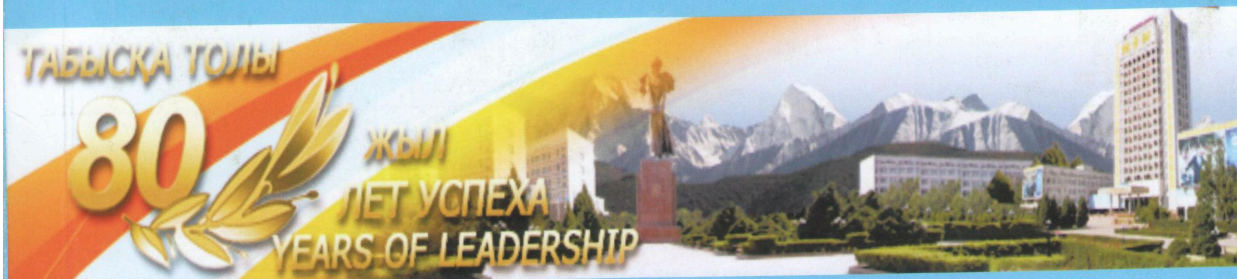


**КАЗАХСКИЙ НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
ИМЕНИ АЛЬ-ФАРАБИ**

ФАКУЛЬТЕТ МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ



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EUROPEAN UNION AND CENTRAL ASIA IN A CHANGING WORLD: THE NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE CONCEPT

The increasing importance of the European Union in world politics and its "contested nature" as an international actor has initiated an ongoing prolific and heated debate among experts and politicians worldwide on what kind of power the European Union is and what role it plays in world politics. A central place in continuing discussion is devoted to the "normative power Europe" concept proposed by I. A. Manners. According to this frame, being a normative power, the European Union is expected to promote certain universal norms in its external action. The main aim of this article is to discuss the concept of power utilizing constructivism approach. Structurally, this paper organized as follows: the first section outlines the history of European integration. The second section reviews the theoretical framework used to conceptualize power.

The United Europe: a brief overview of the key turning points in its history

The idea of a united Europe had been around for centuries. However the Second World War and its negative and devastating consequences lead to understanding that stronger and closer cooperation among Western European countries was essential. There was a growing recognition of the need for attempts of some European countries to impose "its rules of the game" on other players in the international system of International Relations at different periods of history had resulted in discrediting the bankrupted Europe in 1940s. It is for this reason it was suggested that an establishment of wide European mainland community could be a way out from the situation created. Another important factor that gave an impetus to Western Europe to position itself as an organism with mutual interests was the Cold War which began between the USSR and the USA. In the post-World War II period the Europe was divided into the Western and Eastern parts. Anxiety of expansion of communism and territorial ambitions of the USSR led to a deep involvement of the United States in Western Europe's affairs since the USA and the Western Europe were concerned with its fragile defenses. In order not to lose its political ally and possible trade markets among others, the United States provided its assistance to Western Europe. It was laid out in the Truman Doctrine of 1947. In addition to that, by the end of the 1940s the relationship between the Western Europe and the USA was consolidated with the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It enabled Western Europe to concentrate on political issues and gave a high priority to its national economic reconstruction, without spending scarce resources on security arrangements.

The sequent turning point of European integration was the announcement of Schuman Declaration in 1950 that proposed the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community. It was created in the following year and turned a new page in European history. First of all, it was the first time when a sovereign state delegated a degree of its independence to a supranational authority. Second, the project entailed that it was much easier to attain economic growth at the European rather than at the national level and thus the future to political union started from this sectorial integration. Third, the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community was the result of rebooting of relations between the historical adversaries, Germany and France and till nowadays, these two are the main engines of the European Union. Fourthly, the European Coal and Steel Community treaty provided for the establishment of the system of bodies that in a while was used as a design for the institutional construction of the EU: a Court of Justice, a High Authority, an Assembly, and a Council of Ministers. The unique feature of the European Coal and Steel Community at that time was the separated

and decision-making construction. More specifically, the Council of Ministers was authorized to advocate the interests of the governments of the participating states, while a high authority was authorized to represent and maintain the supranational principle [2].

In the beginning of 1950s, an armed clash began in Korea, which provided food for thought, in particular whether this conflict could be qualified as a prelude to war in Europe. Concerned with the position of affairs, the USA made a call for reinforcement of NATO. However the economies of European members of NATO were too weak to make additional contributions, therefore it was proposed to include Western Germany in the list of those countries that would bear defense expenses. Obviously, not all countries welcomed the idea of Western Germany rearmament at that time. Instead it was offered to establish the European Defense Community, similar to the Economic Coal and Steel Community. After four years of negotiations, the project failed. Despite the fact that the attempt of establishment of Western European Army questioned the sectorial integration approach, the Economic Coal and Steel Community states were still interested in the project.

The creation of European Economic Community and the "Euratom" community, with the ratification of the Treaty of Rome, could be considered as another important stage in the European history. The overall aim of this Treaty was the creation of a common market, free movement of goods, capital, services and private individuals and development of joint policies in agriculture. The designed institutional structure of the ECSC was added with the supranational European Commission, which was given a role of a driving engine of the integration. The interests of the member states were represented by the Council of Ministers, which was expected to counterbalance the Commission, while an advisory role was assigned to the Parliament. The final major EEC institution was the European Court of Justice, which proclaimed itself as a major bonding force. It is interesting to note, that at that time the internal European Economic Community trade flourished and economy developed rapidly. This gave enthusiasm to supporters of the establishment of a political union and raised interest among skeptics. Western European states that tried to reject its participation in the EEC, changed their attitude and strive for membership. The most important candidate was the United Kingdom, which applied for membership several times. But the UK's application was blocked by France on the grounds that the UK was not sufficiently committed to EEC goals and objectives and partially because of its "close relationship" with the United States. And only in 1969 at the Summit of the Hague of 1969 the negotiations on UK's accession was renewed. So, several new members joined the European Economic Community within the next several years, in particular, the UK, Denmark and Ireland in 1971 and Greece in 1981.

In 1970-1980s, the newly enlarged entity had to adapt to the changing international climate. Europeans started to worry that in a new era of high technology, where huge investment was essential, they are far behind the United States and Japan. This situation once again stimulated the integration, since the idea that European survival and competitiveness could be gained only through cooperation and unification, was widespread.

In 1986, the European Economic Community participating states signed the Single European Act. It could be qualified as the preparatory stage to further transformation of relationships of EEC member states with a view to establishment of the European Union. The Act empowered the Commission with new functions and competences and broadened the sphere of cooperation: social, economic, scientific, and ecological fields. In addition to that, the legislative process was reformed as a result of the Single European Act. From then on, the qualified majority voting was introduced to new areas instead of unanimity. These changes open the way to further integration, which was formalized in the Maastricht Treaty.

The Maastricht Treaty of 1992 was projected to bring together the European Economic Community, the European Coal and Steel Community and the European Atomic Energy Community as a part of an entirely new entity. This entity was named the European Union. The Maastricht Treaty comprised not just supranational activities of three institutions, but also intergovernmental cooperation in foreign and security policy matters and internal affairs and justice. The mix of supranational integration and intergovernmental cooperation resulted in the creation of the three pillar structure of the EU, which demonstrated at that time that it still felt short of achieving uniformity in terms of its structure and policy-making procedures. Different schemes of the decision-making system were used depending on the area policy. When it came to the unwillingness of member-states to lose control or

influence on a particular important matter, then the decision-making process is based on government-to-government cooperation.

The subsequent important point in the history of the European integration is the signing of the Treaty of Amsterdam in 1997. This Treaty resulted in the incorporation of provisions on social cooperation, shifting certain policy areas to a supranational level of decision-making and preparing the EU for further enlargement.

It should be noted that prior to 2004, the member countries of the European Union were liberal democracies with market economies, taking into account of course that Greece, Portugal and Spain transformed from authoritarian countries and gained EU membership in the 1980s. However, the dissolution of the USSR and unification of Germany in the 1990s, Central and Eastern European countries acceded to the EU. It is very important since it raises the question to what extent the difference between western and eastern countries in terms of countries' history, characteristics, identity and impact on the sustainability of the European Union if it does at all.

Another important factor for the integration of Europe was the Monetary Union and introduction of a common currency "euro" in 1999. In 2004 the Constitutional Treaty was signed. However, a negative outcome of the ratification referendums in France and the Netherlands in 2005, the Treaty did not enter into force. The question is still in the air, when and whether the Constitutional Treaty will be ratified and what are the possible scenarios of its impact on the policy-making process within the EU.

The Normative Power Europe Concept

In the aftermath of the World War II, Europe had lost its status of the one of the key world powers. It was forced to search for its place within the system of international relations. In the last decade many proponents of social constructivism argue that in the 21st century the European Union can be considered as a normative power.

The normative power Europe concept has received an extensive attention from a wide academic community. This approach was presented by Ian Manners, according to which the European Union diffuses "universal norms and principles" in its relations to third parties [3]. Supporters of NPE argue that three factors can be considered as a basis for the identity of the European Union's normative power: "historical context – the legacy of two world wars; hybrid polity – a Union as a hybrid of Westphalian order with supranational and international institutions; political-legal constitutionalism – elite driven, treaty based nature of European integration" [4].

Manners pointed out three features of normative power. First, a normative power promotes universal principles. According to him, five core norms – peace, liberty, democracy, rule of law and respect for human rights – demonstrate the EU as a normative power. Significantly here, Manners also identifies a list of "minor norms" in addition to the mentioned above founding principles. These "minor norms" include non-discrimination, sustainable development, social solidarity and good governance. Second, actions rely on specific tools such as dialogue and debate. More specifically, the European Union shapes non-European partners' policy objectives through several key forms of norm communication: social contagion, often through virtuous example; informational diffusion, often through EU documents; procedural diffusion (international cooperation); transference (EU development aid); and cultural filtration (engagement with external partners on human rights issues) [5]. Third, it is the ability to "shape conceptions of the normal" in world politics [6]. According to the normative power Europe concept, normative powers should be able to establish appropriate objectives and practices not only in relation to their own foreign policies, but also in the international system generally. It is expected that norms guide EU practices on the world scene and that third parties adopt them [6].

Despite increasing popularity of the normative power Europe concept, it still stays among the most debated approaches in the field [7]. Therefore, due to the complexity of the issue and the need for further investigation, it is required to understand the role and place of the European Union in world politics.

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