

# The Limits of Normative Power Europe: Evaluating the Third Pillar of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership



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## **Abstract:**

This paper aims at exploring the notion of Normative Power Europe (NPE) presented by Manners in 2002 and its limits. In order to assess these limits, the paper will draw upon the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and more specifically to its third pillar which is the socio-cultural one. To that end two aspects of the third pillar will be explored; firstly EU's promotion of democracy in the Middle East by the so called democratisation process and the norm of good governance. For testing its success the paper will focus on the Palestinian Elections of 2006 and the EU's reactions to them. Secondly, the other aspect of the third pillar under research will be the intercultural dialogue focusing on the field of youth. The specific focus will be given to all these actors, policies and tools involved in this dialogue between cultures and peoples. The paper concludes by arguing that the notion of normative power Europe is no longer enough to help us understand the EU's nature. Also, the concept has a number of weaknesses. The best proof of this is the recent Sarkozy's proposal for a Mediterranean Union which is mainly business oriented driven away from normative objectives (Council of

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the European Union, 2008b). Will the normative character of the EU continue being in the forefront, or should the EU gradually adopt pure economic and military ways of making its influence stronger.

**Key Words: Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, EU-Middle East policy, Normative Power Europe**

### **Introduction:**

The Mediterranean has always been a priority for the EU. Since its inception, the EU, tried to engage with its Mediterranean partners through a series of initiatives. Although initial attempts such as the Euro-Arab dialogue in 1973, the Global Mediterranean Policy (GMP) in 1987 or the Renovated Mediterranean Policy in 1990 were not successful, in 1995 the EU came on stage with a promising institutional framework; the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) which even after 15 years is the most detailed and significant initiative taken towards the Mediterranean partners (Xenakis and Chrysochoou, 2001b: 60-66). The key question posed in this paper is the success with which the European Union has been able to deploy this partnership in order to develop a significant presence (in security, economic and socio-cultural terms) in the region. The specific focus of this paper centres on the third pillar of the EMP which is the socio-cultural one and in two particular aspects of it; the democratisation process and the intercultural dialogue. What are the limits of normative power Europe with reference to democracy promotion in the Mediterranean and the intercultural dialogue? Is the notion of normative power Europe still alive or does it require 'mechanisms of technical life support'?

The paper is separated into five parts; in the first part the construction of the notion of 'normative power Europe' will be explored so as to find its main strengths, weaknesses and limitations. The second part will put the EMP in this theoretical framework with the aim of arguing that it absolutely fits to the whole 'normative' debate. At the same time the third pillar of the EMP will also

be analysed. In the third part this paper will examine the EU's policy of democracy promotion in the region. In order to do so, concepts such as the democratisation process and the norm of good governance will be put under analysis. For testing the success of democracy promotion in the region this paper will focus on the results of the Palestinian Elections in 2006. By shedding light on the EU's reactions to the Hamas' electoral win in the Palestinian Territories, issues of insolvency and the gap between rhetoric and reality will surface thereby testing the notion of NPE. The fourth part will investigate the aspect of intercultural dialogue. In doing so, focus will be given to the EU's adherence to the notion of dialogue and the tools and actors of this process. More specifically the paper will focus on the Anna Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and will argue that the EU's choice for 'soft power' and 'normative' means has been a wise one in this case.

The paper will end by evaluating these two aspects of the third pillar of the EMP as well as stressing the limitations of the notion of NPE proposing that the argument that the most important factor of the EU is 'not what it does or what it says, but what it is' (Manners, 2002: 252) is not enough; facts and tangible actions are needed.

### **Conceptualising Normative Power**

The concept of civilian and normative power Europe<sup>2</sup> has its roots in Carr's and Duchêne's writings; Carr was the first who made the distinction between economic power, military power and power over opinion (Carr, 1962: 108) while Duchêne, moving one step beyond claimed that traditional military power had given way to progressive civilian power as the means to exert influence in international relations (Duchêne, 1972, 1973)<sup>3</sup>. Duchêne was the

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<sup>2</sup> While these two concepts are considered to be 'very close' to each other (Diez, 2005: 617), Manners argues that there are at least six distinctions to be made between them (Manners, 2006b: 175).

<sup>3</sup> Duchêne stated that 'Europe would be the first major area of the Old World where the age-old process of war and indirect violence could be translated into something more in tune with the twentieth-century citizen's notion of civilised politics' (Duchêne, 1972: 43). Also he supported that 'Europe as a whole

first who characterised the EU as a civilian power and then granted its mission of 'civilising' international relations.

It was this notion of civilian power which Bull criticised for its ineffectiveness and lack of self-sufficiency in military power (Manners, 2002: 237) by arguing that 'Europe is not an actor in international affairs, and does not seem likely to become one...' (Bull, 1982: 151). Unfortunately for Bull, his idea was not to be proved true. In 2010, not only has the EU become a major actor in international affairs but has also been able to become a system of rule sharing capable of producing and diffusing change not only with regard to its member states, but also with reference to international politics.

It is this capability of diffusion of change that made Manners use the phrase 'Normative Power Europe' in order to describe the movement from Cold War approaches to the EU (Manners, 2006a: 184). Manners defined the normative value of Europe's power as resting on the universal character of the principles it promotes in its relations with non-members (Manners, 2002: 241); its ability to shape conceptions of 'normal' in international relations (Manners, 2002: 239). Bicchi proposed that the EU behaves normatively when it promotes values that empower actors affected by the European Foreign Policy (EFP) (Bicchi, 2006: 289).

To this end and with reference to EU's recently developed and expanded Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and European Defence and Security Policy (ESDP) the overall debate about NPE has been sparked. Whilst it has been suggested that the acquisition of military capabilities<sup>4</sup> does not necessarily lead to the diminution of the EU's normative power (Manners, 2006a: 182), Sjursen (2006) and Stavridis (2001) believe that not only does the acquisition of military capabilities not endanger EU's normative character

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could well become the first example in history of a major centre of the balance of power becoming in the era of its decline not a colonised victim but the exemplar of a new stage in political civilisation' (Duchêne, 1973: 19).

<sup>4</sup> On 31 March 2003, the EU launched its first military operation – a peace-keeping mission in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), taking over from a NATO force. For details see (Howorth, 2005).

but it strengthens it as well<sup>5</sup> and that military means are very important, used as a last resort, to uphold civilian values (Orbie, 2006: 125). Finally, Smith states that civilian power Europe is 'definitely dead' (Smith, 2005: 11).

Although the debate is ongoing, the EU is not only promoting values, but is itself founded upon them (more than that, the Lisbon Treaty makes explicit reference to the Charter of Fundamental Rights). As a consequence, one would expect the EU to reflect its internal value-system in its external relations as well. The EU is trying to extend this democratic foreign policy model, not through conventional military means, but through the power of ideas as well as through economic (mainly trade-related) means. In that regard, EU foreign policy takes shape within the wider remit of collective norm-orientation, acting, in its external affairs, as a polity in its own rights; namely, as a political formation capable of producing as well as diffusing values in international society (Smith, 2001).

In the 1973 Copenhagen declaration on European identity, the principles of democracy, rule of law, social justice and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms were made explicit although they were constitutionalised in the Treaty on European Union (TEU) in 1991 (Youngs, 2001: 30). Since then, the EU has made its external relations informed by, and conditional on, a catalogue of norms<sup>6</sup>; these norms are closely linked with the European convention on human rights and fundamental freedoms (ECHR) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Manners defines this 'normative basis' and separates between five 'core' norms<sup>7</sup> and four 'minor'; the first category is constituted by the norm of peace, the idea of liberty, the norms of democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights. The minor norms are the notion of social solidarity, the anti-discrimination norm, the sustainable development norm and last, the norm of good governance (Manners, 2002: 242).

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<sup>5</sup> Sjursen mentions that 'It may also be that the threat of the use of force is required in order to appear credible to the third parties when seeking to promote particular norms' (Sjursen, 2006: 239).

<sup>6</sup> The common element of these norms' diffusion is that this happened without any physical force for their imposition.

<sup>7</sup> All the 'core' norms have a historical context. For example these of the democracy, rule of law and human rights grew when there was the need of distinguishing between democratic Western Europe from communist Eastern Europe.

All these norms are now included with the form of 'conditionality clauses'. These were first introduced in the review of the Lome IV agreement and since then are considered to be an essential element for the EU's financial aid to third countries (Youngs, 2001: 53). Although theoretically the EU is supposed to use this conditionality principle, which has positive and negative dimensions<sup>8</sup>, the reality is that it faces significant difficulties, especially in the case of the implication of negative conditionality; quite often it is difficult for all the member states to agree upon and take a hard stance (Smith, 2005: 11). As a result, the EU often ends up with an inconsistent and untrustworthy image.

### **The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: Towards a New Normative Paradigm?**

By putting the EMP in a theoretical context we could argue that it absolutely fits in the whole 'civilian', 'civilising' and 'normative' debate. Indeed, the EU since the 1970s and until the 1990s was not really questioning human rights and political reform in its relations with the Mediterranean (Youngs, 2001: 52). Although, the beginning of the Euro-Arab dialogue in the mid-1970s was the proof of signs of a common European interest, all the pre-1989 Community efforts<sup>9</sup> for promoting political dialogue and regional co-operation failed (Xenakis and Chrysochoou, 2001a: 58). In 1995, the EU introduced a very promising institutional framework; the so-called Euro-Mediterranean Partnership or as it is often called Barcelona Process (BP).

The EMP included all these normative objectives, which justify the EU's characterisation as a normative power. In fact, the EMP encompasses normative considerations concerning transformation in governance and human rights (Joffé, 2008: 148; Youngs, 2001: 55). The aim of the EMP was

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<sup>8</sup> In the positive conditionality the EU promises benefits to states if they fulfill the conditions; while practicing the negative conditionality principle the EU, if the state violates the conditions, reduces, suspends or even terminate the benefits that had been agreed upon with the certain country.

<sup>9</sup> For details of all the previous Mediterranean policies see Youngs, 2001: 47-93 Also, Xenakis and Chrysochoou, 2001a: 74-116.

to create a secure environment; a zone of shared peace, prosperity and stability (Xenakis and Chryssochoou, 2001b: 75) and to 'establish a comprehensive partnership through strengthened political dialogue, the development of economic and financial cooperation and greater emphasis on the social, cultural and human dimension' (Commission of the European Communities, 1995).

To that end, the EMP can be considered more than just a partnership among states for achieving specific goals as it constitutes a resurgent regime containing characteristics such as the development of general norms of good governance and the enactment of mechanisms of collective action. The EMP's aim was the creation of both an international regime and a regional process which embraced three different dimensions namely peace and stability through political partnership, the setting up of a zone of prosperity through the creation of a free trade area and the promotion of dialogue between cultures, states and societies through its socio-cultural dimension (Xenakis and Chryssochoou, 2001b: 75).

The EU has given great attention in the EMP to issues of human rights and the use of this conditionality correlates with its belief that serious instability can result from their abuses (Youngs, 2004: 426). Consequently, another element that proves that the EMP is very close to the EU's normative role is the co-operation over the promotion of democracy and human rights as an integral part of the Euro-Mediterranean relations. Not in a framework of standard international co-operation, but with the aim of the creation of a 'geo-political sub-region' of the international system (Rhein, 1996: 83).

It is this sub-region or invention of a region which makes the EMP one of the best examples, if not the best, of using normative power in order to bring people closer together with the fundamental tool of the 'dialogue of civilisations' (Adler and Crawford, 2006: 18). By moving beyond theoretical explanations which try to explain the EMP through the lens of the theory of

'security communities'<sup>10</sup> or the theory of 'international regimes'<sup>11</sup> we are driven to the conclusion that the EMP constitutes one of the best projections of EU's normative power. There is probably no other policy, except for enlargement, which concentrates all these normative objectives mentioned above, that try to establish a whole 'regional system' which will have the main characteristics of 'the existence of standard roles linked around a minimum common value denominator and a series of mechanisms for the implementation of the principles of good governance, which will exceed the divide line of the Christian North from the Islamic South' (Xenakis, 2006: 467).<sup>12</sup> In 2003 Smith argued persuasively that 'if there is one objective...which clearly derives from the nature of the EU itself, it is the promotion of regional cooperation' (Smith, 2003: 70). The great success of the EU's use of normative power in the case of the EMP is that it managed to bring to the same table countries that were traditionally in conflict such as Israel and its Arab neighbours. This would possibly not have been a reality with the use of other means rather than these of dialogue and co-operation which were promoted by the EMP.

To sum up, the next sections will offer an overview of the third pillar of the EMP as well as try to explain the limits of the concept of NPE with regard to two aspects of this pillar; democracy promotion and intercultural dialogue.

### **The Third Pillar of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership**

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<sup>10</sup> The concept of security community has its roots in Karl Deutsch's writings. According to him a security community can be defined as 'a group of people which has become integrated' and these security communities can be either 'amalgamated' or 'pluralistic'. An amalgamated security community is shaped when two or more states formally merge into an expanded state (Deutsch et al., 1957: 5-6). On the other hand, a pluralistic security community retains the legal interdependence of separate states but 'integrates them into the point that the units entertain dependable expectations of peaceful change' (Adler and Crawford, 2006: 12). The members of a pluralistic community possess a set of core values which derive from a mutual identity.

<sup>11</sup> The concept of international regime goes back to Ruggie (1975) who defined it as 'a set of mutual expectations, rules and regulations, plans, organisational energies and financial commitments, which have been accepted by a group of states' (quoted in Xenakis, 1999: 263). It was later enhanced by Krasner in 1983 who supported that international regimes are detected 'when there are clearly understood principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures around which decision maker's expectations converge in a given area of international relations' (Krasner, 1983: 2). Finally, Keohane from a realist and neo-liberal approach suggested that 'Regimes are institutions with explicit rules, agreed upon governments that pertain to particular sets of issues in international relations' (Keohane, 1989: 4).

<sup>12</sup> Original text in Greek. Author's translation.



The third pillar of the EMP under the title 'Partnership in social, cultural and human affairs' can be characterised as the 'heart' of EU's so called normative power and it is 'one of the main innovations within the Euro-Mediterranean relations' (Pace and Schumacher, 2004: 122). The incorporation of the third pillar into this multilateral and multidimensional framework was the EU's response to Huntington's notion of the 'Clash of Civilisations' which supported the idea of a deep and innate conflict between Islam and Christianity, between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean (Huntington, 1993: 22-25).<sup>13</sup> The third pillar embraces civil society and non-governmental organisations and the linkages of these networks as Xenakis and Chrysochoou put it 'may lay the foundation for knowledge, understanding and mutual confidence, which are vital for the construction of a common Euro-Mediterranean space' (Xenakis and Chrysochoou, 2001b: 83). The Barcelona Declaration underlined that the reinforcement of democracy and respect for human rights, among other principles of good governance, are the way of replying to the Islamophobic 'clash of civilisations' thesis (Commission of the European Communities, 1995). In the words of Benita Ferrero-Waldner, former European Commissioner for external relations 'intercultural dialogue is the defining issue of this decade, if not this quarter-century. The sooner we take steps towards a meaningful dialogue of cultures, the sooner we can see to rest the dangerous myth of the clash of civilisations' (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006a: 1).

The scope of the third pillar has been very ambitious. The idea of the interlinkages among political, economic, social and cultural affairs is dominant in international politics and major components of the same process (Schumacher, 2005: 282, Panebianco, 2003: 16). This idea has its roots mainly in the European normative belief that 'encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies is a necessary component of any political, strategic or economic programme aimed at

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<sup>13</sup> According to Huntington the great divisions among humankind will be cultural and the principal conflicts will occur because of the 'clash' of civilisations. These major contemporary civilisations are Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox and Latin American (Huntington, 1993: 22-25).

promoting democracy in neighbouring Mediterranean countries' (Rosenthal, 2005: 279-280).

As already mentioned, the third pillar embraces different areas of co-operation and this is probably the reason that it remained for a number of years in the shadow of the EMP; for example human rights issues are in the 'same boat' as environmental issues, illegal immigration with the health sector, media and youth with sustainable development and good governance. Although Del Sarto argues that different issues were 'somewhat 'thrown' into the third basket' and that 'in the best case, the issues dealt with under the third basket are disconnected from each other' (Del Sarto, 2005: 314) it could be argued that all these issues are not completely irrelevant. For example, through a lifelong learning process, media, youth and education can play a catalytic role in issues such as human rights, Islamic fundamentalism, democratisation and good governance. To put it in Calleja's words 'the Barcelona Process continues to remind those capable of bringing change in this region that such change can only happen if education is geared to erase misconceptions of the past and provide the skills and the creative tools for development' (Calleja, 2005: 409).

One more element central to the socio-cultural dimension of the EMP and its third pillar is the role of civil society to the whole process. Since its inception, the BP aimed at involving a wide circle of actors such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society which accompany all ministerial meetings. The EuroMed Civil Fora have contributed a lot to the spread of the concept of multiculturalism and the importance of civil society (Panebianco, 2003: 17).<sup>14</sup> Apart from the EuroMed Civil Fora there are some other important instruments, established by the EMP with the aim to support civil society. The most important of them are the MED-Programmes<sup>15</sup>, MEDA Democracy, EuroMed Heritage, EuroMed Audiovisual and the EuroMed Youth Action Programme (Jünemann, 2003: 84).

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<sup>14</sup> The EuroMed Civil Fora accompany all Euro-Mediterranean conferences on ministerial level complementing the EMP from 'outside' (Jünemann, 2003: 84).

<sup>15</sup> They were suspended in 1996 because of mismanagement (European Commission, 1996).

MEDA Democracy was set up by the Commission with the aim to fund work on democratisation and human rights separately from the main MEDA budget. By the end of 1990s the Commission's democracy assistance for the Mediterranean accounted for 14 per cent of its total contribution (Youngs, 2001: 83). Although MEDA Democracy was stalled in 1998 the problems were solved in the next year and in 2000 all democracy projects for the Mediterranean were transferred to a new Democracy and Human Rights Department in the Commission the so called EuropeAid (Jünemann, 2004: 7).

Apart from the vast amounts of funding that were distributed for work on issues of good governance, human rights and democratisation another aspect of the third pillar also gained much attention, and funds; the institutions for the promotion of a dialogue between cultures, one more central notion of the third pillar and one more tool that the NPE decided to use with regard to its Mediterranean partners. Among the most important institutional frameworks for the promotion of dialogue between cultures, as already mentioned, are the Euro-Med Heritage, the Euro-Med Audiovisual, and with reference to the young people, the EuroMed Youth Programme.<sup>16</sup> The latter was established at the end of 1998, and it is the only programme which addresses the needs of a specific part of the population rather than the needs of a sector (Barbieri, 2007: 14). It promotes the mobility of young people and understanding between peoples through three types of action: Euromed Youth Exchanges which bring together groups of young people from at least four different countries for two or three weeks; the EuroMed Voluntary Service which supports transnational voluntary activity for the benefit of a particular community for a period of two to twelve months; EuroMed Support Measures which further the development of youth organisations and civil society (European Commission External Relations, 2008: 7).

Within the framework of the EUROMED Youth there are several institutions which support the aims of the programme. These include the SALTO Youth

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<sup>16</sup> The EuroMed Youth Programme had three different phases: The first phase took place from 1999 to 2001 and provided a total budget of 9.7 million euro (Barbieri, 2007: 15). The second phase of the programme took place from 2002 to 2004 and its third phase took place from 2005 up to the end of 2008 (EuroMed Youth III Programme).

Euro-Med Resource Centre, the Council of Europe, the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between Cultures, the European Youth Forum, the Euro-Med Youth Platform and the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament (Barbieri, 2007: 17).

To sum up, while the EMP addressed from its early inception the issue of co-operation in cultural, social and human affairs under its so called third basket or pillar with a very promising and detailed institutional framework it was not until the aftermath of 9/11 terrorist attacks that it gained attention. The third pillar had remained in the shadow of the Euro-Mediterranean co-operation and all the attention had been paid to the first and second pillar which can be characterised as the 'high politics' of this partnership. While the official US response to the terrorist attacks was primarily military, the EU adopted an approach founded on the notion of dialogue between cultures and societies (Silvestri, 2005: 385). To this end, the EU, tried to improve its relations with the Muslim world and avoid a 'Clash of Civilisations' by focusing on the notion of intercultural and interfaith dialogue. These two aspects turned out to be 'a political strategy of the EU to express its decision to respond to violence in a different – peaceful – way in opposition to the methods (the 'War on Terror') adopted by the US' (Silvestri, 2005: 393).

### **Normative Power Europe and Democratisation: Convergence or Conflict?**

One of the most basic and fundamental norms that the EU promotes through the EMP, is the democratisation norm. But how can we define democratisation? According to the European concept, democratisation embraces issues of good governance, respect to human rights and democracy (European Commission External Relations, 2010). All these elements seem to be problematic though. What does the EU mean with the concept of 'good governance' and 'democracy', and can we have a clear definition for them?

For Europe the concept of democracy can be summarised in its 'Chapter of Fundamental Rights' (European Parliament, 2000). According to this Western view, democracy is linked with the political systems. But this cannot happen in the case of its Mediterranean partners. Their culture and religion are not the same, and as a result they have their own definition of democracy which is indissolubly connected with their religion<sup>17</sup>. The concept of good governance would probably be based in two elements; democracy (as the EU conceives it) and fair, free and transparent elections. But what happens when these elections take place and their winner is Hamas?

When the results of the Palestinian vote were official, the EU congratulated the Palestinian people for the successful elections and recognised that these elections were a proof of the democratic transition taking place there. They also reaffirmed their commitment to the continuity of the financial aid as their main economic donor; and all this was followed by a comment stating that the elections were conducted even better than those in some member countries of the EU (Council of the European Union, 2006).<sup>18</sup> After all this we could argue that both the EMP as a policy and the NPE as a conceptualisation of the EU had a successful result which everyone should be proud of. All this took place on the 26th of January 2006; three months later the EU following Canada and USA decided to freeze the direct aid to the Palestinian Authority (The Electronic Intifada, 2006). This fact was a direct violation of the EU's discourse about democratisation, and the importance of free, fair and transparent elections.

But the official statements did not stop there. On the 27th of January 2006 the European Parliament's Vice President Edward McMillan-Scott speaking to reporters at a news conference in Jerusalem stated that:

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<sup>17</sup> For details about the different perspectives of the democratisation and the Arab World see Ragioneri, 2003: 47-61.

<sup>18</sup> 'The European Union welcomes the successful holding on 25 January of elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC). The Palestinian people have demonstrated a clear commitment to determine their political future via democratic means. These elections saw impressive voter participation in an open and fairly-contested electoral process that was efficiently administered by the independent Palestinian Central Elections Commission... The successful holding of these elections is an important step in strengthening Palestinian democracy and implementing Palestinian Roadmap obligations' (Council of the European Union, 2006).

'The clamour for choice and change was on the streets in Palestine; we heard and we welcome the noise of democracy. The political environment has changed and the Quartet, which meets on Monday, will need to take stock. As we predicted after last year's presidential vote, the Palestinian people have provided a model for the wider Arab region in the conduct of this election. The parliamentary dimension of the EU's neighbourhood has been amplified, in particular through the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly in which members of the Palestinian Legislative Council and the Knesset uniquely participate (European Parliament, 2006)'.

How can we argue in favour of NPE when it strains the democratic expression of people while it is supposed to be founded on the notion of democracy? The EU, before the Palestinian elections took place, had suspicions that Hamas would win the people's vote. Thus, it had decided to send a clear message to Palestinians to change their minds. The message had come from its foreign policy chief Javier Solana who had said in a visit to the Occupied Palestinian Territories in December 2005 that if Hamas won in January's elections then it would be 'very difficult that the help and the money that goes to... the Palestinian Authority will continue to flow' (El Fassed, 2005)<sup>19</sup>. After Hamas' election victory, the Quartet<sup>20</sup> sent its message again with a press statement which on the one hand '...congratulated the Palestinian people on an electoral process that was free, fair and secure' (Quartet, 2006) but on the other hand 'concluded that it was inevitable that future assistance to any new government would be reviewed by donors...' (Quartet, 2006).

Indeed this is what happened three months after the celebrating official EU statements about democracy which was 'everywhere in Palestine'. As Pace puts it:

'Although they appeared to take their first steps towards a process of democratisation (in accordance with EU norms), the EU's reactions to the electoral win by Hamas stand in stark contrast to EU discursive

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<sup>19</sup> In this direction was the Middle East Quartet's official statement as well which 'recalled its view that future assistance to any new Government would be reviewed by donors against that Government's commitment to the principles outlined above. The Quartet concurred that there inevitably will be an effect on direct assistance to that Government and its ministries' (United Nations, 2006).

<sup>20</sup> The Quartet is consisted of the US, the EU, Russia and the UN.

practices regarding the importance of fair, free and transparent elections as crucial dimensions of the much needed 'democratisation' momentum in Palestine' (Pace, 2007: 1060).

Although the legitimacy of the elections was not questioned, the legitimacy of the winning party was. Hamas was included since 2003 in the EU's terrorist lists, which complicated things as far as the EU's relations with this democratically elected government. While the Quartet posed three conditions to Hamas, namely to renounce violence, recognise Israel and respect past peace deals (Quartet, 2006) the 'measurement' of this adherence remained elusive and problematic.

To restore its normative image, the EU decided to establish a Temporary International Mechanism (TIM) which would channel money directly to people and projects, bypassing the Hamas-led government (Quartet, 2006)<sup>21</sup>. By this, the EU tried on the one hand to justify its decision to freeze its direct aid and on the other to make its Mediterranean partners believe that TIM is a 'proof of the EU's capacity to act in the most difficult circumstances' (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006b). But in the process, 'the EU weakened the normative consistency of the meaning of free, fair and transparent elections as the basic conditions for its aid as well as its image as a 'force for good'' (Pace, 2007: 1054).

Although the EU, through the EMP and its third pillar, has managed to make some positive steps as far as the promotion of democracy and the norm of good governance are concerned these steps are not enough. It is evident that there is an inconsistency affecting the EU and its policies. By looking closely to the Palestinian elections of 2006 and the EU's reaction to them we are driven to the common criticism about 'double standards'. To this end, there is a clear hypocrisy on behalf of the EU, as it seems that its member states are

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<sup>21</sup> TIM had three "windows": the mechanism window I includes an Emergency Services Support Programme funded by the World Bank and its amount is €10 million for health supplies; window II (€40 million) is for the Interim Emergency Relief Contribution (IERC) of the European Commission which is being reinforced to ensure uninterrupted supply of essential utilities such as fuel, particularly to the power station in Gaza; window III (€40 million) aims at the payment of social allowances for those who provide health services in hospitals and clinics. For more details see the website of EuropeAid at [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/occupied\\_palestinian\\_territory/tim/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/neighbourhood/country-cooperation/occupied_palestinian_territory/tim/index_en.htm).

interested in norms and their diffusion only when these do not endanger their vital interests. As a result, it is evident that there is not a clear distinction between norms and interests as Manners tends to himself suggest but there is a more subtle fusion of moralities and material concerns that continually characterises the NPE. In the words of Hyde-Price, the EU is left 'open to the charge of hypocrisy when it proclaims its ethical intentions but then pursues policies that favour European economic or political interests' (Hyde-Price, 2008: 43). Consequently, if the notion of NPE is to convince us about the character and nature of the EU then better consistency is needed between rhetoric and reality.

### **Normative Power Europe and Intercultural Dialogue: From 'Clash' to Convergence**

The third pillar of the EMP and more specifically its ambitious idea that any political or economic programme aiming at promoting democracy should be based on a deeper understanding between cultures and civilisations and on the exchanges of civil society constitutes a big innovation in the European thinking (Rosenthal, 2005: 279). To that end, the intercultural dialogue constitutes one more 'soft power' tool, and one more expression of the NPE. Indeed, the EU through the EMP recognised that political, economic, social and cultural behaviours are interlinked. The aim of the Euro-Mediterranean social and cultural co-operation is undoubtedly very ambitious (Schumacher, 2005: 282) having as its objective 'to bring people on both sides of the Mediterranean closer together, to promote their mutual knowledge and understanding and to improve their perception of each other' (European Commission, 2002: 5). The dialogue between cultures and civilisations, the media, the youth and the exchange between civil societies which are the four dominant areas that were stressed as priority areas for action in the follow-up programme of the Barcelona Declaration (Schumacher, 2005: 283) are considered to be the key elements for the success of the third pillar's mission.



Although the third pillar had remained in the shadow of the EMP, in a post-9/11 era more importance was given to it. After the 9/11 attacks and the bombings in Madrid (2004) and in London (2005), discourse about terrorism, threats but most of all about the 'clash of civilisations' gained prominence. The EU, adhering to the notion of democracy and dialogue, like a normative power, decided to adopt a strategy founded on these notions.

While this approach is definitely an innovative one, it is problematic and a number of conceptual questions rise such as what dialogue means (Pace, 2005b: 293) and what are the principles for an authentic dialogue? (Malmvig, 2005: 352). How are cultures defined in this context and who can represent a culture? (Del Sarto, 2005: 318, 321). These are some of the questions that this part discusses, while introducing all these institutions and programmes that the EU has in order to perform a successful and promising policy called 'intercultural dialogue', with special reference to the field of the youth.

The Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between Cultures can be considered as the biggest success of both the EU and the EMP to the field of dialogue between cultures, and it is the first common institution of the EMP which is financed by all the partner countries and the Commission (Pace, 2005b: 307). In 2003, in the Crete Declaration, the principles of an authentic dialogue were put forward. According to the Declaration these principles include respect of pluralism, diversity and cultural specificities; equality and mutual respect; avoidance and reduction of prejudices and stereotypes; the Dialogue should aim to achieve, not only a better understanding of the 'other', but also solutions for persistent problems; the ultimate goal of Dialogue, should not be to change 'the other', but, rather, to live peacefully with 'the other' (European Commission, 2003b: Annex 1).

In December 2003, and after the Mid-Term Euro-Mediterranean Conference in Crete, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs met in Naples where they took the decision of setting up a Foundation which would promote the dialogue between cultures and civilisations (European Commission, 2003a). It should be mentioned that the original proposal for the support of an interfaith and

intercultural dialogue was taken in 2002, in Valencia (where the Euro-Mediterranean Conference took place) under the document with title 'Action Plan on Dialogue between Cultures and Civilisations' in the 'Valencia Action Plan' (European Commission, 2002). In its early inception, during the Conferences in Valencia and Crete, the dialogue was mentioned as a 'dialogue between cultures and civilisations', but later the EU shifted the focus from the notion of 'civilisations' to that of 'cultures', in order to avoid any correlation with the notion of the 'clash of civilisations' (Silvestri, 2005: 394, Malmvig, 2005: 356).<sup>22</sup>

### ***The Anna-Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures***

The Anna-Lindh Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures became operational in the spring of 2005 (Del Sarto, 2005: 314) and its headquarters are in Alexandria in Egypt (Schumacher, 2005: 282). Youth was identified as a main target group and the foundation defined six major fields of actions namely 'education, science, culture and communication, human rights, sustainable development and women empowerment' (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2004). The dialogic initiatives among these diverse areas are promoted by the cooperation between a wide range of groups such as NGOs, networks and exchanges of artists and intellectuals (Pace, 2005a: 67).

As far as the Foundation's structure is concerned this is coordinated under the leadership of the Executive Director in collaboration with the Heads of the National Networks (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2008). These networks are constituted from representatives across civil society and it is every government's responsibility to nominate an institution within their country to build a network of organisations (European Commission, 2008: 11). In other

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<sup>22</sup> The High-Level Advisory Group or as it is also known 'Groupe de Sages' established by Romano Prodi, tried to defend the notion of the clash of civilisations by arguing that 'Dialogue is now more than ever a necessity – not to align ourselves on the ideology of the clash of civilisations...but to thwart ignorance, of which the idea of the clash of civilisations is one of the most harmful forms. For the problem is rather the *clash of ignorance*, which is much more destructive' (High-Level Advisory Group, 2004: 25). It also supported that 'The dialogue of civilisations derives from the polemical, not to say warmongering, concept of the 'clash of civilisations' and while it may be intended as a counterblast, it unfortunately shares the shame logic in spite of itself, giving credence to the idea that the whole question is thrashed out between blocks distinguished by quasi-ontological differences' (ibid.: 19).

words, the Anna Lindh Foundation acts as a network of national networks of civil society organisations (Anna Lindh Foundation, 2008).

In 2008, after Ferrero-Waldner's proposal at the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly in 2006 (Ferrero-Waldner, 2006a: 4), the Ministers of Foreign Affairs decided to name 2008 as the 'Euro-Mediterranean Year of Dialogue Between Cultures'. This fact, gave to the Anna Lindh Foundation the great chance to launch its first unifying programme across its national networks; the '1001 Actions for Dialogue' (European Commission External Relations, 2008: 13). By this, the importance of dialogue was raised both at local and regional levels.

The '1001 Actions for Dialogue' campaign managed to engage people from a range of domains; from civil society groups to opinion-makers, and this was its biggest success. The outcomes of the '1001 Actions' and the Dialogue Night event were presented in May 2008 in Greece, where the Ministers of Culture were convening for the Euro-Mediterranean meeting. By this, the Anna Lindh Foundation proved that it is a key tool for bridging both the ideas and feelings of civil society with decision-makers across partner countries (European Commission, 2008: 13).

The Foundation's main weakness is that although it acts as a network of 35 national networks, governments continue to have the primary role in the process. As a result, its mandate seems to be more conservative than innovative (Aliboni, 2005: 54). Despite this, it is true that these indirect policies are the main characteristic of the EU's normative power identity, and although they usually can bring change only in the long-term rather than in the short-term, they are still valuable. The process of 'socialisation' that is promoted by the intercultural dialogue is guided by a cosmopolitan commitment to a shared dialogue based on a genuine appetite for cultural understanding and an exploration of common values. At the same time, it would not be realistic to believe that strategic interests are not hidden behind this 'socialisation' process. As became clear, the intercultural and interfaith dialogue gained momentum after the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the 'war on terror'. To this end,

the importance of the Anna Lindh Foundation and of the other intercultural dialogue initiatives aim also at reducing the risk of a radicalisation of youth vis-à-vis the 'war on terror'.

## **Conclusion**

By focusing on the third pillar of the EMP this paper argues that the construction of the NPE has very mixed results. We cannot ignore the fact that the EMP is the only initiative ever taken that brings to the same table Arabs and Israelis in order to discuss and collaborate. This is certainly a success of the NPE construction. The third pillar of the EMP and its dialogic initiatives are a central characteristic of the EU's normative power, and to that end the success in the field of the intercultural dialogue is of great importance. The aspect that 'peace and stability are born out of dialogue' (Prodi, 2002: 3) is definitely reinforcing the normative power of the EU. Moreover, the attention that the EU has given to the field of youth is a very important aspect and it also helps them move away from typical misconceptions and prejudgements and have the chance to learn, through dialogue with each other, and form their own critical views. At the same time through different programmes such as the European Youth Forum, the Euro-Med Youth Platform, the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament and most significantly the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the dialogue between Cultures they have the chance to fulfil one of the fundamental aims of the EMP; to come closer together through the strengthening of the dialogue between them so as to help in a convergence of civilisations in the future.

With reference to this aspect, the EMP faces limitations such as the representation of the dialogue process, the exclusion of representatives of political Islam from it, and the unequal access and participation. What is lacking in the EMP is the EU's ability to convince its Arab partners that it is not engaging in a dialogue with them with the aim of imposing its values on them, but it is coming to the table ready to understand, respect and implement their different perspectives of this existing framework.

The concept of NPE also faces limitations when it comes to the promotion of democracy. The first of these is that there is a huge gap between EU's rhetoric and reality. The EU has never made a serious attempt to challenge, for example, Israel's policies and its continuous violations of human rights or to apply any sanctions to it. In this way, all these norms that the NPE promotes such as 'democratisation', 'respect for human rights', 'good governance' and much more turn out to be empty words and make the EU lose credibility. Moreover, as our case study demonstrated the notion of NPE also faces limitations when it comes to conflict between norms and interests. While the democratisation norm is one of the most fundamental norms of the NPE conceptualisation, the case study of Hamas' democratic election to government demonstrated a clear contradiction between the collective pursuit of common or shared interests on the one hand and 'rational' or 'Realpolitik' issues on the other hand.

Manner's notion that the EU's value lies on what it is and not on what it does or says is thus becoming problematic and highly contestable. While it could be argued that the EU has in general adopted a more 'Kantian' approach with regard to its policies, this is not sufficient in order to argue that it is a normative power. It is thus becoming clear that the EU is a normative power on one condition; that vital interests are not at stake when normative agendas are promoted.

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