Learning from Lukes?: The Three Faces of Power and the European Union

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Introduction

Lukes' now seminal book, *Power: a Radical View*, published over 30 years ago, has made a lasting impression on a considerable community of scholars. Yet it is perhaps surprising is that Lukes' insights have never systematically been discussed in the context of either the EU or in the context of the New Regionalist Approaches (NRA); this paper attempts to address both of these oversights. To this end, the paper has four objectives.

First, it provides an overview of Lukes' work as set out in the book *Power: a Radical View*, discussing its implications for our understanding of policy making in the broadest sense of the term[1], reviewing some of the critiques of this work, outlining the ensuing debates and summarising some of the areas in which it has been applied.

Second, it briefly addresses the literature on EU policy making, arguing that while virtually none of this literature explicitly deals with Lukes' framework, much of it in reality reflects insights and approaches discussed within it. The argument offered is that much of the early literature on the EU tended to imply a view of policy making based on Lukes' first face of power, with later literature implying a second face of power, and more contemporary literature still raising insights explicable through a third face of power.

Third, the paper begins to develop a framework which incorporates all three faces of power. I suggest that such a model can enhance our understanding of policy making, making the discussion of power more explicit.

Finally, the paper offers some thoughts on how Lukes' work is of potential importance in trying to understand the emerging debate on the NRA, suggesting that an appreciation of power can be valuable in two ways: ensuring both that we do not make the same mistakes as have been made by many EU scholars, and that we critically engage with the view that

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[1] Policy making from this point of view encompasses the processing of issues within formal decision arenas (the first face of power), non-decision making (the second face of power) and preference formation (the third face of power).

integration can only proceed on the basis of an essentially economic methodology.

Part 1: Lukes and The Three Faces of Power: An Overview

Lukes' key insight was to offer what he termed a radical view of power, arguing that power has three faces (see figure 1). In developing his framework, Lukes built on the work of Bachrach and Baratz who in a series of earlier pieces had offered both a critique of what they saw as the dominant orthodoxy within the literature and articulated a framework incorporating a 'second face of power', which they argued overcame these failings (1962, 1963, 1970). In this section I review the origins and legacy of Lukes' work, outline the ensuing debates, and offer some examples of research which reflect the three faces of power approach.

Figure 1 provides a diagrammatic representation of the three faces of power.

Figure 1: *The faces of power controversy: political power in three dimensions*

	One-dimensional view	Two-dimensional view	Three-dimensional view
Proponents	Dahl, Polsby, classic pluralists	Bachrach and Baratz, neo-elitists	Lukes, Marxists, neo-Marxists and radical elitists/pluralists
Conception of power	Power as decision making	Power as decision making and agenda setting	Power as decision making, agenda setting and preference shaping
Focus of analysis	The formal political arena	The formal political arena and the informal process surrounding it (the corridors of power)	Civil society more generally, especially the public sphere (in which preferences are shaped)
Methodological approach	'Counting' of votes and decisions in decision making arena	Ethnography of the corridors of power to elucidate the informal processes through which the agenda is set	Ideology critique – to demonstrate how actors come to misperceive their own material interests
Nature of power	Visible, transparent and easily measured	Both invisible and visible (visible only to agenda setters), but can be rendered visible through gaining inside information	Largely invisible – power distorts perceptions and shapes preferences; it must be demystified

Source: Hay, C. (2002: 180)

The first face of power, according to Lukes, 'involves a focus on *behaviour* in the making of *decisions* on *issues* over which there is an observable *conflict* of (subjective) interests, seen as express policy preferences, revealed by political participation' (Lukes, 1974: 15. Italics in original). Thus the most powerful actors in society are those which win the majority of the conflicts (Dahl paraphrased in Lukes, 1974: 12 and 13).

The second face of power originates from the work of Bachrach and Baratz (1962, 1963, 1970). Bachrach and Baratz do not deny the argument that power is exercised when *A* makes decisions which effect *B*. But they argue that the pluralists do not go far enough, not being alive to the fact that, 'power is also exercised when *A* devotes his energies to creating or reinforcing social and political values and institutional practices that limit the scope of the political process to public consideration of only those issues which are comparatively innocuous to *A*. To the extent to that *A* succeeds in doing this, *B* is prevented, for all practical purposes, from bringing to the fore any issues which might in their resolution be seriously detrimental to *A*'s set of preferences' (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970: 7). Thus for Bachrach and Baratz issues which do not arise on the political agenda can be just as important as those which do (1970: 44).

Another important insight from Bachrach and Baratz's work was that in order to explore the role of power it was important to understand that the deliberation of issues within the formal decision making chamber was only part of the process, with considerable methodological implications:

> But now that the locus of power was expanded to include the Masonic lodge and now that power was seen to operate twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week rather than Monday to Friday, nine to five, the analysis of power was set to become an altogether more complex, exacting and, arguably, subjective task (Hay, 2002: 176).

Yet inspite of the apparent differences with the first face of power approach, Bachrach and Baratz here still offer a conflict centred approach to understand non-decision making.

The third face of power approach takes the process of non-decision making a stage further, arguing that Bachrach and Baratz are themselves guilty of adopting an overly limited frame of reference. Lukes argues that their conceptualisation of non-issues within a conflict focus misses the potential power of actors, in particular the state, to shape people's perceptions and interests through the operation of an ideological hegemony (1974: 18-20). Pertinently, he poses the question:

> is it not the supreme and most insidious use of power to prevent people, to whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or because they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divinely ordained and beneficial? (Lukes, 1974: 24)

Thus in order to offer a holistic account of decision making a framework is required which is sensitive to power in all of its forms, incorporating the struggles which emerge within the decision making arena (the first face of power), actions and inactions which shape the agenda-setting process (the second face of power), and the actions and inactions which shape the perceptions and preferences of actors (the third face of power).

There have been a number of critiques of Lukes' work. The first criticism that the pluralists advance is a methodological one. How, they argue, can one study, let alone explain, what does not occur? Polsby has captured the feeling well: 'It has been suggested that non-events make more significant policy than do policy making events. This is the kind of statement that has a certain plausibility and attractiveness but that presents truly insuperable obstacles to research'. How, he argues, is the researcher to choose which non-issues to study?

> One satisfactory answer might be: those outcomes desired by a significant number of actors in the community but not achieved … A wholly unsatisfactory answer would be: certain non-events stipulated by outside observers without reference to the desires or activities of community residents. The answer is unsatisfactory because it is obviously inappropriate for outsiders to pick among all the possible outcomes that did not take

place a set which they regard as important but which community citizens do not. This approach is likely to prejudice the outcome of research.
(1963: 96-97, repr. 1980)

Polsby poses other fundamental questions. What right, he asks, has the researcher to select a non-issue above another in the first place? What right has a researcher to judge an issue as a non-issue when the community itself does not regard it as important? Is the researcher not guilty of greater methodological bias than the methodology he or she is criticising? Finally, what right has any researcher to assign a 'real' class or social interest to any social grouping when the class or social interest in question disagrees with the analyst? Why should a researcher be better equipped to evaluate the interests of these groups than they are themselves? (1963: 95-97)[2].

There is little point in denying either that these questions are fundamental or that they aim at the heart of Lukes' methodology. Lukes himself responds to the first criticism, that non-agenda setting is methodologically unmeasurable: 'It does not follow that, just because it is difficult or even impossible to show that power has been exercised in a given situation, we can conclude that it has not. But, more importantly, I do not believe that it is impossible to identify an exercise of power of this type' (1974: 39).

An exercise of power, Lukes argues, requires the existence of two related conditions. Firstly that *A* can affect, either on its own or with other sufficient conditions, *B* so that *B* does what it would otherwise not do. In this case, without the presence of *A*, we can assume that *B* would otherwise have done *b*. This provides Lukes with what he refers to as a relevant counterfactual, which if it can be empirically identified, proves that a successful exercise of power has occurred (1974: 40-41).

In cases of open political conflict between *A* and *B* the existence of a relevant counterfactual is fairly obvious. It is in situations in which no

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[2] See also Scott, 1990 for an extensive critique of Lukes' work. See Lukes (2005: 124-34) for a review and discussion of Scott's critique. See Hay (2002: 149) who also questions the extent to which the academic can see the interests of an actor more effectively than they can see them themselves.

political conflict is obvious that a more subtle process is required to reveal the relevant counterfactual:

> That is, we must provide other, indirect, grounds for asserting that if *A* had not acted (or failed to act) in a certain way – and, in the case of operative power, if other sufficient conditions had not been operative – then *B* would have thought and acted differently from the way he did actually think and act. In brief, we need to justify our expectation that *B* would have thought or acted differently; and we also need to specify the means or mechanisms by which *A* has prevented or else acted (or abstained from acting) in a manner sufficient to prevent, *B* from doing so. (1974: 41-42)

Such a task has tackled by Matthew Crenson in his 1971 book *The Un-Politics of Air Pollution*.[3] In an attempt to explain why certain things do not happen, Crenson asked why it was that some American cities took action on the issue of air pollution while others, which were equally polluted, did not. Through a number of case studies of neighbouring cities with similar pollution levels and socio-economic characteristics, Crenson explored why the city of Gary, Indiana, took thirteen extra years to enact anti-pollution legislation (1971: 36). His answer was that because of its dominance of the industrial complex in Gary, U.S. Steel was clearly identified with the town's prosperity: with power based on its anticipated reactions to any proposed legislation, it managed to limit any attempts to raise the pollution issue. 'Moreover, it did all this without acting or entering into the political arena' (1971: 77-78).

Non-action, according to Gary's environmental activists, was a crucial factor in the non-implementation of early anti-pollution legislation. As one of Crenson's respondents recalled:

> The company executives would just nod sympathetically 'and agree that air pollution was terrible, and pat you on the head. But they never *did* anything

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[3] Dearlove (1973: 169-73) and Gaventa (1980: 192-99) have also undertaken detailed case studies in which the application of ideas connected with Lukes' model of three dimensional power has enabled them to find evidence of a relevant counter factual.

one way or the other. If only there had been a fight, then something might have been accomplished!' What U.S. Steel did not do was probably more important to the career of Gary's air pollution issue than what it did do. (1971: 76-7)

Not only is the structural position of interests important in determining how effectively issues are treated but so are the political priorities of those interests. This notion of agenda displacement, where one issue can be excluded by the prioritisation of others, is inextricably linked with notions of structural power. Crenson once more provides evidence of the concept, as his research leads him to refute agenda models taking a pluralist frame of reference which argue that issues are free to rise independently of one another regardless of any inherent contradictions which may exist between them. In truth, issues are not mutually independent and action in one area almost inevitably has an impact on another (1971: 169). 'Civic leaders who promote the economic development issue, for example, may thereby discourage the promotion of the dirty air issue. The influence of these political activists extends beyond the field of their visible actions to other issues and would-be issues' (1971: 170).

In consequence the political system is considerably less fragmented than a narrow focus on political action indicates. 'Several issue-areas may, in effect, be subject to the influence of local leaders who are visibly active in only a single field of public concern, and this influence may operate to reduce the penetrability of community political systems. By promoting one political agenda item, civic actors may succeed in driving others away'. Such findings cannot be incorporated in any framework which argues that ideas can come from anywhere (1971: 170).

The arguments of Lukes and Crenson have done much to refute the criticisms raised by Polsby and his colleagues. In particular, Crenson's work satisfies Lukes' two criteria of a relevant counterfactual and the identification of a power mechanism particularly well. As he argues, there is good reason to suspect that most members of the public would prefer not to be poisoned, especially if pollution control did not lead to unemployment.

In addition, Crenson offers a plausible explanation of the power of U.S. Steel to prevent the rise of the pollution issue through inaction.

The second edition of Lukes' book, *Power: a Radical View*, offers further examples of authors whose work, according to Lukes, provides a demonstration of the operation of three-dimensional power (2005: 137-51). Discussing a number of authors from John Stuart Mill (1869) to Sen (1984) and Nussbaum (2000) who have discussed the subjection of women, Lukes shows that they all reveal a pattern in which the:

> Underdog learns to bear the burden so well that he or she overlooks the burden itself. Discontent is replaced by acceptance, hopeless rebellion by conformist quiet, and ... suffering and anger by cheerful endurance. (Sen, 1984: 308-9 cited in Lukes, 2005: 137)

Yet what is important to emphasise is that Lukes rejects the claim that the academic enjoys a lofty position in which he/she is unique in being able to identify such an exercise of power. As he points out, the shaping of the preferences of actors is always 'partial and limited ... Furthermore, internalised illusions are entirely compatible with a highly rational and clear-eyed approach to living with them' (2005: 150). Susan Bordo is cited as illustrating this clearly:

> Recognising that normalising cultural forms exist does not entail, as some writers have argued, the view that women are 'cultural dupes', blindly submitting to oppressive regimes of beauty. Although many people *are* mystified (insisting, for example, that the current fitness craze is only about health or that plastic surgery to 'correct' a 'Jewish' or 'black' nose is just an individual preference), often there will be a high degree of consciousness involved in the decision to diet or have cosmetic surgery. People *know* the routes to success in this culture – they are advertised widely enough – and they are not 'dopes' to pursue them. Often, given the sexism, racism, and narcissism of the culture, their personal happiness and economic security may depend on it. (Bordo, 2003: 30 cited in Lukes, 2005: 150-1)

However, as Lukes himself points out, many other issues are not as clear cut. In these cases it is extremely difficult to justify the relevant counterfactual (1974: 46).

However, this still does not address Polsby's central question: how do Lukes and his colleagues know which issues to study as non-issues? The answer, in short, is that they have considerable difficulty: issues are often not as clear cut as the pollution issue described by Crenson. Other factors could explain the failure of an issue to rise on the policy agenda: an item may not be fashionable; it may be crowded out; it may not have an attractive solution attached to it; it may not have an efficient entrepreneur or a sufficiently motivated public, or it may simply not have luck on its side. Thus, an issue may gain a place on the agenda for any one of a number of reasons, and this powerful criticism is difficult to challenge in many cases.

Part 2: applications of Lukes' insights to the EU

My key argument in relation to the literature on the EU is that while very little, if any, directly engages in discussion of power in the way that Lukes articulates, it has in fact developed in three stages which implicitly reflect insights and approaches suggested by Lukes' work.

The first phase, which refers primarily to the early literature on the EU but which also has an important legacy today, is strongly influenced by Lukes' first face of power. This literature views the EU as an open and pluralist system with analysis centred on observable conflict between actors from which outcomes emerge. The second phase describes the period in which commentators increasingly became interested in explaining the way in which decision making was occurring outside the formal decision making structures. Finally, the third phase describes the period in which constructivism has become increasingly prevalent, which I contend opens the possibility of reflecting on the third face of power. In this section I set out this position – a diagrammatic representation of which is offered in figure 2 – in more detail, drawing on a number of examples to show the way in which the literature has evolved in the EU context.

I conclude that not only is there a pressing need for such literature to engage explicitly with a discussion of power, but that the methodological implications of the faces of power controversy are vital to our understanding of the nature of the study of power and policy making within the EU.

Figure 2: The three faces of power and the EU

	One-dimensional view	Two-dimensional view	Three-dimensional view
Key literatures	Intergovernmentalist accounts of bargaining and power; lobbying literature	Lobbying literature which emphasises agenda control; studies of bureaucratic power; network analysis	Constructivism; neo-Gramscian analysis
Key approach	Observable conflict	Agenda displacement; informal decision making	Interests shaped by external factors; false consciousness

The first face of power and the EU literature

Much literature on the EU has focused on accounts of observable conflict between actors within formal decision making arenas as set out by Dahl, with arguably the most pervasive and clearest example of such literature being intergovernmentalism. Classic intergovernmentalist accounts by scholars such as Moravcsik explain the process of integration through a focus on inter-state bargaining (Moravcsik, 1991; 1993; 1998; Moravcsik and Nicolaidis 1999). Intergovernmentalists focus on the relative powers of the member states, look at the negotiation and bargaining which occurs in the context of the intergovernmental conferences designed to develop the different treaties and over policies such as the structural fund, and then explain the development of policy in terms of the relative influence of the different states (See in particular Marks, 1992: 194-206; Lange, 1993; Carruba, 1997 and Moravcsik, 1998 all of whom discuss the structural funds as trade offs for further integration). Thus policy evolution is explained as a result of the interactions between actors, their capacity to win arguments,

influence one another and their relative power. The legacy of intergovernmentalist accounts, with their focus on conflicts between actors, is such that analysis of the first face of power has effectively dominated the analysis of the EU.

Much of the literature on EU policy making similarly implies a focus on the first face of power. This literature, often focused on a particular case study, institution or policy sector, tends to emphasise relative resource issues, lobbying, winners and losers, and power asymmetries, and is used to portray a vision of the EU as a relatively open and promiscuous entity in which actors and lobbyists interact and the winners are those who have the best ideas, the best resources, the best access … (See for example Coen, 1997; Cowles, 1996; Mazey and Richardson, 2006). A common view thus develops of the EU as a pluralist system, modelled methodologically by the study of observable conflict, often between a wide range of actors amongst whom power is dispersed (See for example Cowles, 2003:113; Richardson, 2006).

To take one example, many accounts of the development of EU social regulation place a strong emphasis on the importance of observable conflict to the development of policy. Here, the literature has emphasised the ways in which the business community has actively lobbied against Commission proposals for the development of social policy within the EU in order to ensure that it does not interfere with the functioning of the single market programme (Cram, 1993: 137).

Similar arguments can also be seen in terms of the analysis of the Commission's failure to implement a carbon-energy tax (Skjaerseth, 1994; Haigh, 1996; Maddison and Pearce, 1995. See in contrast Paterson, 1996 for arguments which are more sensitive to the structural power of corporate interests), as a brief discussion of events clearly demonstrates.

According to Skjaerseth, the opposition to the Commission's proposals was considerable, with the industrial lobby, in particular, focusing on two key principles: that the tax should be conditional on similar measures being adopted throughout the OECD, and that exemptions should be granted to certain energy intensive industries (1994: 28). The lobbying campaign

conducted by European industry against the tax proposal through their employers confederation (UNICE), was particularly vociferous, being described in the *Economist* as the most intensive opposition to a Community policy proposal ever expressed (9th May 1992: 91), and motivated by concern that the tax would damage the competitive position of EU business in the global economy. 'With regard to the energy/carbon tax: "UNICE stresses that such plans run completely counter to the need … for concerted international action"' (UNICE, 1991: 155, cited in Skjaerseth, 1994: 29).

The industrial lobby's opposition was aided by sharp division within both the Commission and the Council, in which opponents of the carbon-energy tax were, like UNICE, concerned with the costs to European competitiveness which would occur with unilateral EU action. Such was the extent of this division that, as a compromise, the tax proposal was subsequently 'made dependent on similar measures being introduced in other industrialised countries' (Paterson, 1996: 88). Given the strength of US opposition in particular, the adoption of a conditionality clause to the proposed carbon-energy tax effectively killed the proposal dead (Paterson, 1996, 130-31). The analysis of this failure to implement policy again relies almost exclusively on the first face of power.

One final example, taken from the area of analysis of legal cases within the EU further demonstrates the tendency to rely on such a focus. In *Barber vs. Guardian Royal Exchange Insurance*, Mr Barber took legal action against his employer, Guardian Royal Exchange, on the basis that his pension entitlement was calculated on the basis of his retiring at 65 whereas a woman's pension entitlement was based on a retirement age of 60 (for a summary of the case see Leibfried and Pierson, 1995: 47). The court found in Mr Barber's favour, agreeing that such action was illegal under EC law. However, accounts of this case in fact focus on the way in which employers responded with 'what is probably the most costly and intense lobbying campaign yet seen in Brussels' (Mazey and Richardson, 1993: 15 cited in Leibfried and Pierson, 1995: 47) against the application of the retroactivity principle (i.e. that the judgement would not apply to

employers prior to the Barber judgement). According to this literature, the employers were successful in this because they were better mobilised than the opposition – again the analysis reflects Lukes' first face of power.

These examples all show that a highly significant and I would argue dominant body of literature on both integration and policy making within the EU implies that power can and should be explained by focusing on overt conflict in which activity within formal decision making arenas can be used to explain the way in which both integration and policy develops. As Lukes has argued, such literature places considerable emphasis on the first face of power, with all of the methodological and theoretical problems which this entails.

The second face of power and the EU literature
Two key themes from Bachrach and Baratz's and Lukes' work on the second face of power are important in our analysis of this area of literature on the EU. First, there is literature which looks at non-decision making, studying the capacity of actors to control the agenda such that the only items that enter the formal decision making arena are relatively innocuous. Second, there is literature which examines the importance of activity occurring outside the formal decision making chamber. My analysis in this section shows that while the former literature is relatively underdeveloped, there is a growing and increasingly sophisticated appreciation of the importance of informal decision making.

Agenda management and non-decision making
Analysis of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) provides perhaps the best developed example of literature which emphasises the importance of non-decision making. Within this literature a strong theme has been the way in which agricultural interests have been highly successful at resisting fundamental reform of the CAP. Indeed prior to the mid-1980s, the agricultural sector remained largely impervious to outside pressures, successfully maintaining the perception that the most effective model of

agriculture was one which broadly reflected their own interests. Crucially, as Crenson's model suggests, they were able to do so without the need for extensive campaigns of formal lobbying, simply relying on their structural importance and perceived status as legitimate defenders of the agricultural sector. This status was supported by a number of the member states and the strong bureaucratic complex which emerged within the Commission's DG Agricultural and was further aided by the fact that no systematic organised opposition existed (Daugberg, 1999; Coleman, 2001).

Aside from the power of these actors, new-institutionalist accounts (particularly historical institutionalism) of the CAP have also emphasised the way in which the CAP has become 'locked in', further reducing the capacity for reform. Pollack cites Scharpf's (1988) discussion of the 'joint decision trap' as follows:

> Once a given policy is adopted this pathological situation is perpetuated by the decision rule of unanimity voting, through which a single state may block policy reforms desired by all other members, and by a status-quo 'default condition', which provides that in the absence of agreement to reform or replace of a given policy, that policy should remain in place, even in the face of an ever-changing policy environment. Under such conditions, policies such as the common agricultural policy may continue, unamended for lack of the requisite consensus, even in the face of ever-growing surpluses of agricultural products. (Pollack, 1996: 440; see Pierson, 1996 for an overview of historical institutionalism and an application to EU social policy)

However, since the mid-1980s, as concerns about the budgetary implications of the CAP have grown, the capacity of the agricultural groups to retain this control has been increasingly called into question. With the twin pressures of the WTO agenda (with its desire to liberalise agriculture) alongside growing awareness of the environmental implications of intensive agriculture, by the mid-1990s the CAP was under even greater strain (see Robinson, 2002: 62-3 and Rieger, 2005 for a review).

Perhaps unsurprisingly in the light of the argument set out in this paper, with these real-world developments much of the literature has reverted once more to a classical first face of power focus. With a renewed focus on observable conflict, scholars argue that the likelihood of reform can be assessed by weighing up the forces against reform (member states who support the CAP, bureaucratic forces in favour of the CAP and agricultural interests) against those in favour of reform (member states in favour, the WTO and supporters of its liberalising agenda, citizens concerned over the implications of intensive agriculture, and advocates of budgetary reallocation) (see for example Daugberg and Swinbank, 2004 and Webber, 1999).

However, despite this reversion to a first face of power focus, the literature on the CAP is in fact relatively exceptional within EU studies in that some of it does have clear implications for the second face of power – much of the other literature simply ignores this.

For example, in her work on European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), Maria Green Cowles focuses almost exclusively on formal lobbying and thus on an implied first face of power (see in particular Cowles, 1995 but also 1997 and 2002)[4]. Her research makes extensive use of a methodology which places a premium on ERT documentation and interviews to demonstrate 'that business leaders from the ERT largely were responsible for relaunching and *setting the agenda* of the single market programme in the early 1980s' (Cowles, 1995: 503).

Cowles describes a process in which the CEO of Volvo, Pehr Gyllenhammar facilitated the coming together of the leaders of some of Europe's major multi-national corporations, ultimately forming the ERT and producing a number of policy documents calling for the promotion of a 'unified European market' (1995: 507). According to Cowles, the ERT was particularly influential in France, with a number of high level meetings with senior French ministerial aides such that France became a strong advocate

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[4] Van Apeldoorn (2001; 2002) has also written extensively on the ERT but takes an approach which emphasises both lobbying and observable conflict but also the importance of the structural power of business (i.e. implying a third face of power). His work is discussed below. Similarly, Gillingham (2003: 240-1) whilst only touching on the role of the ERT, does also imply a framework which is based on the second face of power.

of the single market (1995: 509-13). This was backed up 'by veiled threats' that multi-national corporations would begin to invest outside Europe if liberalisation was not delivered through effective implementation of the SM (1995: 516; 519).

However, while this literature is centred on overt lobbying and observable conflict (first face of power), it does contain the potential for a strong account of the way in which much political activity has occurred outside of formal decision making arenas, revealing an important aspect of at least part of the second face of power as set out by Bachrach and Baratz. ERT activity, working outside the formal decision making arenas, is shown to have been very important in shaping the way the single market issue was ultimately discussed by the member states within the European Council meetings designed to finalise the SEM proposals (1995: 513-20).

Informal decision making: beyond the formal decision arena
In contrast with the literature on agenda displacement and the way in which power serves to confine the agenda to relatively safe items, the literature on informal decision making arenas is actually very strong in EU studies.

In particular, there is a well-developed tradition of studying the way in which the EU bureaucracy, operating both through the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) and the Commission DGs, has been highly influential in shaping a large number of proposals.

Both Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace (1995) and van Schendelen (1996) have argued that COREPER is effectively the engine behind Council decision making. According to Hayes-Renshaw and Wallace (1995: 562) some 70 percent of decisions are taken completely outside the formal council meetings, 15-20 percent are passed to council meetings as 'A' points (i.e. issues which have already been resolved within COREPER), leaving just 10-15 percent of issues to actually be resolved within the Council. Similar trends have also been found in terms of studies of the Commission bureaucracy, leading a number of scholars to point to the importance of informal decision arenas as being responsible for much of the EU's day to day decision making which occurs within highly technocratic, bureaucratic networks of actors.

A desire to centre on informal decision making arenas within the EU has been key to the development of literature on policy networks. As Rosamond argues, 'the image of networks is an attempt to depict the highly segmented nature of EU policy-making in which advice, consultation, expertise and technocratic rationality are the means used to cope with the regulatory thicket of day-to-day decision-making' (2000: 123).

With their emphasis on the problems which the Community institutions have in controlling decision making, fluidity, the importance of interest groups and decentralisation, policy networks seem (on the surface at least) well suited to the analysis of EU decision making (Kassim, 1994: 16 and Peterson, 1995: 77-8). As Richardson argues: 'If EU politics is about who gets what, how and when, then identifying the networks of actors involved and trying to describe those networks is at least the starting point for understanding how the system of making EU policies works' (Richardson, 1996: 36). A growing body of empirical work thus makes use of network analysis to study EU policy making – all of which is highly sensitive as Bachrach and Baratz's second face of power is to the importance of non-formal decision making arenas to the development of policy and the study of power.

Overall therefore, the literature on the second face of power presents something of a mixed picture. While the literature on informal decision making arenas is very well developed – arguably offering a real strength in EU studies – that on agenda management and non-decision making is much less sophisticated. There is thus a clear need to address this deficiency if the full extent of the second face of power is to be explored.

The third face of power and the EU literature
Literature which reflects insights from Lukes' third face of power is both relatively recent and embryonic in EU studies. However, while there is little if any explicit reference made to Lukes' framework, there are two literatures which *do* have a very clear resonance with Lukes' work: social constructivism and Neo-Gramscian analysis with its particular emphasis on

false consciousness. In this section I discuss both of these literatures, showing how they might be used to reflect on the third face of power.

Social Constructivism

The literature on social constructivism is in its relative infancy, being traced back to a special issue of the *Journal of European Public Policy* published in 1999 entitled *The Social Construction of Europe* (Christiansen *et al*, 1999 repr. 2001). As Risse points out (2004: 160), social constructivism can be defined as 'based on a social ontology which insists that human agents do not exist independently from their social environment and its collectively shared systems of meanings ("culture" in a broad sense)'.

The parallels with Lukes' third face of power and its emphasis on the way in which real and perceived interests can be moulded by factors external to an actor are thus relatively clear. However while Lukes may be seen as operating in a relatively structurally-based way, many constructivists try to place themselves at the interface of the structure-agency debate, offering an account which emphasises both external factors as constraining behaviour and the capacity of agents to change those factors over time (Risse, 2004: 161). But constructivism is a broad church and there are authors within constructivism who emphasise an almost structuralist perspective (see Christiansen *et al*, 2001: 16-18 for an overview).

One example from the work of Hay and Rosamond demonstrates the potential of constructivism as a means of exploring the operation of the third face of power. In their work on the relationship between discursive constructions of globalisation and economic reform, Hay and Rosamond seek to challenge the idea that globalisation actually imposes external constraints on actors. In fact, they argue, '[w]hether the globalization thesis is "true" or not may matter far less than whether it is *deemed* to be true (or, quite possibly, just useful) by those employing it.' (2002: 148). Ideas operating externally to a subsystem may thus be exploited by actors within a policy subsystem so that they can achieve their objectives:

The key point, therefore is that political actors may have an incentive to employ globalisation as a discourse in order to undertake unpalatable reforms – blaming globalisation for changes which are actually driven by domestic priorities (2002: 150).

Hay and Rosamond use the case of corporate taxation to illustrate this argument, suggesting that governments have been constrained in their actions by the way in which globalisation has been socially constructed as leading to greater capital mobility. States concerned by this thesis will respond by reducing corporate taxation – for without such cuts they will suffer a decline in tax revenues due to capital flight. As Hay and Rosamond argue:

There is precious little evidence to substantiate the thesis or the parsimonious if implausible assumptions upon which it is premised … Yet, the irony is that if governments believe it to be true, or find it to their advantage to present it as true, they will act in a manner consistent with its predictions, thereby contributing to an aggregate depreciation in corporate taxation – whether they are right to do so or not. (Hay and Rosamond, 2002: 149).

Arguments such as these, which emphasise the importance of ideas, and discourses and their effects on actor's behaviours – either constraining them or enabling certain forms of action – have clear resonance with discussions of the third face of power. Thus constructivist insights are important in suggesting a way in which we might begin to operationalise a research agenda in which a third face of power can be appreciated within the context of the EU.

Neo-Gramscian Analysis
Like constructivism, Neo-Gramscian analysis is in its relative infancy in terms of studies of the EU (see Bieler and Morton, 2001). Neo-Gramscians have been particularly concerned to show the importance of material

interests, leading actors to demand further and further integration in order to realise the evolution of a neo-liberal capitalist market place (Bieler and Morton, 2001).

Furthermore, Neo-Gramscian analysis also suggests ways in which we might be able to begin to operationalise insights from Crenson's work on non-decision making. In discussion of the work of van Apeldoorn, Maria Green Cowles makes this particularly clear when she argues:

> The critical element of this approach, relating back to its Marxist routes, is the explicit assertion that the structure of society, especially in today's global capitalism, is inherently biased in favour of capitalist groups such as firms and banks. In Gramsci's terms, it is the hegemony of the firms' discourse production, the firms' ability to appeal to others, that further enables capital to dominate to the detriment of other societal actors (Cowles, 2003: 111).

Yet in spite of such insights, what is quite striking is that these scholars have not as yet offered a systematic exposition of the way in which false consciousness acts to shape or mould the development of EU policy. For Lukes, who explicitly based his third face of power on the Gramscian view of false consciousness, this is a potentially serious obstacle to the articulation of a developed understanding of the third face of power. To develop a coherent model on the basis of a third face of power would thus require an exploration of the implications of such insights in a much more systematic way.

Part 3: Power and Policy in the EU: Towards a three dimensional model of power

This section of the paper begins the key task of setting out what a three-dimensional model of power might look like. I would argue that there are five requirements for such a model:

- Firstly, the framework must explicitly examine observable conflict (i.e. the first face of power)

- Secondly, the framework must make the operation of the second face of power much more explicit, by looking both at the way in which observable conflict can exclude certain items from the agenda *and* at the way in which power operates outside formal decision making arenas.
- Thirdly, the framework must clearly engage with insights from work such as that of Crenson, who argues that certain actors are able simply by their presence to prevent the articulation of certain issues (i.e. a kind of 'two-and-a-half faces' of power).
- Fourthly, the framework must include a properly articulated third face of power, exploring the extent to which a non-state entity (i.e. the EU) has the ability to shape actors interests and asking how that process might develop; whose interests are being shaped, and what the implications from that process are?
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, any framework must attempt to show how these faces of power inter-relate to one another.

In the light of such requirements Annica Kronsell's (1997) *Greening the EU* merits a brief mention here, for in its aim of making a significant contribution to our understanding of the nature of policy making (in particular agenda setting) within the European Union through a framework which is explicitly based on Lukes' three faces of power, Kronsell's book demonstrates both the potential and the problems of such an approach. Arguing that agenda setting operates on the basis of both macro- and micro-level processes, Kronsell suggests that the macro-level excludes certain policy options from being considered by policy-makers, in this context as a result of the male-dominated patriarchy (the third face of power) creating a certain perception of nature based on a strictly economic view of the environment. This excludes a broader perception of nature which she argues can only be achieved through a gendered conceptualisation of nature. In this sense, her work is closely related to not only the work of Lukes but also of Benson (1982) who similarly argues that the agenda is constrained by, in Benson's words, 'rules of structure

formation' which constrain the operation of the upper (or micro-) level of agenda setting.

However, the book relies heavily on Kingdon's (1984) work on policy streams to explain the policy process at the micro-level, and in doing so loses focus on those constraining factors. According to Kingdon, agenda setting results from the interaction of streams of policy problems, solutions, and politics which become coupled when certain conditions are met: despite her recognition of the importance of the macro-environment, Kronsell's account thus seems to infer that the agenda setting process at a micro-level is free-flowing and largely pluralistic.

A crucial problem with Kronsell's argument is thus that she does not ever succeed in fully elucidating the relationship between the first, second and third faces of power, with her strong reliance on the work of Kingdon suggesting that the first and second faces of power are in fact the most important to her analysis. The following section thus attempts to address these failings, building on a framework initially set out by Benson in order to argue for a model which properly addresses all three faces of power and the relationship between them.

Benson and the three faces of power

Benson's model of a policy sector provides an organising framework for understanding the inter-relationships between Lukes' three faces of power (Benson, 1982, see Figure 3. Benson's model is summarised in Parsons, 1995: 148-50). The policy making process, according to Benson, takes place within three interlinked levels: rules of structure formation, interest structure and the administrative surface level, with the rules of structure formation providing a baseline which constrains the operation of the higher levels (1982: 160).

Figure 3   **Benson's model of a policy sector**
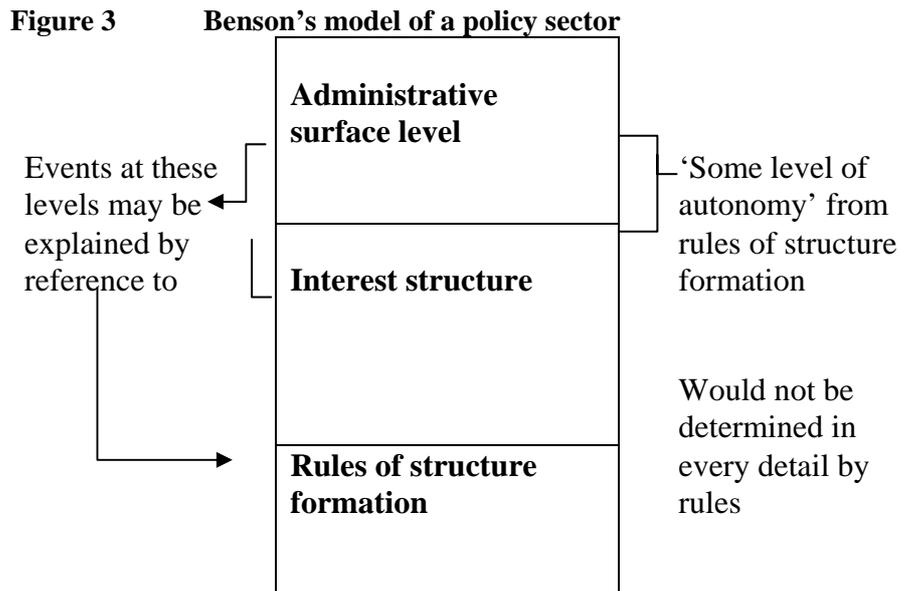
Source: Parsons, 1995, p. 149

Parsons argues that the rules of structure formation level 'shapes the way in which issues are brought into the realm of decision-making and others are kept outside the decisional processes … In terms of agenda setting, Benson's framework stresses how the analysis of administrative and interest structures in given policy sectors are shaped by "deep rules" which operate to ensure that some demands are excluded from the decision making process, and which limit the choices and behaviour of policy makers' (1995: 149). Thus, interest groups and policy proposals which are in step with the rules of structure formation are likely to be served by government policy regardless of the exercise of power, while those interests and policy proposals which are out of step with the rules of structure formation are likely to be ignored (Benson, 1982: 162-5).

These ideas are potentially important in relation to the ideas explored here, with Benson's deep level being analogous to Lukes' third face of power. Viewed in this way, the third face of power can be seen as operating at a deep – almost structural – level, constraining the operation of the levels above. Thus issues which are compatible with the third face of power operate freely and those which are not do not.

The second level, which is analogous to the second face of power (non-decision making), is influenced by the third because if the third face of power is serving to ensure that some interests are not being realised, this will have the effect of enabling some actors to realise their own interests without any need to mobilise against an opposition which is of course not aware of their own real interests. This will also enable the dominant actors to be much more successful at ensuring that certain issues do not rise on to the agenda.

Finally the first face of power (observable conflict) can only explain those issues in which humans are both aware of their own interests and in which non-decision making has not occurred. Thus anything which is excluded by the operation of either the third or the second face of power is not going to appear as an issue for conflict in the first face of power, while anything excluded by the third face of power is not going to appear as an item within the second face of power. Benson's framework is thus potentially highly valuable in helping us to understand the inter-relationship between Lukes' three faces of power: the final section of this paper aims to show how such a model can help to inform discussion of the NRA.

Part 4: Lukes' the three faces of power and the NRA
Before undertaking an examination of the implications of Lukes' three faces of power to the NRA, however, one immediate question arises: can such a model be utilised in analysis of a political entity which is undergoing a process of integration and which - according to most accounts of the NRA - remains dominated by intergovernmentalism (Christiansen, 2004: 591-4). Clearly the EU is the only example of a regional entity in which a degree of stasis has occurred; it might be argued that it is only when such stasis has occurred that discussions of power can be undertaken. I would argue that this is not the case and that insights from this paper can indeed be applied to the NRA, with the following consequences.

First, the overview of EU scholarship set out in this paper has shown that many early accounts of integration within the EU began on the assumption that it proceeds on the basis of observable conflict (see also

Risse, 2004: 161-2). This highlights the danger of the same pattern developing in the case of scholarship on the NRA, so that we rely on explanations of the integration process which centre on conflict between actors and institutions with outcomes determined by the balance between them. Indeed, for Söderbaum this is exactly what *is* occurring. As he observed in introducing a recent edited volume on the NRA, 'the study of the new regionalism *is dominated* by various rationalist/problem solving theories' (2003: 10. Emphasis added), thus implying a perspective which does place a premium on observable conflict.

Söderbaum's analysis suggests that the majority of scholarship takes as its point of departure the conflict which develops between states, so focusing attention on questions of why certain states may or may not choose to secede power to different institutions and the effects of their doing so on the development of integration. The inevitable result is analysis dominated by a focus on operations of the first face of power, or at best, a partially developed second face of power.

This seems all the more likely in the absence of a supranational actor comparable to the European Commission in the EU context, which has been seen by neo-functionalists as instrumental in developing integration on the basis of spillover. As Risse makes clear, whilst neo-functionalism, like state-centric approaches, offers 'an actor-centred approach to European integration', the fact that it also articulates the theory of spillover means that it is alive to 'the shift of loyalties (identities) from the national to the supranational levels' (2004: 162).

There is a twin danger here: that on the one hand our analysis becomes almost totally preoccupied with reflecting on developments which are ongoing and current, but also that on the other hand we assume that the process of integration is likely to develop from a balance of forces which can be read off from the preferences of those actors presently fighting over the process of integration.

However, insights from Crenson's work, from the constructivists (see for example Hettne's, Jessop's and Neumann's contributions to Söderbaum and Shaw, 2003. See also Hettne and Söderbaum, 2002) and from

consideration of the third face of power as outlined in this paper all suggest that integration may well be developing in certain ways not because of the balance between certain actors and the impact of observable conflict but rather because of unobservable factors. This is potentially very important for us in terms of understanding both how and why integration is developing in the way that it is and how we might explain its future development. From this perspective, the reason that certain actors are so successful at shaping the way in which the agenda is formed in the first place, and with it the nature of integration - so marginalising some issues and promoting others - can only be explained by insights offered by the second or third faces of power.

Thus I would argue that scholars on the NRA need to try to develop a framework which can consider overt and explicit conflict, non-decision making through the presence of actors who restrict the agenda and so shape the evolution of integration, and the impacts of factors which mould actors interests and perceptions. Bringing all these elements together will lead to a much more illuminating debate about the nature of the NRA, so offering a much fuller explanation for why integration is developing in the way it is.

The second set of consequences highlighted by our analysis based on a three faces of power model involve what I would identify as real world implications. For example, it might be the case that the way in which those actors which are actively engaged in pushing for integration in different parts of the world understand their own interests is completely dominated by certain perceptions of what integration ought to, could, and should achieve. If this is so, in terms of what integration can achieve certain results might simply not be realisable because of a lack of knowledge of as to alternative forms and approaches to integration. In such a case, insights from the third face of power could be vital to understanding how and why it is that actors have the preferences and views which they actually have about the nature of integration.

For example, a third face of power approach might enable us to reflect on why it is that integration is often seen as a process which is most likely to develop on the basis implied by Balassa's (1962) stages-based

model of integration (with development of a free-trade area proceeding, via a single market, to full political union). If that is indeed the pattern on which integration is proceeding in many different parts of the world, it is important to recognise that it may be so not just because of the observable interests of the actors involved or the forces of political economy but rather may result from the fact that the actors involved in the process have already had the very sense of what integration can achieve moulded into them before they even begin the process.

These brief reflections on the development of scholarship on the NRA thus show that insights from Lukes' work can be of profound interest, not only for helping us to understand both the development of the European Union and the evolution of the literature which analyses that development, but also in terms of trying to reflect more broadly on the nature of the evolution of integration in other parts of the world.

Conclusion

This paper has made a number of observations, setting out a series of arguments for the importance of insights from a three dimensional view of power for our understanding of both the EU and the NRA.

My review of the relationship between the development of literature on the EU and our understanding of power based on Lukes' three faces model has shown that much of this scholarship can be separated into three key phases of knowledge, each of which begins to take into account one of the faces of power.

The first phase refers to early scholarship on the EU in which I suggest that much of this work was developed on the basis of an implied first face of power. Indeed there still remains a considerable array of contemporary work which still reflects this tradition, being based on examining the interaction between actors on the basis of observable conflict, with the assumption being that the EU is a highly pluralist political system.

The second phase refers to later work which subsequently began to place emphasis on both non-decision making and the importance of political interactions outside the formal decision making arenas (in particular within

the EU's evolving bureaucratic structures). This literature offers insights applicable to the study of the second face of power.

The third phase which is still in its relative infancy refers to insights being developed by both constructivists and implied, yet not fully explored, by Neo-Gramscian analyisis, which open up the possibility of showing the importance of the actions and in-actions which shape the perceptions and preferences of actors. Such insights, I have suggested, are particularly important in developing the tools required to understand the third face of power within the EU context.

While this analysis suggests that awareness of the importance of all three faces of power is growing within EU studies, it also reveals that so far there has been a failure to integrate analysis of the interaction between those faces. The third part of this paper has thus attempted to provide an initial sketch of what a three dimensional view of power might look like, and how these three faces of power may be seen to interact. Drawing on the work of Benson, I have developed a model that illustrates the ways in which the third face of power, in particular, acts to constrain the operation of the second face of power and how that in turn acts to constrain the operation of the first face of power.

Finally, in the last substantive section of this paper, I have drawn together insights from this literature on the EU and the three faces of power debate, arguing that they have potentially important implications for the study of the NRA in two key ways. First I have suggested that such accounts have implications for our study of transformation and change within parts of the world which are in the process of integrating. Secondly, I have suggested that we need to avoid the mistake that many scholars of the EU have historically made – waiting for integration to have reached a certain level of stasis before employing a full range of theoretical and empirical tools for its analysis, when only these can bring sufficiently deep insights into the nature of the integration question.

My overall argument here is thus that we need to make an intellectual leap away from a focus on observable conflict which will otherwise dominate discussion of the initial phases of integration, instead

providing a framework which accounts for all three levels of power (observable conflict, non-decision making and the shaping of actors preferences) while integration is still in its early stages. Without doing so there are two dangers: the academic one is that we simply fail to bring sufficient sophistication to understanding the process of integration; the practical one is that the way in which integration itself proceeds will not be appropriately debated, instead proceeding almost automatically from limited integration centred on the evolution of a free-trade area, through development via an economic rationale, before gradually moving towards greater political integration. As Lukes' framework suggests, the dominance of the third face of power may be shaping our perceptions such that we can only see integration proceeding on the basis of an economic rationale because decision makers see that as the only possible way of proceeding: understanding these constraints of power opens up the potential to debate alternative processes and models of integration.

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Lukes was previously a widower.[5] He has three children from his previous marriage to the English barrister Nina Stanger: freelance journalist Daniel (born 1977), musician Michael (born 1979) and academic Alexandra (born 1981). Academic interests[edit].Â He is a member of the editorial board of the European Journal of Sociology and directs a research project on what is left of the socialist idea in Western and Eastern Europe. The three dimensions of power[edit].Â Adding this face gives a two-dimensional view of power allowing the analyst to examine both current and potential issues, expanding the focus on observable conflict to those types that might be observed overtly or covertly.[8]. Political developments since then have highlighted that the Union faces a double challenge: there is not only a need for urgent action to adapt governance under the existing treaties, but also for a broader debate on the future of Europe in view of the next intergovernmental conference. C 287/2. EN. Official Journal of the European Communities. 12.10.2001. Already within the existing Treaties the Union must start adapting its institutions and establishing more coherence in its policies so that it is easier to see what it does and what it stands for.Â The Council and the European Parliament should focus more on defining the essential elements of policy and controlling the way in which those policies are executed.