

Post-Colonial Perspective on the Discourse of ‘Normative power Europe’ In the African-EU Relations

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Abstract

This article attempts to critically examine the concept of 'Normative Power Europe' and its role in (re)producing the dominant power relation between the EU and the African nations. In order to analyze the normative power thesis and its postcolonial implication to Africa this article introduces the Cotonou Partnership Agreement- the EU cooperation agreement with African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries-which included tight normative clauses and conditionality's. The article argues that the meta-narrative of NPE and the normative clauses and conditionality's in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement are reinforcing the unequal power relations that are resulted from the colonial rule in the African-EU relations through the practice of Orientalism. It farther reveals this meta-narrative produces and reproduces the representation of Africans as 'inferior' and 'deficient' which needs to be redeemed by the help of the 'superior' and 'capable' Europeans.

Keywords: Africa • Cotonou Partnership Agreement • Normative Power Europe • Orientalism • Othering

Introduction

Since the publication Ian Manners famous work in 2002, the concept of 'Normative Power Europe' (NPE) has become very popular for examining the foreign policy and external relations of the European Union (EU). The idea has contributed a lot in the discursive construction of unique European identity in the academia as well as policy frameworks of the Union. It built an image of the EU as a novel kind of actor in its own institutional set-up as well as its international politics [1].

However, nowadays, there has been a growing inquiry of the notion of NPE in comparison to a traditional European identity. One of the important areas in which the idea of NPE has been under scrutiny is the African-EU relations. This was specifically due to the long-lasting colonial power relation between the two continents. The EU has developed a strong tie with countries of Africa after the end of the colonial era. Particularly, after the inception of the Lomé Convention in 1975, the EU has established a formal relationship with the African states within the larger framework of the African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries (ACP) [2]. The cooperation with African states further strengthened under the Cotonou Agreement which included tight normative clauses and conditionality's in a way to realize the objectives of the 'partnership'. Equality and Sovereignty are portrayed to be at the center of postcolonial relationships between the two parties. Furthermore, the relation between the two has been portrayed as a mechanism of empowering African states while at the same time striving to diffuse the core European values (ibid: 2).

In various literature, the EU's commitment towards those 'normative principles' of the institution has been questioned [3-7]. These studies are skeptical about the Union's normativity due to the inconsistency in the application of normative clauses in the EU policies towards other parties and the overriding of economic and geopolitical interests over the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and good governance in the EU's international relations. But, by engaging in such debates whether the EU is a normative power or not, critiques of this concept overlooked the discursive construction of the EU's postcolonial identity embedded in the idea of NPE [1]. Thus, in an attempt to examine this perspective, the present article tries to address the question, how does the discourse of NPE constructing the Africans' as 'deficient' in need of correction or guidance of the EU in the African-EU relations that has been guided by the Cotonou Partnership Agreement?

The article argues that the discourse of NPE which is being narrated in academic works and EU policies (though not explicitly) is reinforcing the unequal power relations that are resulted from the colonial rule in the African-EU relations through the practice of Orientalism. In doing so, it critically examines the concept of NPE and its role in (re)producing the dominant power relation between the EU and the African nations. Thus, the analysis will particularly take the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) and Manners concept of NPE on board so as to elucidate the Orientalist nature of the African-EU relations.

The article begins by discussing Post colonialism as a bigger theoretical concept that would frame the current African-EU relations.

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Then, it introduces one particular postcolonial perspective, Orientalism, in an attempt to reveal the meta-narrative of NPE and how the discourse embedded in it (re)produces the knowledge of the Orient, which impacts the power relation between the African countries and the EU. In the latter sections, it critically analyzes the normative power thesis as well as the CPA and its postcolonial implication.

Theoretical Framework: Post colonialism

The traditional colonialism and direct European control have ended, but the legacy of colonialism and dominance of the West is setting the global norms still persist. Having once conquered and colonized the broad parts of the world, "Europe had aspired to direct world affairs by first writing the history of 'Man' in its own self-image and degraded the markers of culture, arts, and science for others to the status of folklore, myths, and shamanism" [8]. The academic subjects ranging from History to Anthropology and now International Relations (IR)—contribute to this endeavor (ibid.). For instance, colonialism and imperial rule were legitimized by the anthropological theories which increasingly portrayed the peoples of the colonized world as inferior, childlike or feminine, incapable of looking after themselves and needing the paternal rule of the west for their own best interest [9]. Post colonialism then emerged as a multiplicity of perspectives, traditions, and approaches to question identity, culture, and power that have been (re)produced by the hegemonic or dominant academia imbued with colonial thoughts or premises [8].

Post colonialism as a theory claims the right of every people on this earth to the same material and cultural well-being, but in reality, the contemporary world is a world of inequality and much of the inequality lies in the division between the West and the non-West [9]. In an attempt to reveal the 'truths' in the representation, it states that Post colonialism rejects 'native essentialism', or the idea that the natives bore essential and timeless features [8]. According to him, this idea has been abused by Western powers and postcolonial elites for the purpose of gaining and maintenance of power (ibid.).

In this situation, Post colonialism, therefore, remains essential in analyzing the EU's contemporary relations in international politics. The EU member states were once colonial powers which had exercised direct control over the African countries and currently involved in a relationship that has been perpetuating the unequal relations of the colonial past. The Union put forward the diffusion of European democracy, human rights, rule of law, and good governance at the forefront of its 'partnership' with the African 'others' in the Cotonou Agreement. At the same time, the academic literature of the EU's international relations is also engaged in the knowledge production of the Union's normative power and its ability to shape what is 'normal' in international politics. However, postcolonial perspectives reveal that "the EU's self-styled mission for humanity inscribes the very agency of those it seeks to empower" and cements the practice of inequality that has its root in colonialism [10]. As it is also maintains, the contemporary postcolonial world can be recognized through past colonial practices that persist to function in the present [11]. There are various perspectives on the larger framework of post colonialism which studied the colonial and imperial domination. Edward Said's theory of Orientalism is one of those sub-

theories of post colonialism that focuses on the discussions of political subjectivity and identity [8]. Regarded by many as the sourcebook for postcolonial studies, Said's work was groundbreaking, as it changed the course of the study of postcolonial experiences and power relations [12]. On top of that, it opened up a great deal of discussion between the (former) oppressed and their oppressors [13].

Therefore, by employing this framework, this article attempts to demonstrate the persistence of the EU's positional superiority in the African-EU relations under the Cotonou Agreement.

Orientalism

The leading theoretical framework in the field of post colonialism is the theory of Orientalism which was developed by [14]. The theory has played a crucial role in disclosing the European construction of 'the self' and 'others' in the colonial period that has resulted in an unequal relation between the Europeans and its former colonies and the extent to which it produces and reproduces 'the self' and 'others' in the postcolonial present [12]. Said sees Orientalism as:

"A library or archive of information ... What bound the archive together is a family of ideas and a unifying set of values proven in various ways to be effective. These ideas explained the behavior of the Orientals; they supplied the Orientals with a mentality, a genealogy, and atmosphere; most important, they allowed the Europeans to deal with and even to see Orientals as a phenomenon possessing regular characteristics" [15].

This theory is an important conceptual work in understanding and analyzing the past relations between the "Orient" and the "Occident" [13]. It states that Orientalism depends on the strategy of putting the West in the "positional superiority" vis-à-vis the others (Middle East) without ever losing him the relative upper hand (cited in [13,14].

It said argues that "Orientalism is an ineradicable distinction between Western superiority and Oriental inferiority" [15]. In the discourse of Orientalism, Oriental is seen as "irrational, deprived (fallen), childlike, different" and the Europeans as "rational, virtuous, mature and normal" [15]. Drawing from the work of note that the intellectual dominance of the West and the equivalent suppression of the Orient are reproduced in the ways in which the Orient is represented in Western thinking [15-16]. Orientalism produces the binary which views the Oriental societies as backward, traditional, and despotic and Western societies, as advanced, modernized, and democratic (ibid.). Pointing to the works of notes that one cannot understand the past and current relations between the West and the rest and the systematic domination without embracing Orientalism as a discourse [14,13]. It reveals the control and misrepresentation of the Orient created by the discourse of Orientalism and exposes the manner in which it gives legitimacy to the apparent domination of Europe within the world (ibid.).

The theory of Orientalism enabled postcolonial scholars to question and to examine colonial and imperial language and to reveal how discursive knowledge included particular perceptions and modes of representation, which shaped a specific knowledge about the Orient [12]. According to Said, the influences of this current transited to what he defines as the 'orientalist discourse', which has been still influencing the way modern Europe conceives and treats its oriental

counterpart [15]. Hence, this concept has the potential to make a significant input to the study of the notion of NPE and power relations embedded in it in the African-EU relations in the postcolonial era. Scholars recognize that colonial and imperial traces are still very much with us today, continuing to function and therefore producing a postcolonial present [13]. Thus, the production of knowledge about the 'orient' has a big influence on the present as much as in the past.

Postcolonial Approach on the Discourse of 'Normative Power Europe'

This has developed the concept of 'NPE' in various publications over time [17-21]. His work became the center of attention in the study of the EU's role in international politics. Throughout his articles, his thoughts on the concept of 'NPE' remained more or less the same [22]. He states that Europe's normative powers do not rest on its military or economic might, but in its 'ideological power' or power over opinion and more importantly upon its ability to shape the conception of what is 'normal' [17,22]. This asserts that the commitment to human rights, rule of law, democracy, and good governance are the very characteristics of the EU and its making [17]. Moreover, he notes that the Union has gone further towards making its external relations informed by and conditional on the normative principles which guide its member states (*ibid.*). However, Manners work has been subjected to various criticisms. Pragmatic critiques against his notion of EU's normativity particularly focus on EU's utilization of moral norms in the public legitimization and self-rationalization of geopolitical interest and commercial gain in its relations with external 'partners' [6]. But, postcolonial critiques are much more geared towards exploring the dominative dimension of the concept of NPE. Manners conception of EU's ideological superiority over the 'Other' discursively creates the image of the Union as an actor which more approaches to the Universal norm than any 'other' actors in world politics. Thus, his argument has the notion of sensationalizing the EU as an actor that has exceptional quality of embracing normative values in its practices within and outside its territorial limit.

This also discusses the diffusion of the normative values from the EU to 'Others' through the various mechanisms [17]. One of these mechanisms he mentions in his work is the diffusion of normative values through 'Transference'. Transference is seen as the mechanism by which the EU diffuses its 'norms' through the process of exchanges of goods, aid, technical assistance, etc with third parties. He makes clear that such transferences are the result of the exportation of community norms and standards as well as the carrot and stick attached to financial rewards and economic sanctions. As far as Manners is concerned, Europe ought to influence external partners' conception of 'normal' behavior in pursuit of a just global order [7]. The problematic of Manners argumentation is that the third parties are being considered as having inferior normative values and they are supposed to adopt what is considered to be 'universal norms' in the eyes of the EU. Apart from that, his presentation entails that it is through the adoption of European norms that the global order could be fairer for all. But, the conception of what is normal is only taking into consideration what the Europeans consider as normal. By that, it implies that the European values are superior to what others are practicing in their domestic or international affairs.

This discursive construction, therefore, (re)produces an opposing image or "difference" between the EU norms and the norms of 'other' partners.

Very importantly, Manners argumentation of diffusion of norms through a mechanism of carrot and stick also shows the inequality between the EU and the third parties with whom the Union forges a 'partnership'. This kind of assumption principally reflects the past orientalist understanding towards the 'others' that are treated unequally in the past. If we look at the case of Africa, this inequality is part of the European knowledge which is rooted in the colonial rule. This reveals the continuation of the biased knowledge about African society and the norms and values they traditionally own. Moreover, in bidding to install the European norms, "the NPE precludes the viability of African norms" [23].

Overall, as notes the idea of NPE is intrinsically involves the practice of 'othering' in it [10]. This practice is built on making the European norms as a standard and universal while the 'Others' seen to have an inferior one that has to be Europeanized to achieve the level of universal standard. Through the languages he uses in his normative thesis, Manners presents and discursively portrays the EU as a force for good with superior norms and represent 'others' as inferior, in that way disempowering them rhetorically. Generally, the NPE thesis is based on a Eurocentric ideology that predisposes it to impose its norms universally [23]. It does not have a place for African knowledge and by that; it revivifies Africa-EU postcolonial condition (*ibid.*).

The Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA): The Implication for the Postcolonial EU and African Relations

The Cotonou Partnership Agreement was signed between the EU and ACP countries in 2000 with the general objective of poverty eradication, sustainable development and the gradual integration of the ACP (African, Caribbean, and Pacific) countries into the world economy [24]. Article 2 of the agreement affirms the equality of the partners while giving due emphasis on the obligation of ACP states to abide by normative principles that are explicitly mentioned in Article 9 of the agreement. These normative principles, in turn, play a crucial role in guiding the partnership and cooperation relations.

However, even if the agreement is seemingly designed in a way that promotes equal partnership between the signatory parties, it remains a discursive promise only. Looking at the case of Africa, the EU's policies are fundamentally rooted in the colonial relations of the EU member states and it is this relation that constantly expanded and passed into the CPA [25]. With this in perspective, it could be argued that the agreement is functioning between historically unequal parties whose prior relationship was fundamentally hierarchical. As the power asymmetry is grounded in the colonial past and continuing in the postcolonial present, the parties cannot have equal weight with regard to the ability to influence the agreement and the respective outcome [26].

This also notes that conditionality and capacity-building mechanisms, which are an integral part of the agreement, postulates

the inequality continuing within the signatory parties [26]. The conditionality's that are mentioned in Article 96 and 97 basically reflect that the relationship is based on a form of coercive mechanism which by definition involves an element of inequality and hierarchy between the parties involved in the agreement. As all demands subsumed under political conditionality are fairly opaque, the EU is largely free to decide what it considers as a breach of obligation with regard to the essential elements and this, in turn, provides an element of arbitrariness in favor of the EU [27]. In this setting, even though the Agreement makes a serious discursive attempt at balancing out the obligations and rights of both parties, in concrete terms the ACP members have no formal say on what is meant by a breach of normative values in their domestic affairs [26]. Besides, the obligations that are attached to the agreement further signals that the EU's normative principles are the only way out to the achievement of the intended success of the agreement. As it states, the CPA elucidates that by refusing the EU norms the countries are not only risking their relationship with the EU but also apparently refuse progress and modernization as well [23]. In this way, the CPA is not able to accommodate the African norms as well as their agency to make progress without the help of the Europeans. Besides, the agreement limits the African countries setting their own agenda-which contextualizes their domestic political, economic and social dynamics- by their own free will.

Furthermore, the idea of capacity-building, which is almost mentioned in every part of the agreement, indicates that the normative values and the agency to enhance them is not supposed to be there yet and will only be achieved through the assistance of the Union [26]. The agreement also creates a dichotomy that manifests itself in a teacher/student and capable/incapable binary whereby the EU provides the knowledge and technical expertise and the Africans receive it in a process of parent/child relation where punishment is applied for the benefit and own good of the latter (ibid.). This type of sentiments is a typical manifestation of orientalist practice in which the orientals were seen as a locale requiring Western attention, reconstruction, and redemption.

The other problem of the CPA is that it imitates the Nineteenth-century ontological debates about the African states. As it asserts "like the slavery for which it once stood, "Africa" has emerged to the large Western public yet again as a metaphor for a number of evils: failed states, AIDS, poverty, and corruption" [28]. Article 25 (on AIDS), Article 97 (on Corruption), and the issue of poverty almost in every part of the agreement produces certain Orientalist knowledge of African countries with various troubles that needs European intervention to curb. Overall, the CPA and the seemingly benevolent normative requirements embedded within it are just a continuation of the past oriental practices that are based on the discursive construction of the identity of the self and others.

The legacy of colonial relationship and its continuity

The EU member states had largely participated in the colonial relationship with African states. The postcolonial policies being adopted are intended to reverse the effects of past policies and policy formulations that are embedded in colonialism. For that end, the Union has come up with something different: Since the mid-1990s it started to promote the idea of being a "normative power" that is

aimed at exporting an apparently successful norm-set to other parts in the world [29]. But, the postcolonial relation of the Union is not able to escape the taints of Europe's past imperialism. Müller states that the European quest to educate others reaffirms a number of Euro-centric notions that essentially regards other regions to be norm-free, underdeveloped, and uncivilized.

As claims, the European community was born not only of a desire for a radical break with the past of the continent that was marred by war and nationalism, but also it was also born out of desire for collective management of a colonial world – above all the African continent – that was slipping out of the grasp of its member states individually. The efforts to assert the normative camouflage by the EU is an attempt to seepage from the old-self and provide the story of a new-self in international politics. Regarding this argues that the EU has been working hard so as to make the world believe in the story of its "virgin-birth" that holds a normative power hood but, it cannot escape the echoes of its own colonialism by pretending as if nothing had happened in a previous historical era.

According to, the colonial and postcolonial European knowledge about Africa has substantial continuities [23]. During the colonial period, Stager continues, European administration inscribed a difference between colonizers and the colonized 'others' and it immured 'race' deeply within the African black subject that created the subject's inferior position in the colonial relation. Upholding the superior and inferior subject's position, the postcolonial policies that are being practiced in the African-EU relations are normalizing the image of Africa as deficient that are in need of the help of countries that are modernized and developed. Moreover, the discourse embedded in the postcolonial policies and practices stresses white modernity and blacks' dreams of progressing in the light of the former.

The attempt to escape from the past could also be sketched in the concept of NPE. The NPE discourse mainly revolves around the idea that the EU is post-sovereign [30]. By that narrative about the normative base of the EU has totally ignored Europe's colonial engagement in the past [17,23]. His work is merely focused on detaching the EU from the past colonial experience of its member states that had been at the core of orientalist practices. In this scenario, the rhetoric of normative power engages in "a virgin birth" of the NPE in a way that neglects or underestimates colonialism and its enduring repercussion in human history [31]. Thus, the colonial past and its legacy make the EU far from the 'ontological' status of normative power and it also enables the member states of the Union to interact with Africa in many other ways than mere norm diffusion [23]. Müller (NA:1) has also revealed the continuity of the colonial practices by arguing that the relationship between the EU and Africa is still shaped by pertaining colonial boundaries, that have the ambitions to tame, educate, protect and govern through a normative power coverage [29].

Therefore, it is difficult to detach the current relationship between the European Union and African countries from the practices that prevailed in the era of colonialism where Africans were misrepresented by the European knowledge.

Research Methodology

NPE and the EU's Internal Compliance with its 'Norms'

The discourse of NPE rationalizes the conception that the Europeans are obedient to the normative principles they are attempting to diffuse in their international relations with the 'Others' that are deemed to be lacking those values in their domestic and international relations. In his attempt to rationalize the EU's role as a normative power in the international politics, discusses the EU's normative difference in the international relations and later provides its role in the abolition of death penalty thorough out the world as a case study [17]. Even though Manners focused on the norm of the abolition of capital punishment in his original work, he did not mean that a normative power is limited to the promotion of human rights only [32]. Rather, Manners listed peace and liberty, democracy, rule of law, human rights, social solidarity, anti-discrimination, sustainable development and good governance as constituting the normative basis of the EU.

However, the EU's self-image of normative power needs to be contested from the perspective of practices within the EU member states. By this, I am saying that the postcolonial studies should make an inquiry of the discourses that are embedded in the self-representation of the EU through examining the internal practices within the member states. Mostly, the self-image of the Union is built on the idea which hypothesizes that "what we do should reflect who we are". But, there are occasions where the member states of the EU have been breaching those normative principles they are claiming to diffuse to the others that are claimed to be not yet able to embrace it. Protection of minority rights, which is at the heart of the EU's identity in international relations, is one among other difficulties the members of the EU are not able to comply with [30]. According to Cebeci, the French position with respect to not signing the Council of Europe's minority's convention and its complete reservation to the United Nations (UN) article on the rights of minorities is a prime example in this regard. In his later works, Manners himself proclaimed that 'consistency is important in ensuring that the EU is not promoting norms with which it does not comply' (ibid.). Another example that proves that the Europeans have difficulties in complying with their own norms could be the rise of populism and its related problem with the respect of minorities living in European countries. Far-right populists- in France (NF), the Netherlands (PVV, Freedom Party), Italy (Lega Nord), and Germany (AfD)- usually include "ethno cultural or even a racial divide" while dealing with both the establishment and in their appeal to the "people"[33]. By that, the parties are deteriorating the cosmopolitan nature of European democracies and challenging diversities. Thus, it is in this situation of inconsistency between internal practices and external prescriptions and actions that the NPE thesis is endorsing the EU's difference of action in international relations.

The in compliance with the normative principles, that are said to be the base for the formation of the institution and guiding the Union's role in the international politics indicates that postcolonial studies of the concept of NPE needs to delve more critically delve into analyzing the EU's self-representation apart from examining the dominative dimension of the concept. Besides, the aforementioned

particularity could further introduce some other mythologized and ideologies representation of European self-representation.

Who Speak about 'Normative Power Europe'

The 'Normative Power' basically relies on the lenses through which the EU and Western scholars conceive the Union and its external 'others'. Apart from the knowledge, it creates about the European self, knowledge production about the 'others' remains the European matter. The way the Europeans shape the discourse and construct the self/other binary represents the identity the Union upholds in its international relations. Apparently, the involvement of scholars from the so-called 'Others' has been very minimal in either refuting or supporting the notion of NPE. However, it has to be the endorsement of the countries at the receiving end which should determine the alleged identity of the EU's at the international level. Basically call for an outside analysis of European foreign policy as opposed to the usual inside-out construction of the identity of the Union [26,34]. Accordingly, they note that this mechanism could determine the very substance of the structure being promoted by the EU and its point of departure.

In the current situation, what is being conceived as 'normal' as well as the production of knowledge about the EU being a normative power has been echoed by the Union itself and Western-based scholars. As this explains NPE speaks about, for instance, Africa and thereby reinforces the difference upon which its normative norms are founded [23]. In doing so it delimits the possibility of knowledge production and makes it only the European affair. Thus, the concentration of the discursive construction of what is normal has been remained Eurocentric and has a dominative dimension in (re)producing its identity in international politics.

Can the scholars or policymakers from the 'others' challenge the EU's self-image of Normative Power? This could be a very challenging task for them. The superior and subjective relation that is developed through aid provider and receiver enables the dominant Western conception to edge with regard to what is being understood as normal and enables it to sustain its hegemonic position. The existing power relation thus plays a crucial role in cementing the discourse of NPE. By looking at the EU-ACP relations, has discussed it very explicitly [30]. According to despite the rhetoric of 'normativity' in the EU policy documents and foreign policy researches, the EU's conditionality, sanctions, and interventions that have been employed by the Union are perceived by their targets as coercive and intensive towards its subjects [30]. However, such perceptions do not resonate in Europe and the dominant knowledge in the discourse of EU's normativity overlooks their very existence. Ceberci provides the example of the EU's only military intervention in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo that resulted in the torture against the civilians by the French soldiers and the manner in which it was silenced by European foreign policy researchers (ibid.). He states that this incidence was a typical example by which how negative representations of the EU are ignored or negated to maintain the hegemonic understanding of the EU's normative presence in its international relations.

Thus, the EU's discursive self-representation as a normative power is made through its policies and Western-based European

foreign policy researchers that legitimize its practices internationally. They set the European norms and practices as the best and ignore negations. This, in turn, is the result of the relative strength of the idea of NPE that results from the positional superiority of the concept. As Said rightly argues about the lack of corresponding equivalence of Orientalism in the orient itself, the current ideas of NPE in the postcolonial era does not have a matching idea from the subjects where the EU's normative ideology is being applied. This, in turn, makes the idea of NPE to be a linear endorsement of the notion from the European side rather than the subjects that are at the receiving end of the EU's normative values.

The present article tried to critically examine the concept of NPE and its role in (re)producing the dominant power relation between the EU and the African nations. By that, the article engages in postcolonial scholarship to reveal such practices of 'othering' and subordination embedded in the NPE thesis and the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. Conception of NPE sees the EU as a model of normative power with the capacity of redefining international norms in its own image [17]. In this way, his theses involve in the discursive construction of the EU's identity in international politics. Apart from building an image of the EU as an exceptional actor in international relations, it also entails the inferiority of other norms and values. Manners mentions cooperation's like the Cotonou Agreement as a mechanism by which the EU diffuses its norms. But, this puts the EU in a position of superiority while degrading African norms and values. When it comes to the CPA, the EU has a dominative dimension in the cooperation. It produces and reproduces the representation of Africans as 'inferior' and 'deficient' which needs to be redeemed by the help of the 'superior' and 'capable' Europeans. Besides, the normative values in the cooperation are more of an imposition against 'others'. Thus, this dominative dimension demonstrates the continuation of the practices that are rooted in the colonial relationship between the EU member states and African countries.

Conclusion

The article also revealed that members of the EU themselves lack compliance with the norms they claim to diffuse for those which 'lack' them in their domestic and international relations. Moreover, it argued that the NPE thesis relies on the lenses through which the EU and Western scholars shape the discourse of the EU's normativity in international relations. Overall, the article argued that the discourse embedded within the concept of NPE and the CPA still reinforces the negative stereotyping or Orientalism in the postcolonial present.

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