-to-state engagement (nation-state). Furthermore, the concept of engagement can be equated to attempting and hopefully garnering positive interest by third parties regarding the formulation and implementation of foreign policies. The field via representative authors can be placed on a continuum of influence implicating intrinsic attraction by means of soft power resources to an intentional and managed country image that speaks to the interests of foreign publics.

This paper focuses on analysing new European diplomatic practices in times of crisis and transition such as Higher Education as a soft power. Therefore I study International Relations and Higher Education policies, and how European influences are affecting the development of domestic policies in Latin American Higher Education. This phenomenon has been studied as part of sporadic variables that share degrees of guidance with another influence: the strong manifestation of the US in the Latin American continent.

Specifically this research examines the growth of European ideas circulating throughout the field of Latin American Higher Education (HE), as part of the Bologna Process, which has manifested itself in a set of procedures, methods and tools that have contributed to the transformation of Chilean and Mexican HE. This phenomenon requires a rigorous analysis of European ideational factors present within Normative Power Europe (NPE), not only through a cluster of ideas, norms, principles and values but also through analysing language. This occurrence has been studied as part of sporadic variables that share degrees of guidance with another influence: the strong manifestation of the US in the Latin American continent. This present paper proposes a different narrative: the scenario of Latin America in the Higher Education area, especially in Chile and Mexico, appears to be significantly affected by some European influences, noticeable by examining the implementation of two ‘European tools’: the Bologna Process and the Tuning Project. The empirical cases of European influences, Chilean and Mexican HE, are shown in detail in order to understand the most significant impacts on their public and university policies.

I argue that the impact of European influences upon received countries is mediated by domestic circumstances. This paper, therefore, makes a contribution to both existing understanding of the European Union’s influence over Latin America and Latin American HE, and also seeks to advance upon existing debates European ideational factors present within the notion of Normative Power Europe (NPE) in particular, by illustrating how the NPE literature would benefit from a deeper consideration of the use of language.
The EU as an influential actor.

Is the EU an influential actor in the field of Higher Education (HE)? This question is extremely relevant because any influential actor in the area of HE could constitute a hegemonic power or superpower on the two fronts of material and ideational sources. In terms of material factors, nowadays the field of HE embodies the most important aspect of training human resources, the power of human capital (Ridderstrale & Nordström, 2000). Therefore, a superpower could exert supremacy within the core of productive processes and determine the course of future ‘economic waves’. Considering ideational aspects, Europe could exert an intellectual hegemony (Robertson, 2009) based on a pedagogic force which offers models of teaching and learning (as seen in the Bologna Process) within the area of HE. The only literature analysing European influences in HE upon overseas countries is fairly recent.

Is it possible to say that European HE initiatives have lost their momentum due to the crisis or have they become more robust and resilient? The EU seen as a ‘global teacher’ (Adelman, 2009: 170) refers to a notion of the Union spreading and exporting its model beyond the geographical boundaries of Europe. This idea presents serious connotations when analysing European influences reaching beyond Europe. It presents a powerful image of the EU as an international actor, endorsed it with a special capability, a force that manifests a pedagogic potential for establishing its (external) relationships. Therefore, its power is not ‘deposited’ in its material capabilities for exerting physical strength, but rather it is to be found in its ability to structure/organise, (to shape) knowledge.

From the 2000s until the present day, the development of certain rapid changes has been observable in a significant number of Latin American Higher Education (HE) institutions as the result of an intervenient variable within the process, a sort of external influence. This phenomenon can be described as the manifestation of new ideas circulating throughout the field of Latin American Higher Education (HE), especially in Chile and Mexico. At the outset it can be seen that these ideas have transmuted into a set of procedures, methods and tools applicable for transforming Chilean and Mexican HE. Such ideas were not coming, as they usually did, from the US; instead they were arriving from the EU as part of a more significant phenomenon occurring in Europe, in the form of the Bologna Process and its executive instrument, the Tuning Project. The following preliminary question shows certain gaps within the ‘state of the art’ of phenomena that justify the existence of this presentation.

Therefore, the historical relationships literature shows Europe as a ‘model-maker’ or ‘model-offerer’ impacting on Latin American HE from the ‘birth’ of universities and study centres there. By contrast, Latin America is seen as a ‘model-taker’, which transplants foreign patterns into its HE in order to reach a certain degree of global influence, in the line with the trends of superpowers.

As a starting point, this paper claims that European influences upon non-European countries might be studied considering the EU as an ‘influential actor’. An influential actor produces long-term effects which can be observed within complex and intersubjective spheres of ideatic structures or systems.

Firstly, it is necessary to characterise the ‘actor’ in order to understand its dynamics and range of influence. It is argued here that the Union is distinguished by exerting a ‘special power’, or at least a

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2 This concept, coming from literature and media studies, makes reference to ideologies, epistemologies, social constructs, social norms and laws.
different from traditional powers. Its power depends on its constitutive nature and its ways for establishing its internal and external relationships. Secondly, having characterised the influential actor, it is important to analyse and understand the nature of the EU’s influences. Certainly some scholars rescue the idea that the Union exerts material or ideational sways, even both. Owing to the fact that the empirical experience and data were observed on abstract fields of language and ideas, it is fundamental to argue here that an influential actor exerts an ideational power rather than a material force. Thirdly, even though there are no perceivable studies of impact of European influences, the ‘dissenting side’ of Normative Power Europe (NPE) constitutes the first attempt to fill the gap of this aspect. These narratives show real discourses of perception of others about European performance and actions. This is the case of the publication Normative Power Europe: introductory observations on a controversial notion (2009) edited by André Gerrits.

This paper is part of my research Fondecyt de Iniciación 2015 – 2018. Nº 11150378 "Higher Education (HE) in Chile as a strategy of international cooperation: analysis of American, European and Asian models" (main researcher). Even though the original piece researched three levels of empirical analysis of Normative Power Europe (NPE): an analytical (pragmatic) dimension, a gnosiological (deontological) aspect and a study of the ‘European Bologna Language’, this paper will only describe the first and the second analysis as a result of significant conclusions achieve during the investigation process.

The EU as an ideational power.

The European Union, as one of the significant participants in the decision-making processes in the global sphere, produces effects upon other actors through what it can do and does well, i.e. playing an international role as an actor, as a ‘distinctive agent’ (Smith 2003: 104). At the moment, the existing literature has been focused on answering the following two questions:

(i) Is the EU an influential actor in the international arena? In general terms, one can argue that there is a significant amount of literature supporting the view that Europe represents an influential actor that exerts power in the global sphere through its material and ideational capabilities. However, the Union is mainly seen as a force which does not exert any coercive power (Laïdi 2008, 5). Certainly, Europe is seen as a different kind of actor, exerting neither hard power nor soft force. The EU constitutes a ‘hybrid’ entity (Manners & Whitman 2003: 388; cf. Wiessala 2006: 19) posing/exercising a ‘sui generis’ nature/presence (Whitman 1998: 2/15) through a mosaic of capabilities and tools. One may recognise that the EU offers very attractive models by which it establishes its external relations exerting power in a different and ‘gentle’ way. It is observable, then, that the ‘European’ literature is mainly focused on the role of the EU within the international arena: the EU as a global (Bretherton & Vogler 2006) or an international actor (Smith 2001, 289). This argument that the EU plays a role as an influential actor in the international arena contributes to identifying, within the existing literature, different aspects of the power of exertion as a phenomenon of influence and compliance (Cialdini 2007).

(ii) Is the EU an ideational power in the global arena? European approaches supporting the idea that the Union constitutes a power exerting ‘magnetism’ and producing non-critical ‘complaisance’, institute the notion of what Whitman et al. consider as Europe behaving as an ‘ideational actor’ (2011). Hence, Europe as an influential actor is necessarily an actor that exerts power ideationally, a crucial aspect which justifies the existence of this paper. These ‘leitmotivs’ are connected by a common denominator: the implicit idea that Europe produces effects upon others operating in different fields of activity and co-ordinating its external relationships based on value-driven external policy (Youngs 2004: 415).
What kind of ideational power does the EU exert? It is a difficult task to answer this question, owing to the fact that historically Europe has exerted different kinds of power. On the one hand, the EU as an ideational power is a notion originally presented, within the existing literature, through two significant claims: the introduction of the socio-cognitive dimension for studying Europe (Hyde-Price 2004; Tonra 2010) through a Constructivist ‘lens’, and the third dimension of power, which supports the idea of ‘shaping normality’ (Berenskoetter 2007).

A formal interest for studying the EU ideational factors emerges with Constructivist scholars. A good example of this is the book *The Social Construction of Europe* (2001) edited by Thomas Christiansen, Knud Erik Jørgensen and Antje Wiener. In this tome, ideational elements of the Union are observed in three main areas: the constitution of ‘social ontologies’ and ‘social institutions’ on the permanent processes of integration and enlargement, the transformative impact of Europe, and phenomena of identity formation.

With regard to the third dimension of power, although this argument concentrates all the previous aspects of power, it is certainly more complex to define. In the first instance, it reminds us of Foucault’s conception of non-visible methods of exerting ‘institutionalised’ power. Thus power is not something material or tangible, it is not “something that is (or can be) centrally controlled by an Orwellian Ministry of Information, but something that works through diffuse ‘capillaries’ contained in seemingly neutral practices of people working in institutions such as hospitals or prisons” (Berenskoetter 2007: 10).

This power can establish parameters of ‘normality’ amidst a social construction of reality. So whoever claims to shape the discourse on what constitutes the normal, imposes a normative character through a discursive power that determines canons of ‘normativeness’.

On the other hand, it is argued that the specific literature of the EU as an ideational actor/power is centred on two discursive trends: (i) *an ideational side* as such where there exists a notion of power marked by the notion of ‘certainty of reason’, coming from Aristotelian and Cartesian traditions; and (ii) a *value-normative horizon* or subjective normative considerations (Hyde-Price 2004: 102) based on principles and values, which belong to a Hebrew-Christian tradition. However, it is difficult to differentiate between the two tendencies to define ideational characteristics of the Union.

Although a considerable number of studies analyse the ideational nature of the EU in terms of narratives based on the power of ideas and ideation (Manners 2009: 2) characterising Europe itself and its actions, its ‘mentality’ is mainly defined with reference to its normative side. Indeed ideational and normative do not perform as synonymous, but in the case of the Union, Manners argues that all examinations of it necessarily present a normative character (2007: 116). This aspect is understandable for four main reasons: (i) its constitutive nature strongly supported by the use of mechanisms of law, such as its own constitution; (ii) its history ‘marked’ for the development of a diplomacy grounded on treaties and agreements; and (iii) the establishment of its relationships sustained by “the normative basis of global governance” (Laidi 2008: 5) and (iv) by the formalisation of commitments that enhance “normative standards in order to protect its own norms” (ibid).

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3 I call European mentality the sum of Europe’s intellectual capabilities. In Freudian terms I conceive of this aspect as the super ego of Europe, which would prompt itself to develop an unimpeachable ethical behaviour whose morality is associated with normative principles and values that Europe wants to promote.
As one might realise in the second ideational aspect, there exists an inclination towards defining power as part of a process that involves value-driven interests. Therefore an axiology⁴ (or deontology in Manners’ words) of power is seen when a force is exercised through non-physical control, but where a particular set of principles and values are imposed as the result of a major purpose: the common good. So, the EU ‘goodness’ has two capacities: a teleological competence determined by a ‘transcendental morality’ and a rational ability gained through the use of reason.

Even though a constructivist notion of normative aspects of power necessarily implies an implicit analysis of ideas, it is difficult to find scholars studying a continuity of European ideas circulating outside Europe. Ian Manners argues that “the diffusion of ideas in a normatively sustainable way works like water on stone, not like napalm in the morning” (Manners 2008b: 80). Certainly the study of cartographies of ideas is a complex issue in social sciences, because ideas do not constitute ‘material factors’ which provide empirical evidence of impact, influence or even of hegemony of a superpower. Ideas constitute ideological factors imposing a non-material superstructure according to a Marxist perspective.

The normative nature of the European Union.

The normative nature of the EU is very well represented by the theory called Normative Power Europe. I argue that Normative Power Europe (NPE) represents an amalgam of different meanings, views, theories and areas of development which contribute to designing one of the most suitable forms of ‘attire’ for analysing ideational aspects of the EU.

NPE literature incorporates a wide and complex group of scholars working together around European Studies, the Foreign Policy of the EU and European Integration theories. Certainly NPE is a very European sort of scholarship, led by Ian Manners and an elite cluster of researchers analysing and exploring theoretical and empirical aspects of the nature of the European ‘beast’ (Risse-Kappen 1996b).

The concept of Normative Power Europe, NPE was coined by Ian Manners in 2000 in order to identify certain practices developed by the EU, especially in the establishment of its international relations.

In 2000 I chose the term ‘normative’ with care, hence a brief discussion of terminology is in order. Based upon my research into symbolic and normative discourses and practices within the EC/EU during the 1990s, I used the phrase ‘normative power’ as a response to the relative absence of normative theorizing and to promote normative approaches to the EU (Manners 2007: 116).

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⁴ From the Greek axiā, which means “value, worth”, axiology is the philosophical study of value, ethics or aesthetics. Normative Power Europe (NPE), for example, represents a significant study of European values.
Manners (ibid) argues that his leitmotifs were mainly (i) to theorise and promote normative frameworks that would constitute the right ‘apparel’, embracing European external activities, (ii) to keep a considerable distance from those other ideal typologies that are used to define the Union as typically civilian and military power and (iii) to avoid the classically US debate of ‘soft power’ and ‘hard force’ in the implementation of American national interests and foreign affairs.

Therefore, the EU looks like a different international power characterised by its normative distinctiveness. Referring to a practical way of using NPE, Forsberg argues that it is more convenient and more fashionable than other concepts such as Civilian Power Europe (CPE), but “the notion of normative power reinvents the wheel that was already captured by ‘civilian power’” (2009: 7). However, there are significant differences between CPE and NPE, which go much further than the simple conception of the use of military power. Certainly, what Manners introduced was not merely a simple terminology; rather he brought to the table of European studies an expression with serious connotations and subsequent implications. He refers to the EU as a ‘Normative Power’ in order to demonstrate the difference between this concept and the terms of civilian and military powers. This would more usually be accepted as defining the presence of the EU as a superpower in International Relations.

Originally, Manners’ main objective was to propose a theory in order to examine and achieve a better understanding of the international role of the Union (2001: 2). However some scholars prefer to use the theory in different research ‘atmospheres’ especially focusing on internal processes - what Hiski Haukkala calls “power in Europe” (2007: 3). According to Manners, the study of the worldwide role of the EU presents at least three theoretical, empirical and normative deficiencies: (i) previous theoretical frameworks have underestimated the ontological hypotheses of the Union as a catalyst of norms; (ii) empirical research showing Europe as a changer of norms in world politics have long been studied only through a positivist ‘lens’; and (iii) former normative studies on the EU have not considered its capability for extending norms in the global arena. I argue here that Manners wished to redefine the bases of the EU as a superpower ontologically, epistemologically and empirically, - an aspect that he develops in depth using other disciplines to support his arguments such as philosophy, epistemology and deontology.

Taking into account the Union as a ‘shaper’ of canons of the normal in world politics, one can ask what roles the EU exerts so as to be considered a normative power within the global sphere. Firstly, Manners argues that the EU shows two ways in which normative power is exercised, by ‘virtue’ of being a sui generis political entity, determined by “supranational and international forms of governance” (2008b: 65) and through its ‘performance’, acting ethically for the good. However, it is not possible to distinguish boundaries between these two elements, virtue and acts, because these aspects could be considered, in turn, as part of the European identity and as a result of its performance. So, the EU is what it is and its acts. In order to fill this gap, the author later extends his argument towards a tripartite analysis which combines what he calls procedural normative ethics: “by virtue of the principles of ‘living by example’; by duty of its actions in ‘being reasonable’; and by consequences of its impact in ‘doing least harm’” (Ibid: 66). This three-way notion establishes what I mention as the axiological bases of NPE.
Forsberg (2009) summarises the main aspects of NPE through what he calls ‘types of normative power’. This characterisation is very interesting because it implicitly states the theory analytically at three levels: as a discursive practice developed through ‘persuading others’ by spreading information; a deontological component through ‘invoking norms’ that activate commitments, and an ontology of language through ‘shaping the discourse of what is normal’. This latter statement is clearly interpreted by Haukkala when he argues that:

In Europe, this ability is augmented by the fact that the EU has not only power to set the parameters over the legitimate aspects of international (and also domestic) life in general, but that it also has the recourse of being able to claim almost a sole monopoly on what can be called “Europeanness”. The Union seems to enjoy the authority of pronouncing what it means, and perhaps more importantly what it takes, to be “European” (2007: 6).

The analytical dimension of NPE.

The analytical dimension of NPE is constructed on the basis of two significant aspects, a set of procedures that allow scholars to apply the theory to empirical data, and the cases for study, supported by different objects of analysis normally related to European policies, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the EU Foreign Policy (EFP) and the EU’s security policies. It is important to note here that some scholars do not have specific objects of study or concrete cases for verifying the theory; rather they contribute to expanding epistemological boundaries of NPE.

After analysing conceptual and some of the analytical elements of NPE, I will study those aspects that are used as the empirical basis for the theory, although they overlap with other gnosiological components. NPE is mainly verified empirically through three main constituents, which Manners calls ideational aspects of NPE: (i) a system of values, (ii) a group of actions and (iii) processes of impact:

(i) A ‘value system’ characterises European values as an exportable ‘commodity’. It is referred to sometimes as values, norms, or principles, and in the latest of Manners’ works, they are mentioned as normative principles. In the particular case of ENP (European Neighbourhood Policy), he mentions three principles, legitimacy, coherence and consistency. In general terms he distinguishes nine main European normative principles, within official documents and speeches, which represent the axiological (deontological) core of NPE.

(ii) A group of actions, which is defined through three instruments, persuasion, engagement and differentiation, that motivates dialogue, debate and consensus (De Zutter 2010: 1108). Quoting Rosemary Foot, Manners argues that the process of persuasion is fundamental since normative principles are expressed discursively, an aspect that would encourage discussion and debate and, through ‘language in use’, norms can be shaped domestically and within the international sphere (2010: 40). The EU constantly encourages dialogue and the participation of different actors within and outside the Union and at the time of establishing its relationships. Thus they engage in what experts call political dialogue; these speech acts commit speakers to future actions (Searle 1969). The Union has the ability to differentiate when it shames or confers prestige in establishing its relations with others, an aspect that has earned it the pseudonym of ‘exclusive club’ (Rosecrance 1998: 20, cf. Orbie 2008: 10).
Furthermore, Forsberg adds two aspects that close the analysis of NPE, the activation of international norms and setting and showing an example. In the process of stimulation of worldwide normative principles, Laidi argues that “Europe expresses its preferences for norms by strong support to the normative basis of global governance, which could be defined as the body of international texts and treaties that rules the international system” (2009: 5). However as he outlines, the Union supports global standards as well as its own rules.

(iii) A set of processes that determine EU impact. These processes are described as socialisation, ownership and positive conditionality. Even though some scholars such as Forsberg (2009) and Sjursen (2006) argue that effects upon others are scarcely observable, Manners is emphatic in saying that the diffusion of ideas is a long-term process: “the diffusion of ideas in a normatively sustainable way works like water on stone, not like napalm in the morning” (Manners 2008: 27). In addition, it is difficult to make a distinction between European acts and their effects, because socialisation could also be understood as a persuasive process, or conditionality may be considered as part of a decanting phenomenon of what one has received/perceived. However effects need to be studied in countries affected by European norms.

The socialisation process is something that can be seen both as a mechanism of diffusion of norms and an apparatus of decanting normative principles in norm-taker countries:

…socialisation should be seen as being a part of an open-ended process where the EU reflects on the impact of its policies with the partner countries, in particular through encouraging local ownership and practising positive conditionality (Manners 2010: 42).

Ownership is seen as a process of self-motivation to adapt European norms to a nations’ own needs and interests. For this reason, Manners argues that NPE is not a neo-colonial power, because it encourages ‘other-empowerment’ (Ibid: 42). Certainly NPE is not neo-colonialist, but not for the reason given by Manners. It does not have the pretension of exerting a neo–colonialist power, because it does not exercise an economic or material force. Sjursen claims that “he [Manners] is not interested in capabilities but in ‘normative power of an ideational nature’…” (2006: 238).

Positive conditionality is determined by the recognition by others that the EU does not exert a punishing power. Rather it exercises a force based on alternative and positive ways to encourage a move from ‘passive engagement’ to ‘active engagement’ (Manners, 2010: 43). This European conditionality is exercised through aid programmes, agreements, political dialogue and other forms of authentic diplomacy. In general, they are welcome and the EU is seen as a benevolent power which espouses dialogue rather than conflict. For this reason, non-European countries wishing to establish political and economic relationships with the Union, accept its nature of being a settler of conditions.

There is a fourth dimension considering analytical aspects of NPE: a set of procedures to explain the transmission of norms and the ways of exerting NPE. With Richard Whitman, Manners explores these differences according to three notions: capabilities, culturation and conciliation (1998).
(1) **Capabilities.** This expression implies the exertion of power in terms of physical force. Manners and Whitman argue that conventional approaches connect physical power with civilian and military power but in different ways. Civilian Power involves the role of international law and institutions, and its empirical meaning conveys the exertion of power in terms of influence. Military Power means peacekeeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security, and it uses force, rather than influence. However, Thomas Diez (2005) suggests that Normative Power cannot be reduced merely to economic and military actions, but has further - possibly less visible - ramifications.

(2) **Culturation.** This notion involves the construction of norms. In the EU case, these are founded on its foreign and development policy objectives, including the consolidation of democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this sense, Manners believes that this concept:

…can be differentiated from civilian power by examining the extent to which [as an example] Westphalian culturation is changing. Hence, an emphasis on EU cosmopolitics within normative power representations clearly indicates a huge change of political culture away from the Westphalian frames of reference in which many discussions of civilian power take place (Manners 2004: 3).

(3) **Conciliation.** This concept implies a way of solving a conflict or war, or of dealing with controversial humanitarian intervention. Some international relations scholars extend this word to include even military actions; but all agree that it applies to Civilian Power and the changing of the structures of conflict (Normative Power). From an empirical stance, it is possible to note some difference between these approaches in terms of whether conflicts are resolved through shorter-term intervention, i.e. changing the conflict itself, or through long-term conciliation of the parties, i.e. changing the norm of conflict.

In contrast, normative power theories emphasise the extent to which physical conflict is a manifestation of more structural violence and often the result of extreme constructions of difference (Manners 2004: 4).

Even so, the promotion of the European normative principles is important, not with any expectation in terms of their being universally accepted, but with a view to spreading or diffusing them. In this sense, Manners proposes that EU norm diffusion is shaped by six factors: contagion, informational diffusion, procedural diffusion, transference, overt diffusion and the cultural filter.

(a) **Contagion:** along this route of norm diffusion, the EU spreads its norms through the unintentional diffusion of ideas to other Actors.

(b) **Informational diffusion** constitutes the result of the 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” (Manners 2002: 244).

(c) **Procedural diffusion** refers to an institutionalised relationship between the EU and a third party, “such as an inter-regional co-operation agreement, membership of an international organization or enlargement of the EU itself” (Ibid).
(d) **Transference**: in this case, norm diffusion happens when the EU develops exchanges of goods, trade, aid or technical assistance with third parties “through largely substantive or financial means. Such transference may be the result of the exportation of community norms and standards (Cremona 1998, 86-90) or the ‘carrot and stick’ of financial rewards and economic sanctions” (Manners 2002: 245).

(e) **Overt diffusion** takes into account the physical presence of the EU in third states and international organisations.

(f) **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” (Manners 2002: 245). Ian Manners says that this kind of norm diffusion produces effects in third states and organisations through the impact of international norms and political learning. The effects are produced in terms of learning, adaptation or rejection of norms imposed by the EU.

**The gnosiological dimension of NPE.**

What types of norm are at work when the EU spreads its normative power in the international sphere? Ian Manners believes that the EU can be seen through four norms, which are: utility norms, maxim norms, social norms and narrative norms.

The first type, *utility norms*, is defined by a utilitarian perspective and seeks to maximise gains in political encounters. In this case, the utility is related to efforts for finding efficient solutions to concrete problems, conflicts or dilemmas.

From the approach taken by critical theory, the EU *maxim norms* offer the rules which would determine the rights or wrongs in political encounters.

Theoretical explanations for maxim norms focus on subjective meanings situated in interpretivist epistemology and, more often than not, assume concrete problems from objectivist ontology. From this perspective, the progressive normative power of the EU rests on the extent to which maxim norms motivate EU external action and are recognised as just by non-EU parties”(Manners 2004: 6).

Those who adopt a social perspective define EU norms as the role of constituting identity in political encounters. “Theoretical explanations for *social norms* focus on individual and group identity from constructionist ontology, and more often than not, demonstrate this through apparent knowledge situated in positivist epistemology”(Manners 2004: 7). According to Manners, the Normative Power of the EU represents a model and an Actor when it develops relationships with non-EU parties.

Finally, the discourse (or narrative) paradigms describe the EU norm as the story of legitimising the EU in political encounters. Normative Power as a progressive process tells us a meta- narrative about the EU encounters with non-EU parties.

Theoretical explanations for *narrative norms* focus on subjective meanings situated in interpretivist epistemology and on individual and group identity from constructionist ontology (Ibid).
Ian Manners uses these ontological and epistemological considerations to place ‘norms’ in the adequate range of social construction of reality. In the following table, I summarise these aspects of norms. Owing to the fact that utility norms show a discourse of ‘efficiency’, he identifies utility norms as part of the range of objectivism/positivism. Maxim norms are analysed within objectivism/interpretivism frameworks, because they seek ‘justness’, whereas social norms involve the constitution of processes established on through constructionism/positivism bases. Finally, Manners emphasises that narrative norms facilitate the construction of difference as part of constructionism/interpretivism Gnosiology.

**Table 1: ontological and epistemological considerations of norms.**

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Specific epistemological contributions to the theory are seen in different frameworks, such as the English School, Critical Theory and Post-structuralism. Other epistemological approaches are observed through Manners’ appetite for defining the role of theory by studying the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). Quoting Colin Hay, he agrees that “theory is a guide to empirical exploration, a means of reflecting... upon complex processes of [political] evolution and transformation in order to highlight key periods or phases of change which warrant closer empirical scrutiny” (Hay 2002; cf. Manners 2010: 32). He speaks about causal and constitutive theories for analysing ENP (Europe Normative Power). For him, causal theories are those that involve a causal relationship, i.e. a cause and its effect when the object of study is explained; in contrast, constitutive frameworks refer to those where “the subject of study is constituted or created within the context of a specific social relationship” (Ibid: 33). Even though Manners is not explicit in placing NPE within any specific kind of theory, one can assume that its range oscillates between causal and constitutive theories.

It is important to note that we need to make a distinction between the object and the subject of study. Maybe this discussion does not need to take place here; however it is mentioned because causal theories do not involve the subject studying; they refer to the phenomenon as the object of analysis and not as the subject of study. Contrarily constitutive theories put object and subject in the same place so that the observer or subject studying generates her/his own phenomenon being studied (Maturana & Varela: 1984).
Does the dissenting academia of NPE tell us about the receptiveness of ‘others’?

Following Forsberg’s argument, in NPE it is possible to observe at least three kinds of scholars: a.) those who redefine the concept and theory, b.) those who are sceptical about the theory and (c) Post-colonialist scholars who criticise the theory, considering to be a reprehensible mask of European post-imperialism (2009).

I argue that there is a ‘dissenting academia’ which is difficult to encapsulate in the groups above. These scholars could belong to the ‘b’ and the ‘c’ cohort. However in some aspects they have contributed to re-defining NPE epistemologically. Nevertheless the dissenting scholarship of NPE is a very contested and diverse group of scholars who criticise the theory and underline the need for listening to other voices outside of Europe because, as Gerrits points out, “Europeans and non-Europeans often tend to think differently about the role and relevance of the European Union” (2009: 6).

The ‘dissenting academia’ has theoretically thrown down the gauntlet in an interesting and challenging way in the book Normative Power Europe in a changing world: a Discussion (2009), edited by André Gerrits. Here sceptical and pro-NPE scholars intertwine their claims with the purpose of seeking better clarification about the concept of Normative Power Europe in a different world order: that of fluctuating international relations.

In this tome, one can observe the presence of alternative voices (non-European) talking about their distinctive perceptions of NPE. However they focus only on criticising Euro-centric discourses and pointing out the need to study different perceptions of European identity. For example, Gerrits mentions Kishore Mahbubani who defines the EU as:

… an arrogant, inward-looking, self-obsessed and conservative identity in decline, which not only treats non-European cultures and societies with disdain and condescension but which also fails to establish any kind meaningful partnership with them (Mahbubani 2008, 266; cf. Gerrits 2009, 10)

By the same token, Tatiana Romanova argues that a concept such as NPE is not capable of embracing the EU’s next neighbours “In the dichotomy of Russia versus Western/Europe, Russia can accept that it is not part of the ‘West’, but it will never agree with not being part of Europe. Additionally, Russia will always counter the EU’s values-based definition of Europe and its arrogation to speak on behalf of Europe” (2009, 57). So if the EU does not care about its near neighbours, it could never worry about the rest of the world. Characteristics of sympathy would not be present within European concerns and decision-making policies.

Yiwei Wang (2009) is not less critical than Mahbubani and Romanova about NPE. However he prefers to compare the contrasting building of values within European on the one hand and Chinese normative power. For him, the EU confuses universalism, Messianism and cosmopolitanism as part of its own value-driven policies. Therefore Europe could represent a ‘navel-gazing’ power/actor in international politics.
As argued previously the existing literature of NPE does not offer true studies on the impact of the EU upon others (Forsberg 2009, 6). This aspect is reinforced by Haukkala’s idea that the model offered by NPE is too passive to offer an understanding of the Union as an international shaper of norms. He argues that the impact of the Union can be seen only at regional level in Europe. I maintain that an analysis of receptiveness is called for with regard to NPE in order to give a clearer demonstration of how others perceive the impact of European performance and actions rather than the theoretical conclusion of rhetorical discourse. This would provide empirical evidence as to how third parties receive and use European ideational influences.

Furthermore some scholars question whether NPE is a position to give an account not only of the Union’s impact but also of the role of the EU within world politics. It is difficult to gauge the range edges of the theory. Whereas Forsberg (2009) and Sjursen (2006) argue that effects upon others are scarcely observable, Manners is emphatic in saying that the diffusion of ideas is a long-term process: “the diffusion of ideas in a normatively sustainable way works like water on stone, not like napalm in the morning” (Manners 2008a, 27).

Gerrits (2009) gives good reasons for understanding why the dissenting scholarship of NPE does not offer proper studies of impact or receptiveness of others:

(i) European scholars are confused about the coercive possibilities of the EU and its own processes (or studies) of receptiveness, i.e. they favour certain aspects of the transmission combined with factors from the receivers angle.

(ii) Theoretical frameworks such as NPE are not easily understood, recognised or appreciated outside of the EU.

(iii) Normative or comparable notions of power cannot take the EU beyond rhetoric and self-perception. Concepts and theory cannot help to solve the problem of receptiveness.

Therefore the ‘dissenting academia’ of NPE does not tell us about the impact or receptiveness of European ideational influences. These scholars criticise the theory considering only its conceptual dimension. On the one hand, they analyse which aspects of European identity and particularly its actions can be encapsulated within the term ‘normative power’. This theoretical construct therefore redefines the role of European normativeness as and when the EU establishes its international relations. On the other hand, the presence of European ‘foreigners’ within academic circles helps to make a comparison between the canons of ‘normality’ proposed by the Union and the parameters of normative power understood by others.

European scholarship travels in parallel with outsiders to the EU, because the first group rests on an empirical demonstration of the Union exerting a normative power, whereas outsiders establish a critical discourse. This narrative condemns the fact that when Europe arrogates for itself the exhortative power to shape normality, in reality degrees of normality are related exclusively to European parameters, so they cannot be universal or applicable to everybody.
I argue that the significance of NPE does not lie in its ‘empiricality’, i.e. through practical demonstrations of the Union exerting a normative power, but rather its impact can be placed in the genesis of a powerful discourse characterised by the presence of a ‘common language’ shared by NPE scholars, “a set of concepts created to classify a power’s identity” (De Zutter 2010, 1114). When this ‘language’ denominates Europe as a normative power, this gives it an ontological and epistemological superiority for seducing others with a particular European world view and performance. After constant discursive impacts, the EU is seen by others as an intelligent and virtuous power.

Therefore, in an exercise of analysing the real impact of the Union as an ideational power, it is necessary to observe another side of the coin, i.e. the place occupied by norm-takers. The following table shows some questions that emerge when studying the EU as a norm-maker and non-European countries as norm-takers.

Table 2: questioning NPE in the EU and non-European countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The European Union.</th>
<th>Non-European countries.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are norms diffused by the EU?</td>
<td>What are the European norms really received by non-European countries?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the EU diffuse norms?</td>
<td>How do non-European countries (others) receive European norms?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How does the EU construct its normative practices and discourses?</td>
<td>How do non-European countries use European norms within their practices and discourses?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Two concepts from the ‘dissenting’ academia offer further analyses of NPE: ‘epistemic violence’ (or the power of reason and morality) and ‘ontological violence’ (or the power of language). Even though both terms contribute to NPE discussion empirically, their involvement is more perceptible in the gnosiological dimension. ‘Epistemic violence’ analyses in depth those deontological aspects that give the EU its ethical superiori, -transformative and creative realities. ‘Ontological violence’ highlights the fact that dominance of the EU is determined by a discursive interplay that offers more than epistemologies or parcels of European collective mentalities; it exerts power based on an imposition of European ontologies or weltanschauung.

Empirical analysis.

The empirical analysis of NPE is focused on two main aspects, its analytical and gnosiological dimension. This part of the study was one of the most difficult tasks of the investigation, because the process of grasping and examining European influences through the core content of NPE, namely ideas, principles and norms, encountered significant barriers, such as obstacles with language and the examination of Chilean and Mexican, as opposed to European data.

Firstly, amongst diverse aspects of the analytical dimension of NPE, this research focused on the processes of the EU impact, namely socialisation, ownership and positive conditionality. Owing to the fact that it was not possible to observe immediate and direct effects, I added another process called adverse or null effects, which showed unexpected and unwanted impacts. In the following table (table 4), I compared the main aspects examined as part of the analytical dimension of NPE.
The process of *socialisation* was observed in Chilean discourses through two significant narratives: (i) procedures of European companionship in the implementation of Bologna in public and institutional/university policies, and (ii) discussions about the EU versus the US hegemony in the field of HE. In the case of Mexico, European guidance for adopting the European model was observed as a somewhat distant phenomenon.

An interesting exercise in self-identification and projection of European superiority was perceived when analysing the process of *ownership* as part of the phenomenon studied. Chilean interviewees identified themselves as a European experiment whilst they emphasised the dominance of the EU that is competing with another superpower, the US, for reaching a greater degree of hegemony in Higher Education.

The process of *positive conditionality* showed more fascinating results in the presence of NPE within Chilean and Mexican discourses and practices. In the case of Chile, there was a clear consideration of the Union as a ‘force for good’ (Pace 2008) and a communicative power. Mexican interviewees highlighted normative aspects such as values and norms. Therefore the axiological dimension of NPE is very perceptible. Finally, through studying adverse and null effects, one could infer that European ideational power was seen as a cultural influence that constantly disputes its dominance with the US in the area of HE. This aspect alone is worthy of further investigative research based on a wider spectrum of empirical cases.
Table 3: analytical dimension of NPE: processes of impact.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EU impact</th>
<th>CHILE</th>
<th>MEXICO</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Socialisation | - The presence of European guidance was seen through aid programmes offered to Chilean HE institutions, and through processes of ‘companionship’ in the implementation of Bologna within public and university policies.  
- The identification process appeared as a result of academic exchanges and a kind of admiration for the European ‘paragon’. Aspects of international politics emerged explicitly, especially focused on who will win the hegemony of Higher Education, the US or the EU. | - The presence of European guidance was seen as a somewhat distant process. However there is a significant involvement of Mexican private universities and technological institutes within the process, which took on the European paragon, because they received an order to do so from the Secretary for Public Education. |
| Ownership     | - Through a process of self-identification, Chilean discourses show an implicit European superiority determined by a depreciative view of us, and by the European need to compete with the US for the prevalence of hegemony in the field of HE. | - At the institutional/university sectors, changes occurred gradually owing to the fact that HE institutions adopted only partial aspects of the European model. In the public sector, Bologna has coloured the Plan for National Development, even though European presence is barely perceptible.  
- At higher level, actors compared what was happening in Europe but, in turn, they coordinated proper actions for implementing the changes. |
| Positive       | The European model was constructed discursively as follows: a reference, a good model, an intelligent process, a motor capable of accelerating processes, and as “a constructor of bridges of dialogue, communication and harmonisation”. | Here it is interesting to note that other elements beyond the subject of HE appear explicitly: the presence of normative aspects such as norms and values overestimated by Mexican interviewers. They rescue the value of normative principles of democracy, solidarity and citizenship. Therefore the axiological content of NPE is perceptible through discourses that contribute to shape a positive opinion of Europe. |
| conditionality | - The EU possessed a geopolitical interest in exporting the model. This concern was not seen as a kind of hegemony but as a cultural influence or maybe a political hegemony, “with real interest in preserving European issues uppermost in the minds and hearts of subjects in developing countries”⁵. | - The dispute between American and European hegemony is still part of the conversation about HE. However, they recognise that the omnipotent presence of the US is a determinant variable that does not allow them to adopt the model completely. |
| Adverse/null   | - The EU possessed a geopolitical interest in exporting the model. This concern was not seen as a kind of hegemony but as a cultural influence or maybe a political hegemony, “with real interest in preserving European issues uppermost in the minds and hearts of subjects in developing countries”⁵. | - There is a significant resistance amongst different academic and governmental circles. |
| effects.      | - The dispute between American and European hegemony is still part of the conversation about HE. |                                                                           |

⁵ Interview with Andrés Bernasconi, Santiago-Chile, April 8th, 2008.
Secondly, through a simple analysis of interviews as ‘texts’, the main ideas were extracted and summarised in order to identify parameters of comparison with key notions of the ‘Bologna European mentality’. European ideational factors, observed in a series of discursive practices, materialised through significant events, namely declarations, meetings, policies and the use of a European ‘language’. Within the analyses, European ideas belonging to the Bologna Process were observed as part of the core of Chilean and Mexican events. Norms were analysed taking into account how Chilean HE made use of them. EU principles and processes of transmission of norms and ways of exerting NPE followed European patterns of analysis.

Table 4: analysing NPE in Chilean domestic policies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILEAN DIMENSION</th>
<th>IDEAS</th>
<th>NORMS</th>
<th>EU PRINCIPLES</th>
<th>TRANSMISSION OF NORMS</th>
<th>WAYS OF EXERTING NPE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVENTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declarations:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Santiago (2006)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Policy:</td>
<td>- Accountability</td>
<td>- Utility norms.</td>
<td>- Good governance</td>
<td>- Cultural filter (learning and adaptation)</td>
<td>Culturation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>programme</td>
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<td>MECESUP 2 –</td>
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<td>the ALFA Tuning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project</td>
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<td>University</td>
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<tr>
<td>policies:</td>
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<td>projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>System of</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits (UCH 0610, 2006).</td>
<td>- Harmonisation &amp; collaboration.</td>
<td>- Social solidarity.</td>
<td>- Cultural Filter (learning and adaptation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framework of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>- Homogeneity &amp; diversity.</td>
<td>- Sustainable development.</td>
<td>- Cultural Filter (learning and adaptation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(UCN 0701, 2007)</td>
<td>- National &amp; global perspective.</td>
<td>- Social solidarity.</td>
<td>- Cultural Filter (learning and adaptation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Questioning NPE in the EU and non-European countries: Mexico.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEXICAN DIMENSION</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>EU PRINCIPLES</th>
<th>TRANSMISSION OF NORMS</th>
<th>WAYS OF EXERTING NPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVENTS</td>
<td>IDEAS</td>
<td>NORMS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: questioning NPE in the EU and in Chile and Mexico.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The European Union.</th>
<th>The EU</th>
<th>Non-European countries.</th>
<th>Chile and Mexico</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What ideational aspects are diffused by the EU?</strong></td>
<td>- Axiological core of NPE: ideas, kinds of norms and principles.</td>
<td>What European ideational aspects are really received by non-European countries?</td>
<td>- Pragmatist, socio-cultural and political aspects of NPE, specifically focused on ideas and kinds of norms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How does the EU diffuse its ideational outlooks?</strong></td>
<td>- Analytical procedures of NPE.</td>
<td>How do non-European countries (others) receive European ideational outlooks?</td>
<td>- Analytical procedures of NPE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How does the EU construct its ideational (normative) practices and discourses?</strong></td>
<td>- Axiological core of NPE. - Analytical procedures of NPE.</td>
<td>How do non-European countries use European ideational standpoints within their practices and discourses?</td>
<td>Reinforcing their existing practices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the table above (4), I have summarised some questions about NPE in the EU and in Chile and Mexico. I have organised this part of the conclusions answering the question previously proposed.

(i) **What ideational aspects were diffused by the EU? (EU’s principles).** The Union through the Bologna Process (and the Tuning Project) diffused an ‘axiological core’ based on ideas, types of norms and principles. Which European ideational aspects were in fact received by Chilean and Mexican HE? Chile and Mexico have received, adopted and used an ‘axiological package’ characterised by pragmatist, socio-cultural and political aspects of European normative discourse.

(ii) **How did the EU diffuse its ideational standpoints?** The transmission of norms was observed as analytical procedures for exerting NPE. How did Chile and Mexico receive this European ideational outlook? These aspects were received in almost the same way by the ‘norm-takers’.

(iii) **How did the EU construct its ideational (normative) practices and discourses?** The Union formalised its discursive normative practices through an axiological core and analytical procedures of exerting ideational power. How did Chilean and Mexican HE use European ideational standpoints within their practices and discourses? I firmly maintained that the Bologna process represented nothing more than a medium for reinforcing existing practices. For example in the case of Chile, the use of practical procedures, coming from the Tuning Methodology, and the presence of utility norms validates even more the existence of a neo-liberal system of Higher Education.

In contrast, Mexico presents more of a state-system in HE and therefore its approach towards European ideational influences was perceived as the recovery of normative principles such as democracy, solidarity and citizenship, supporting the notion of education as a fundamental concern of state welfare.

Concluding, the receiver countries use the axiological (deontological) ‘package’ in a utilitarian way. In the case of Chile, it is observable as a predominant pragmatist side, whereas in Mexico it is seen a political aspect of European values. If we overlap this with the analysis of the Bologna Language, we can reach one of my conclusions: that Chile uses European norms for supporting its neo-liberal system whereas Mexico employs European Ideational influences for assisting it state system.

20
Conclusions:

The EU as an ideational actor could be exerting Public Diplomacy. Cull (2013) defines Public Diplomacy (PD) as international actors seeking to engage with foreign publics as opposed to traditional PD seeking state-to-state engagement (nation-state). Furthermore, the concept of engagement can be equated to attempting and hopefully garnering positive interest by third parties regarding the formulation and implementation of foreign policies. The field via representative authors can be placed on a continuum of influence implicating intrinsic attraction by means of soft power resources to an intentional and managed country image that speaks to the interests of foreign publics.

This paper focused on analysing new European diplomatic practices in times of crisis and transition such as Higher Education as a soft power. I summarise my paper as a significant effort towards demonstrating European influences upon non-European countries. The field of this research, Higher Education (HE), constitutes one of the contemporary interests for the EU and other superpowers to exert an intellectual hegemony (Robertson 2009).

The Bologna Process could be seen as a ‘Trojan Horse’ that purports to bring in a vaguely European influence yet, in fact, makes a more fundamental change than perhaps intended. This European model can be seen, then, as the most influential tool that Europe has been using to spread the norms, ideas and language. Here language is used to reproduce discursive practices of domination. These practices are grounded in ontologies that reveal only the experiences of superpowers, which historically have played the role of master.

Certainly as some European scholars argue it is difficult, through empirical cases, to verify the hypothesis that the Union exerts an ideational power characterised by discursive practices that validate its own identity and ways of behaving in the global sphere. Europe presents an exemplar ‘personality’ eliciting some considerable degree of admiration and compliance.

This paper offered a hermeneutic prospective which criticises, firstly, those discursive constructions offered by the language of NPE itself. Secondly, it uses further constructions which reveal influential processes exerted by the EU exporting its models abroad, as in the case of the Bologna Process. Thirdly, this research undertakes a more critical analysis and perspective in which to study post-colonial strategies which indicates an orientation and impact on the discourses and ‘vocabularies’ of others.

In a final analysis for this paper, it was said that ‘higher education’ as a hegemonic ‘social structure’ could have two variants: European or American hegemony. In that sense, this thesis will do comparative analyses to look for either a European hegemony (as a political discursive logic) or an American hegemony (as a political economic logic) or even possibly both (EU and US hegemonies) operating in the field of Higher Education in Latin America. In these analyses, Latin American countries might show characteristics of different logics (discursive and economic), or they could be representing a mix of both kinds of hegemonic logic. If we made this latter assumption, it would allow a complex analysis of how hegemonic forces might be at present operating in post-modern contexts or Post-industrial (Post-Fordist) societies.
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