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Discourses of Ecologically Unequal Exchange

Processes of 'othering' in the European Union's framing of trade

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Abstract

The field of Ecologically Unequal Exchange (EUE) demonstrates how contemporary trade is based on time-space appropriation, from which the North owe the South an ecological debt. EUE researchers argue that free trade under the capitalist world-system reinforces the extractions and hinders 'development' of the south. To investigate the discrepancy between EUE findings and the European Unions notion of 'trade for development', this thesis takes a postcolonial perspective on the issue of time-space appropriation. Employing a Critical Discourse Analysis, EU trade policies are examined to investigate if and how the EU discursively reinforce time-space appropriation through practices of 'othering'. The analysis demonstrates that the EU position their norms as universal, although they are part of a 'culture of growth'. Through processes of othering and of silencing other types of knowledges, the EU's trade discourse work to neutralise their own norms. As such, the EU reinforces the Western knowledge construction and their own position of power. The analysed texts imply that through the 'right' combination of trade and norms, development can be achieved. This notion portrays world inequalities as stages of development. Thus, the conclusion show that processes of othering play part in obscuring time-space appropriation in the analysed documents.

Key words: Ecologically Unequal Exchange, Postcolonialism, Eu Trade, Critical Discourse Analysis, Development

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1. Introduction

In a time of environmental destruction and disasters, the notion of sustainable development has become more or less a buzzword within developmental organizations as well as academia. As the 2030 agenda stresses, we need to alter our consumption patterns, lower emissions and turn to 'clean energy', all whilst combating contemporary poverty and reducing inequalities (United Nations, 2015). It is becoming more evident with each passing day that 'business as usual' is greatly incompatible with such goals. A growing body of critical research labelled 'Ecologically Unequal Exchange' (EUE) show how, in contrast to what many global development organisations withhold, sustainable and equitable change is not possible under contemporary trade structures.

The field of EUE demonstrates how the world-economic system of production and consumption is unequal to the extent that 'developed' countries have disproportionate access to natural resources from the developing countries ,whilst developing countries function as a sink for the North's waste (Jorgenson, 2016). Ecologically Unequal Exchange is thus a process of both resource-extraction as well as of outsourcing environmental 'harms' that leaves developing countries with the burden of ecological and environmental issues, created largely by the Norths consumption. These processes have been traced back to colonial times where extractive structures in the developing countries, created a pattern of dependency (Andersson, 2011; Infante-Amate & Krausmann, 2019, p. 1). Furthermore, the South is little paid for the work and the material put into these processes. Using Hornborg's (2006, 2011) definition, this dual structure in world trade can be referred to as a 'time-space appropriation'. This means that exchanges under current trade structures, are unequal both in terms of labour (time) as well as natural assets, energy, and ecological footprints (space). EUE theory argue that these long-term structures has enabled the accumulation of time and space in the North (translated into money) whilst the extractions from the south creates and sustains their 'underdevelopment' (Givens, Huang, & Jorgenson, 2019). Given that the worlds access to time and space is ultimately of a zero-sum character, an equal and 'sustainable' world is not possible under these extractive trade structures.

Whilst EUE research has comprehensively been able to document the unequal flows (Jorgenson, Dick, & Austin, 2010; Oulu, 2015; Warlenius, 2016) as well as historically and politically trace the roots and patterns of EUE (Brolin, 2007; Bunker, 2019), scholars are

advocating for empirical-political explorations of the power dimensions that shape contemporary structures (Ciplet & Roberts, 2017, p. 298). Taking this perspective, one might question why it is that although ecological issues and environmental problems are receiving more and more attention, little consideration in mainstream development efforts has been given to this *structural* role of trade. On the contrary, the gathered findings within the field of EUE stray very far from how both trade and ecological hazards are portrayed by important global actors. Instead, enabling and deepening free trade is often depicted as the road to global prosperity and an important step in achieving development goals.

Following this notion, the European Union channel the sustainable development goals (SDGs) through policies of trade facilitation (European commission, 2012, p. 4). Trade being one of their main tenets for development, EU policies acknowledge little or no tension between the concepts of sustainability and trade (Holden, 2019, p. 963). The EU is often portrayed as promoting a more progressive and egalitarian type of trade. Yet, the EU is dependent on material imports, and biophysical trade balances indicate that they import more material than they export (Hornborg, 2011, p. 115). Deepening trade policies can thus be understood as a way to secure these inputs and reinforce time-space appropriation from the South. Therefore, this thesis turns to examine *what* it is that enable EU, to rather intactly argue that trade is fundamentally good for development, for poverty reduction and for ecological sustainability.

As demonstrated by scholars within critical fields of discourse analysis, feminism and postcolonialism; language is powerful when in the hands of the powerful. Knowledge, from a postcolonial perspective, is understood as partial and shaped by politics and culture, and the specific Western construction of knowledge is oftentimes assumed to be universal. This positioning of certain knowledges as universal and neutral truths in turn, work to obscure and 'silence' other knowledges (McEwan, 2019, p. 47). It is clear, that the dominating discourses around trade, sustainability, and development stray far from the understanding demonstrated by the field of EUE. It is the proposition of this thesis, that the notion that sustainability and development can be enabled *through* trade, can be understood as a type of knowledge production that obscures time-space appropriation and that this process could be linked to a postcolonial project of excluding other types of knowledges. Therefore, this thesis takes a critical stance to examine the EU as former colonialists and as a contemporary dominating global power. By doing so, the discursive structures that enable EUE could be understood, not only as a *process* of unequal flows, but as a *project* of suppression.

1.1 Research question and purpose

The aim of this thesis is two-folded, on a theoretical note, it seeks to add to the field of EUE theory by incorporating postcolonial theory as a part of understanding and explaining the continuation of time-space appropriation. As argued by Oulu, such attempts have been neglected by the field and could be useful to understand the political power dimensions of EUE as a process in which the western knowledge production is implicit (Oulu, 2014). Secondly, on a more empirical note, the aim is to apply said framework to explore the implicit knowledges at play in EU's 'trade for development' discourse, and examine how and to what extent these discourses 'fuel' the obscuration of EUE.

As such, it should be noted already at this stage, that this research does not set out to prove that time-space appropriation occurs. Instead, it seeks to explore how time-space appropriation manifests itself discursively, and what role power dimensions have in this manifestation. Considering the colonial roots of said extractions, it is the hypothesis of this thesis, that the western knowledge production manifested in EU policies, has a role to play in obscuring time-space appropriations. As such, the research questions are as follows:

How does the European Commission discursively construct the relationship between trade and sustainable development in their trade policies?

What type of knowledges are implicitly reproduced in these discourses?

How can these knowledges be tied to the process of time-space appropriation?

To examine and deconstruct the discourses around trade, a critical discourse analysis will be conducted. Through a postcolonial perspective, this analysis will be geared towards examining the cultural and political underpinnings of EU trade policies and exploring the implicit assumptions and consequences of discovered discourses. A second but interrelated step of the analysis is to examine these findings against the backdrop of EUE theory to understand if and how the processes of othering can be connected to time-space appropriation.

Whilst there is some existing research on how processes of EUE can manifest themselves semiotically(2011, 2014, 2019), no thorough discourse analyses have to my knowledge been undertaken to understand the processes of EUE. More research has however been done on the discourses of EU trade as well as on postcolonial understandings of development policies. This thesis could thus add to existing literature on EUE by combining it with these perspectives. By doing so, it can hopefully give some insights as to if and how

time-space appropriation can be understood as part of a project of western knowledge production.

This introduction is followed by a theoretical framework, starting with a summary of Ecologically Unequal Exchange and on how the contemporary understanding of value could be understood to obscure time-space appropriation. This subsection is followed by a presentation of postcolonial theory and how it could add to the EUE perspective. The last part of the theoretical framework presents some findings from studies on EU discourses, and sets out three main themes, drawing from discussed theories, that will be used as a guide for the analysis. Next is a presentation of the choice of research design where the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is presented. Subsequently the analysis is presented in clusters of discovered discourses, followed by a conclusion and finally some suggestions for future research.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Ecologically Unequal Exchange

The theory of Ecologically Unequal Exchange takes a world-systems perspective. Its heritage traces back to the dependency school as first elaborated by Raul Prebish, who noticed declining terms of trade for primary products exported from Latin America and presented a theory to explain these tendencies. His structural analysis allowed for an understanding of the trade relations as based around a centre of industrial production, and a periphery of agricultural production, where demand for the latter was expanding less than the industrial production, leading to unequal outcomes (Brolin, 2007, pp. 98–100). The world-systems theory explains this assymetry by pointing towards the relative monopolization of production processes in the 'core', and as such points out that 'free trade' is not based on fair conditions of competition as often proclaimed (Wallerstein, 2004, p. 28). As such, world-system theory argues, monopolization, not comperative advantage as classic economicts claim, is what shapes the rule of trade and enables an accumulation of profits to the core.

This notion is largely obscured by the manner in which *value* is understood under the contemporary world structure. Here, classic Unequal Exchange theory draw on Marx's labour theory of value (LTV). Relating LTV to dependency theory, it becomes clear that trade between 'unequal' partners inevitably results in a value transfer (Warlenius, 2016, p. 369). A simplified demonstration would be that the typical production in developing

countries entails labour-intensive industries, yet under free trade they must compete with more 'efficient' (monopolized) producers in the core. In the trading process then, this surplus value created by workers will not accrue solely to the owners of the industries, where it could potentially be nationally invested or redistributed, but is transferred to the developed countries buying the commodities. In a nutshell, this is how classical Unequal Exchange theory explains how the capitalist notions of free trade and comparative advantage obscure Unequal Exchanges.

Bunker, commonly understood as the first one to conceptualize EUE, explains in his research on industries in the Amazon, how this asymmetry takes place not only in labour (time), but also in material terms (space). Criticizing LTV for not considering material-ecological aspects of exchange, he argues for an altered definition of value where matter, as it "touch everything humanly useful" must be included (Bunker, 2019, p. 24). The issue from an EUE perspective being that natural resources are considered a "free gift to capital" (Moore, 2011) enabling overexploitation. Several conceptualizations of how value should instead be understood and measured has been proposed within the field, all including material-ecological aspects of exchanges (see for example Bruckner, Giljum, Lutz, & Wiebe, 2012; Foster & Holleman, 2014; Moran, Lenzen, Kanemoto, & Geschke, 2013; Oulu, 2015). The main takeaway point from all these conceptualizations, and specifically the empirical use of them, is that when measuring exchanges in non-monetary values, including the actual 'embodied material and energy' inputs to production; trade is unequal. Generally, developing countries produce commodities with large inputs of both labour and material (land, water and other types of energies), and in exchange they import more expensive commodities from the core embodying less labour and material (see for ex. Austin 2012; Bruckner et al. 2012; Bunker 2019; Jorgenson and Clark 2009; Rice 2007; Singh and Ramanujam 2011). The consequences of this being not only the 'underdevelopment' of the south but an accretion of ecological 'issues'. As such it could be framed as the North owing an 'ecological debt' to the South (Hornborg & Martinez-Alier, 2016; Rice, 2007; Warlenius, 2016).

To summarise, EUE demonstrates how contemporary trade is not only unequal due to the transfer of surplus value from the periphery as explained by LTV, but also regarding the material and energies in production. This dual extraction is what Hornborg (2006, 2011) refers to as time-space appropriation. The consequences of this appropriation are as demonstrated an augmented productive capacity in the core, and environmental degradation, poverty, and general 'underdevelopment' in the periphery. Differently expressed, since the assets of time and space, are ultimately of zero-sum character (Hornborg, 2011, p. 14), the process of 'securing' wealth is one that exploits both human and non-human nature.

The capitalist fixation on growth and economic values, bolsters environmental depletion as well as monetary inequalities, in its refusal to consider value outside the 'economic' arena. When 'tracking the losers' of this conceptualization of value, it is a type of dual loss for marginalized groups.

2.2 Towards a postcolonial understanding of EUE

This articulation of EUE as an issue of how value is conceptualized, opens up for the question, *whose* understanding of value is this? To examine what type of knowledges are part in constituting and reinforcing this notion of value, this section presents the field of postcolonialism, and how it could be related to the field of EUE.

The aim of postcolonial research, as McEwan puts it, is "to re-examine the long historical, cultural and spatial record that has depicted colonies and postcolonies as the problematic children of European history" (2019, p. 2). This re-examination is done, most distinctly by investigating the discourses of the "taken for granted world" and how they naturalize and universalise particular worldviews (McEwan, 2019, p. 150). Edward Said (1978), commonly understood as the founder of postcolonial studies, analysed Western media and writings, linking it to imperialism and western cultures as producers of 'orientalism'. He demonstrated how Western culture portrays the oriental (eg, those not Western) as "irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, different" and the European as "rational, virtuous, mature, normal" (Said, 1978, p. 48). Connecting orientalism to Gramsci´s notion of a hegemony, Said argues that these cultural binary discourses enable the Europeans to "manage and even produce the [orient] politically , sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively"(1978, p. 11).

Later postcolonial scholars have developed Said´s work, arguing that 'orientalism', is an overly unifying concept. Not agreeing to the notion of the orient as a complete colonial subject, Bhabha points towards the rupture and 'hybridity' of colonial discourses. In essence, Bhabha is arguing that the stereotypes are *meant* to be understood as natural and fixed, yet they are often contradictory and "anxiously repeated and reconfirmed by the colonizer" (Kapoor, 2008, p. 7). By focusing on this 'discursive instability', one can deconstruct the binary categorization through which the 'other' is constructed and thus, make room for agency (Ibid. p. 8). Writing history 'from below' is thus an important part in deconstructing the Western knowledge production. Yet the difficulties in doing so are clear

since, as Spivak (2010) concludes in her text, the Subaltern (the most marginalized groups) *cannot* speak.

> "Between patriarchy and imperialism, subject-constitution and object-formation, the figure of the woman disappears, not into a pristine nothingness, but into a violent shuttling which is the displaced figuration of the 'third-world woman' caught between tradition and modernization, culturalism and development" (Spivak, 2010, p. 61).

Admitting her 'failure' to capture the voice of the subaltern, Spivak nevertheless argues that a focus on the marginalized, to record the silence, is one important way to challenge the imperial and patriarchal discourses. As such, part of the project is of unlearning the taken for granted world and "articulate participation […] by *measuring* silences"(Spivak, 2010, p. 48. emphasis mine).

Returning to time-space appropriation from a postcolonial lens, it is a project that greatly benefits developed (European) countries, and the ongoing accumulations are traced back to colonial history (Bunker, 2019; Jorgenson, 2006, p. 7). Considering the core issue of EUE to be the way in which value is conceptualised, it begs the question to what extent the capitalist notion of value and 'free trade' is based on colonial and Western knowledge production of silencing other notions or cultures of value. Whilst some postcolonial scholars claim that also criticism towards a central power such as Europe is Eurocentric because of the continued focus, Bhambra (2009) contrarily argues that such criticism is necessary in order to rethink current categorizations. Specifically, by deconstructing European universalist claims. Thus, by investigating the silences in global narratives, one can shed light on the fact that this knowledge is not constructed in ways that bring forward world-perspectives, but that of the Western world (Bhambra, 2009, p. 3).

Kapoor (2008) demonstrates how policies and practices within the field of development are often portrayed as apolitical and culturally 'neutral' yet are part of a neoliberal and Western knowledge construction. Further, such 'neutral guise' enables the 'universalising' of policies which in turn work to legitimize the act of imposing them on others (Kapoor, 2008 p. 37). From an EUE perspective, it is argued that anthropocentric worldviews, or in this case discourses, divides natural capital from human capital, which works to portray natural resources as "free gift to capital" (Moore, 2011). This core issue of understanding value as separated from 'non-human' nature, could thus potentially also be positioned as part of the hegemonic Western knowledge production that post-colonial scholars

scrutinize. This will be further elaborated in the section that follows, where some core themes of how this could be examined in the case of EU trade discourse are laid out.

2.3 Core themes

This section briefly turns to examine how EU trade policies are portrayed in contemporary research. This is followed by three core themes explaining how EU trade policies will be analysed within the frame offered by postcolonial and EUE research to examine the 'trade for development' discourse.

EU-trade policies are often understood as a type of 'harnessed globalization', promoting a toned-down form of neoliberalism. On the one end, free trade is portrayed as "win-win" policies that work to strengthen both the EU's own economy, as well as the economy of developing countries they trade with. Simultaneously, the EU advocates for a 'rights-based' and 'moral' approach to development. The idea being that free trade is not enough by itself to ensure development, but need to be coupled with values such as good governance, human rights, and labour standards in developing countries (Holden, 2019, p. 959,963). As such, the EU has successfully framed their trade policies, 'at the service of development'.

Bailey and Bossuyt (2013) examines the way that the EU position the discourse of trade *for* development, through processes of othering. They find three discourses whereby the European Union highlights the positive benefits that can be reaped of the 'other' by trading with the union. These are "increased prospects for international development; greater opportunities to achieve more equitable socioeconomic outcomes; and advantages to be accrued by countries and regions that replicate the European Union model of governance" (Bailey & Bossuyt, 2013, p. 568). However, processes of 'negative othering' are also found, where "third regions or countries are denigrated for routinely acting unfairly by failing to comply with EU-led market expansion" (Ibid).

There is thus a 'dual' approach to trade, the first being clearly neoliberal in the assumption that free trade is essentially good for development, the second being that this trade must be promoted along with EU's 'norms and values' to 'secure' development. It is of interest for this thesis to understand and analyse this 'dual' approach to trade. This includes investigating how these notions interact with each other, what 'knowledge' they are built upon, and what the implications are on a broader societal level. Drawing on previous research,

the following three themes are the ones deemed of main interest and provides focal points for conducting the subsequent analysis.

2.3.1 Normative Power Europe

Amongst the fields that analyse the EU values and their global effects, the 'Normative Power' (NP) perspective as first presented by Manners (2002) is one of the most prominent. NP theorists argue that since the EU has come to "the fore with an emphasis on the principles of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law" the analysis of their undertakings must be principle-related (Whitman, 2011, p. 2). This is a portrayal of EU where they are not "simply promoting its own norms" but instead place *universal* norms at the core (Manners, 2002, pp. 240–241). NP theorists argue that the EU builds its 'legitimacy' upon these norms of peace, human rights, liberty, democracy and rule of law, and are as such enabled to shape conceptions of the 'normal' (Whitman, 2011, pp. 3–4).

The portrayal of EU as a normative force for good, opens up for at least two types of critique from a postcolonial perspective. First, there is an evident issue of lacking reflexivity in the statements of EU as a normative power supporting *universal* norms. As Hyde-Price (2008) notes, on the one hand, the EU is a pursuit of the shared interests within the union, on the other hand, it sees itself as an ethical power and is regarded as a "force for good" in the world. This duality can never be achieved unless the EU's values and interest are also 'cosmopolitan or universal values and interests that transcend those of individual political communities". He goes on to note that "It is ironic that many Europeans have seen through the Bush administration's claims that what is good for America is also good for the world, but fail to question EU claims that what is good for 'Europe' is good for the world. (Hyde-Price, 2008, p. 32).

Secondly, the portrayal of the EU as a normative power that can shape the values of other, puts the EU in an unquestioned position of a hegemonic power. Yet, as Diez (2004, p. 616) points out, they do not question to what extent the EU relationally has such powers, but rather how and to what extent it *acts* as a normative power. Thus, the idea of normative power Europe, rather uncritically reinforces the discourses that the politicians of EU has established as promoters of 'progressive values'. As such, NP studies do not consider what the effect is of *constructing* the EU as a normative. As Diez concludes "the projection of European norms and values (in both policy and analysis) needs to be subjected to continuous deconstruction through the exposition of contradictions within this discourse, and between

this discourse and other practices." (Diez, 2005, p. 636). This can be done through a postcolonial analysis that asks what types of 'silencing' and 'othering' that are part of constructing the 'normative power Europe' and what the implications of those processes are.

2.3.2 Development in a culture of growth

The second focal point is one related to understanding how the EU uses this normative power and draw on Kapoor´s (2008) outline of common postcolonial traits in development policies. Kapoor argues that development policies framed with the goal of enabling economic growth, are oftentimes positioned as culturally neutral, being that they are imposed 'just for the sake of growth'. Their effects are however cultural. By taking an economic perspective and putting the idea of 'rational choice' as central, 'non-market', 'non-selfish' undertakings of the 'other' are intrinsically positioned as irrational, and thus obscures or erases other types of cultures (Kapoor, 2008, p. 25). For the case of EU, this is perhaps the most evident in their policies conditionalized upon certain adjustments of pro-market restructuring and 'good governance'. These types of conditionalities are from Kapoor's perspective closely related to colonialism, as they impose a form of *indirect control* enabling global powers to monitor and shape economic policies 'from a distance' so to speak. (Kapoor, 2008, pp. 25–26).

Another common 'trait' in development policies that Kapoor identifies relates to 'modernization ideals'. This means that 'modern' (western) values are portrayed as important for enabling 'development'. Here, the emphasis is often on entrepreneurship, scientific beliefs, investments, and other neoliberal values. This intrinsically positions non-western societies as at least partly responsible for their 'underdevelopment', as 'traditional' practices such as "superstition, ethnicity and religion" are positioned as hindering development (Kapoor, 2008, pp. 19-20). Of interest for the analysis, is thus to examine to what extent the EU are using these 'techniques' of portraying policies as either 'neutral' or 'universally good', as well as thinking about what 'silencing' this involves.

2.3.3 The concept of nature

Due to the nature of EUE, and the criticism that follows of how value is conceptualized, special attention will be devoted to the concept of sustainability in this third theme. Environmentally sustainable trade, is one of the norms that the EU encourage through their trade policies (European commission, 2015). Yet from an EUE perspective, trade between unequal powers, has largely fuelled the environmental problems. Hornborg (2011, p. 120) points out how the dichotomy of culture and nature is a tradition of 'European thought' where

non-human nature is either ignored or portrayed as distinctly separate from ‘human nature’, obscuring the fact that all is part of the same system. The environmental issues are thus at core socially constructed (through notions of trade and value) but largely de-politicised in a manner that enable global powers to overlook the inequalities that hinder sustainability (Oulu, 2016, p. 83). This de-politicization could be expected to manifest itself discursively in a similar way as policies discussed above, portrayed as ‘culturally neutral’ but based on an economic and anthropocentric culture that excludes nature.

For example, the concept of sustainability is often framed as a ‘war on nature’ or war against climate change, followed by an expectation that this ‘war’ will be won through ‘technical solutions’ (Robbins, 2012, p. 71). As Hornborg however points out, technology in this case remains oblivious to the “extent to which a local increase in technological capacity is a matter of shifting resources from one social category to another within global society”(2011, p.9). As such, the positioning of technology as a solution is not only impossible according to EUE theory (Oulu, 2016 p, 83), but also work to obscure the fact that access to technology is highly unequal. Furthermore, political ecologists has pointed towards how the binary framings of ‘modern’ vs ‘Primitive’ play a role in portraying ecological effects as issues of and for developing countries (Robbins, 2012, p. 68) This obscures the fact that it is a global issue, largely ‘created’ by Western nations resource extractions. As such, the analysis should also consider to what extent and how the EU are using this type of ‘othering’ and nature-human binarity in their discussions on sustainability.

3. Methodology

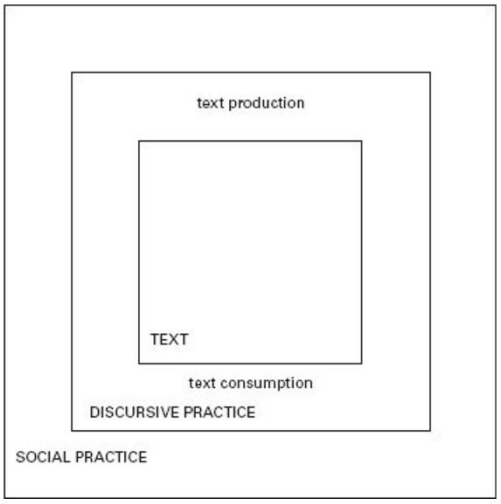
3.1 Research Design

This research is aimed at studying the social knowledge construction inherent in the EU-trade discourse. Since the social context of a phenomenon is the interest of the thesis, a qualitative design was deemed most appropriate (Bryman, 2012, p. 20). Since the research question aims to understand the specific types of ‘knowledges’ that the EU convey through their policies on ‘trade for development’, a discourse analysis will be conducted. Classic discourse analysis is often based on an interpretivist epistemology, which focus on the subjectivity of language (Bryman, 2012, p. 30). The research question for this thesis does however imply that the knowledges found in the EU discourse can be understood as underscoring a broader structure that obscures time-space appropriation. As such, it takes a critical-realist perspective, where

discourses can be understood as shaping the social world (ibid, p.29). This does not mean that the researcher's understanding of the world directly reflects the reality as such, but rather one way of 'knowing' this reality (Ibid, p.39). The research will be conducted using the analytical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine if and how the European Commission's policies on 'trade for sustainable development' implicitly enable the obscuration of time-space appropriation.

3.2 Critical Discourse analysis

The main foundation of CDA is the focus of language as a social phenomenon. As such, texts are important units to analyse as they create and reinforce specific values and meanings in systematic ways (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 6). CDA does however understand individual agency and discourse-creation as constrained by material reality and structures, and therefore examine the two in an intertwined manner (Bryman, 2012, p. 536). As such, CDA understands discourses as both shaped and constrained by the social setting and how the world is understood. Particular 'social structures' can become hegemonic and "become part of legitimizing common sense which sustains relations of domination" (Fairclough, 2001, p. 5). Differently put, discourses can function 'ideologically' by reinforcing specific 'realities' and thus sustain and reproduce power relations (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 57). Yet, hegemonic structures are not rigid systems. They can be 'recontextualized' through confronting practices that ultimately can shift the social structuring. This is where CDA

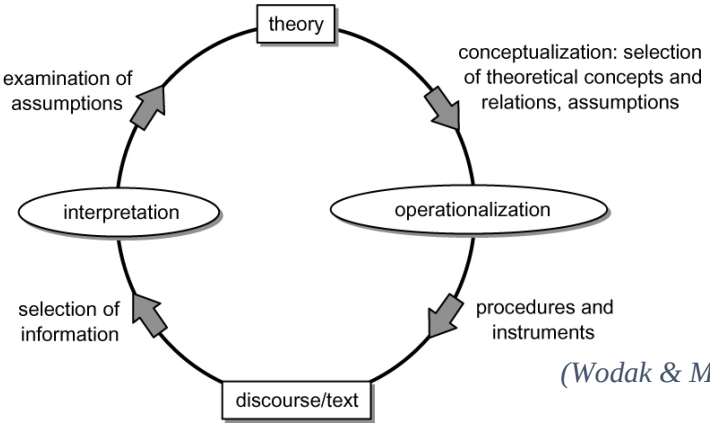


(Fairclough, 2003)

stands out by taking an explicitly political stance to question and deconstruct social structures as an action for change (Fairclough, 2001, pp. 3–5).

Figure 1. Three dimensional CDA model

To fully capture the way that discourses construct and reconstruct social identities, relations and ultimately 'systems of knowledge, Fairclough presents a three-dimensional analysis (see figure 1). The first *textual analysis* draw attention to the linguistic use, grammar, glossary and other more formal textual dimensions. The second dimension of *discursive practice* relates to how the text is produced and consumed. This means focusing on how authors draw on existing discourses to create the text, and how receivers interpret the text based on already available discourses. These two processes are highly interrelated yet should be understood as two different parts of the analysis, as it highlights the idea that discourses can never be understood without a social setting. The discursive analysis thus function as a 'mediator' between the text and the social practice. This third dimension of *social practice*, is the analysis of if and how the discursive practice reproduces or restructure the 'existing order' of discourse, and what implications this have more broadly in society (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 60–62). For social research, this last stage also means drawing on existing knowledge and theories that are not discursive. In this case, meaning practices of time-space appropriation. The relationship between theory, texts, and discourses should be understood neither as deductive nor inductive. Rather, CDA understands research as a circular and iterative process, as demonstrated in figure 2 (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 18).



(Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p.18)

Figure 2. Iterative research process

3.3 Sampling and Material

The sampling process has been made based on publications from the European Commission. Although publications from other EU institutions could be of interest to examine EU

discourses, the Commission's publications where deemed the most appropriate for the analysis of trade discourses, being that they are the institution that represents the EU internationally and negotiate agreements, as well as work with managing EU policies (Eurpean Union, 2020). On the Commissions website (European commission, 2020a) several papers, policies and assessments relating to how trade enable sustainable development can be found. As is commonly how CDA practitioners chose their material, a selection of 'typical texts' where made (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 17).

For this case, that meant the 'most exposed' documents and papers on the website described by the commission as relating to 'development', 'trade' as well as 'sustainability'. Table 1 gives an overview of all selected material. An entire section on the commission's website is devoted to the relationship between trade and sustainable development. On this page, three clear 'clusters' of trade-development policies are outlined (see appendix I). These are the Generalised Scheme of preferences (GSP), the European Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the 'Aid for trade' scheme. As such, the sampling was also made purposely to cover vital parts of all three 'pillars' which together with more generalised trade policy documents (table1, #1,#2) can be understood to compromise the EU's 'trade for development' approach. Besides this, two additional documents clearly displayed on the webpage (see appendix II) where included. The document *Tailoring Trade*, (#3) is described as explaining the Unions trade and development policies, and the other document (#9) is a factsheet on how the EU support least developed countries (#9). For the third analytical dimension, the theories and research presented throughout the thesis will be used to understand the social practices. This material was retrieved using Lund University's library.

Table 1. Overview of sampled material

#	Name of documents (as used in text)	Type	Reference
1	Trade for all	Policy document	EC (2015)
2	A progressive trade policy to Harness globalization	Report on 'trade for all' implementation	EC (2017a)
3	Tailoring trade	Communication on trade policies	EC (2012)
4	Report on generalised scheme of preferences	Report on GSP scheme 2018-2019	EC (2020b)
5	Economic Partnership Agreements	EPA factsheet	EC (2006)
6	Putting partnership into practice	EPA brochure	EC (2017b)

7	Supporting businesses and communities in ACP countries	Factsheet on benefits of EPAs for ACP (Africa, Caribbean, and the Pacific)	EC (2013)
8	Aid for Trade	Progress report on implementation of Aid for trade	EC (2019)
9	10 ways the EU support the world's least Developed countries	Factsheet	EC (2016)

3.4 Data Analysis

This section sets out to describe how the process of analysing the data proceeded. Since the CDA method incorporates theory into discourses, the first analytical process was of understanding *how* processes of time-space appropriation could possibly be discovered discursively. After mapping out some themes of interest, (see 2.3 Core themes) the initial *textual* coding of the document was conducted. This meant looking for the words EU used to describe themselves and others, what type of 'value-laden' words where frequently mentioned as well as looking for the contexts in which concepts such as development, sustainability and trade were used.

This process was largely interwoven with considering what political implications where involved with phrasing things in distinctive manners. From here the practice of *discursive* analysis took place by thinking about what is assumed about the readers ability to understand the text based on 'available discourses'. This process largely focused on what was *not* stated, and how that could affect the interpretation of the text. To exemplify, the process of framing a value as inherently good without explaining why this is the case, assumes that the receiver interprets the text from the same 'available discourse'.

For the third dimension of *social* implications, theory and previous research was reviewed to try to make sense of how it could, or could not, 'fit' within the discourses found in the texts. This process was also largely about understanding potential linkages or discursive instabilities between the discourses within the text. Having said all this, the process was less of a linear process then the one described above, for example, after identifying clusters of themes and discourses, I went back to recode the documents based on this understanding.

3.5 Ethical considerations

The CDA theory, as it takes a critical and political approach, cannot be understood as 'objective' in the manner which positivist reasoning would argue necessary for validity. On

the contrary, the premises for validity is in this context contingent on the notion that social sciences are never objective and that following such ideals, one is positioned within the same hegemonic structures that produces and reproduces our social understanding of the world. By taking a critical approach, in this case by reading 'against the text', an alternative understanding could ultimately be achieved to contrast this. Wodak &Meyer (2001) suggests instead a form of validity based on 'internal' triangulation, where permanent switching between the different levels of analysis and theory could minimize the risk of bias, as well as the use of several different types of theory (2001, p. 13). Beyond this, they suggest that 'completeness', meaning that new data does not reveal new findings, could be used as evaluating validity.

Thus, being upfront about the political nature of this thesis is of major importance. In relation to both postcolonial theory as well as CDA there is another important ethical consideration, being the difficulty of actually reading 'against the text'. As Spivak argues "no contemporary metropolitan investigator" is *not* influenced by the western knowledge construction (Spivak, 2010, p. 48). This means, that the discursive knowledges that I have when analysing the text, are largely created through the hegemonic social orders of how the world is understood. This has been countered to the best of my extent by attempting to read 'against' the text in close relation to postcolonial theory, as well as attempting to 'unlearn' certain types of pre-understandings about the world. Nevertheless, this issue of 'biasedness' is one that clearly limits the outcome.

3.6 Limitations

The major limitation of this research is the scope. Using rather abstract and 'grand' theories, whilst researching a broad area, it became evident that not all the relevant aspects could be included. This research could have benefitted from a smaller scope to study specific discourses more in depth, yet attempting to interpret the 'bigger picture' by drawing on EUE seemed important. As such, this research could only be understood as covering a very limited part of a grander narrative.

A further limitation of this thesis is the lacking focus of the actual 'consumption' of texts. It was beyond the scope to investigate technically to what extent EU-documents where distributed and 'who' reads them, but such input could have increased the understanding of the 'reach' of discourse so to speak. Regarding the 'completeness' of the chosen material, the same themes kept reappearing when looking in new texts from the

commission and could to that extent be considered ‘complete’. Yet, research could have benefited from including documents from other parts of EU, which was beyond the scope of this research.

4. Analysis

Findings from the analysis of the Commissions publications on ‘trade for sustainable development’ are presented in this section. Although the analysis proceeded using the three-dimensional analytical model provided by Fairclough, for the sake of coherence, the presentation is summarised in core themes. These themes link the textual to the discursive practise and to some extent also connects to the social practices. The broader relation to social practice and EUE theory is summarised and accentuated in the conclusion.

4.1 The strong and benevolent EU

In all the analysed material, the notion of the EU as a powerful actor on the global market, that can strongly influence others is evident. As demonstrated in the following passage, the EU’s positioning of themselves as strong is related to the argument that they must take larger ‘responsibility’ for developmental goals.

> The issue of development, however, and the specific role of trade for development, remains pressing. The EU has a particular responsibility as the world's largest trading power, the biggest trading partner of many LDCs and other low-income or lower middle-income countries, and the world's largest provider of development assistance. (2012, p. 2).

In all of the policy papers, this emphasis on the EU’s ‘strong position’ was presented early in the paper, and was linked to their potential to ‘shape globalization’ (2017a, p. 2). EU should furthermore “use this strength to benefit both its own citizens and those in other parts of the world” (2015, p. 7). The Commission positions the EU as ‘strong’, as having the ‘most ambitious’ trade policies, and as being ‘best placed’ to lead, throughout the analysed texts (for ex.2017a, p. 8). As such, the EU is positioned as an actor that has the power and strength needed, and the will to help. Furthermore, they point to how the EU *has* helped several developing countries through EU’s trade agreements (2017a, p. 7) and how their trade rules in general has “helped to promote development” (2012, p. 6, 2020b, p. 12).

The ‘least developed countries’(LDCs) are continually referred to using words such as ‘poorest’ ‘smallest’ ‘vulnerable’ ‘most off-track’ ‘marginalised’ and ‘weakest’. Thus, the ‘self’ of EU is strong and helpful, and the ‘others’ (the developing countries) are portrayed as in need of help. The first page in the factsheet document *10 ways the EU support the world’s least Developed countries*, (2016) pinpoints this type of connection of the strong, the weak, and the EU as a source for help (Appendix 3). It could be argued that this binarity of strong/weak and the emphasis on the EU as a force for good, creates a picture not too remote from the colonial binarity of the ‘saviours’ and the ‘helpless object’ in need of ‘rescue’.

There is one other type of recurrent ‘othering’ that could be understood as fuelling this binarity of saviours/the rescued. The EU-rhetoric greatly differs between countries labelled LDC’s, which are the subjects of their ‘aid for trade’ policies, and those countries understood as ‘emerging economies’. The emerging economies being most notably; China, Brazil, India, and other countries that have grown economically over the last decades, and according to the commission, have “managed to reap the benefits of open and increasingly integrated world markets” (2012, p. 2). The emerging economies are portrayed as powerful actors that the commission argue need to “match our initiatives to open markets to countries most in need” (Ibid) as well as “show more leadership and assume more responsibility” (2012, p. 18). They furthermore imply that the emerging countries ‘contribute’ less to the trade-system than they ‘derive’ from it (2012, 2015, p. 28) which creates an ‘imbalance in the trading system’ that “is increasingly felt in poorer countries” (2012, p. 18). This notion that the emerging economies need to ‘contribute more to the system’(2017a, p. 13) is one that is repeated in most of the analysed documents.

Although this discourse of ‘others’ as unhelpful is most prominent when discussing the emerging economies, it is evident also in the EU’s way of pivoting their assistance in trade against that of other ‘developed’ countries. For example, by stating that “We offer LDCs more than other developing countries” (2016, p. 4) and that their policies are more ‘flexible’ towards LDCs than the policies of other ‘developed’ countries (2006, p. 1, 2012, p. 7). By positioning the EU as ‘strong and helpful’, the LDCs as ‘weak and in need of help’ and third parties as ‘strong but irresponsible’, it could be argued the EU creates the notion that they are the ‘only’ source for the developing countries ‘much needed’ help. This ties in well with the notion of normative EU, (as discussed in section 2.3.1), and could be understood as a way to legitimize ‘interference’ in the LDCs.

4.2 The universality claim

After positioning the EU as a source for help, the question that follows is thus, what help does the union offer? The EU strongly argue that free trade is important and necessary for development. They are however clear with noting that "trade is not an end in itself. It is a tool to benefit people" (2015, p. 35). As such, trade must be altered or handled in a manner that enables such beneficial outcomes. This is evident already in the titles of the documents, *Tailoring trade and investment policy for those countries most in need* (2012), *Delivering a Progressive Trade Policy to Harness Globalisation* (2017a), and *Trade for all: towards a more responsible trade and investment policy* (2015). The question that follow is thus; how does the EU tailor trade?

In all the analysed documents, there are two overarching goals proposed by the commission. One being to secure the 'efficiency' of trade, which largely means to 'tackle barriers' of free trade. The second being to "take responsibility for supporting and promoting EU values and standards" (2015). It is, the explicit aim of the union to align the trade agenda with that of development, as stated in the foreword of *Trade for all*, "trade policy will become more responsible, meaning it will be more effective, more transparent and will not only project our interests, but also our values" (2015, p. i).

What are the EU values then? Throughout the texts, human rights, environmental protection, good governance, consumer protection, responsible trade, fair trade, social justice, and 'other fundamental rights' (2020b, p. 2) are referred to as such. This last all-encompassing grouping of other *fundamental* rights pinpoints the notion that these values are somehow unquestionable and universal. This is evident throughout all the analysed documents and emphasised in the following quote.

> The EU unilaterally supports developing countries to achieve sustainable development through trade. Trade preferences promote universal values of human rights, core labour standards, environmental protection and good governance (European commission, 2020b, p. 1)

Such claims that the unions values are 'holistic' 'fundamental' or 'universal', could be understood as a way to legitimises their pursual of them, and the project to enforce them on other countries, as discussed earlier in text (Kapoor, 2008 p.37). This legitimacy is further strengthened by arguing that the EU is "guided in all its external action by the core values underlying its own existence, including the respect and promotion of human rights" (2012, p.

3). This claim, both reinforces this universalist stance, but is also ahistorical and idealistic. Ahistorical because the nations of the union have a long history of colonialization and resource extraction that are of great importance for their position as a global power, and idealistic as it implies that the EU is already living up to these standards. As such, it could be understood as a process of strengthening the 'self' and the normative power of the EU. In summary, the notion that EU values are 'universal' values is a circular argument, because they themselves are the ones ascribing the values this status. This could be understood as a way to legitimize their interference in developing countries. Furthermore, positioning the EU's values as universal efficiently 'silences' other non-western values, and can thus be understood as a neo-colonial pursuit. Although one could argue that there is nothing fundamentally wrong with pursuing trade that is considered 'ethical' by one part, prescribing your own values *universal status* is a typical colonial technique of silencing the other (Kapoor, 2008, p. 36) In doing so, the colonisers legitimize the intrusion and attempts to alter the values of the colonised.

These claims might be disregarded as unnecessary picking on EU's attempts to improve human rights. Yet the structures at play in 'normative power EU' seem to be deeply situated and move far beyond positioning human rights as important. The 'universal value' of 'good governance' for example, seem to imply everything from 'capacity to implement reforms', property rights, rules on market access, support development of private sector and more generally; "institutional and technical support to facilitate implementation of trade agreements and to adapt to and comply with rules and standards" (2019, pp. 20-1,65). As previously discussed and demonstrated by Kapoor (2008), these ideals are not neutral in the way that the EU claim, but rather part of a 'culture of growth'. As such, classical neoliberal notions are deeply intertwined also in the EU's supposedly universal 'normative' discourse. Presenting these goals as universal eradicates other knowledges and ideals which further strengthens the EU's position as 'universally good'.

4.3 Narrative of win-win trade and stages of development

This part of the analysis turns to examine the relationship between 'value-based trade' as deconstructed and analysed above, and the simultaneous pursuit of more classic trade policies of increasing efficiency and 'tackling barriers' in trade. Being that assistance is geared towards enabling trade, the act of 'helping' the developing countries is simultaneously part of

a win-win narrative, where both parties are portrayed as gaining by deepening the trade relations (2006, p. 2, 2012, p. 9, 2017b, p. 3).

The analysis of the documents shows how the notion that developing countries will benefit from trade is emphasised both through 'negative' and 'positive' types of othering. On the positive side, the commission consistently argue that the EU-provided 'assistance' can enable developing countries to 'reap' the benefits of free trade (for ex. 2017a, p. 3) It is repeatedly emphasised that access to EU markets both will, and has, helped developing countries "in their efforts on economic growth, poverty reduction, good governance and sustainable development" (2020b, p. 13, see also 2013, p. 1). It is also evident in the discussion of WTO where it is repeatedly argued that they should have a "central role in deepening and enforcing the rules of global trade" and that this is in the interest of all members but "in particular, the smallest and poorest" (2015, p. 28).

In terms of negative types of 'othering', the specific detrimental effects on developing countries if free trade is not pursued is stressed. Continuing the WTO discussion the Commission argue that "The biggest losers of a failure to move forward at the WTO would be the most vulnerable developing countries" (2015, p. 27). Here, obstacles in the WTO negotiations are furthermore blamed on "the will of the participants to find a compromise", pointing again to the 'lacking contribution' of the emerging economies (2015, p. 28). Whilst the EU aim to do "everything possible to restore the centrality of the WTO" (ibid p.27). This is a reoccurring theme as mentioned previously of 'blaming' the emerging economies, positioning the EU as 'force for good', and the LCDs as the ones most in need of help. Furthermore, barriers for trade are recurrently referred to as 'unnecessary' or 'disguised protectionism'(2015, p. 13) and are again portrayed as especially damaging to the LDCs (2017a, p. 2)

There is another discourse at play in framing development in this dual way where free trade is important, but so are 'the right' values. As noted, countries that have succeed in 'developing' are often portrayed as having 'reaped' the benefits of trade (European commission, 2012, p. 3). For those countries that have not succeeded in doing so, the commission turn to domestic issues for explanation. These explanations range from lacking 'quality of infrastructure', lacking dedication of 'civil society engagement', to poor 'investment climate' (2019, p. 33,39). It is evident in the following segment.

> […] any sustained trade- and investment-led growth starts with stable political institutions and practices, an independent judiciary, protection of

> human rights, transparency of public finances, rules and institutions and a strong stance against fraud and corruption. Policies, regulations and institutions supporting the development of the private sector, decent jobs and export competitiveness are also crucial […] Ownership is a critical condition for success. Solutions cannot be imposed from outside. Ultimately, developing countries must make their own choices. (European commission, 2012, p. 16)

As such, the dual nature of EU trade policies opens up for the portrayal of free trade as a 'win-win' narrative, yet failure of free trade to deliver 'progress' in developing countries can be blamed on domestic issues. From a critical point of view, portraying free-trade as the main driver for development, but blaming the shortcomings of free-trade on various types of domestic issues, can be understood as obscuring the fact that trade is a mechanism of unequal distribution. Instead, inequalities are depicted to a large extent as 'stages' of development, where new reforms are recurrently necessary to take the next 'step' on the development ladder.

4.4 What 'sustainability' and for whom?

In this last part of the textual analysis, we turn to examine the specific role of *Sustainability* in the trade for development nexus. Along classic neoliberal reasoning, trade is understood as an important factor to enable sustainability. The EU "aim at fostering the smooth and gradual integration of the ACP partners into the world economy – and ultimately contribute, through trade and investment, to sustainable development and poverty reduction." (2006, p. 1).
Many of the previously mentioned themes are evident in the Unions framing of environmental issues. First, 'sustainability' is considered one of the cornerstones of EU's 'universal' values., and the EU position themselves as in "the forefront" of having high environmental standards and supporting sustainability (2020b, p. 13). They further claim that the "EU has been leading in integrating sustainable development objectives into trade policy"(2015, p. 22). It is further argued that environmental protection, is a core interest of European citizens (2017a, p. 8) and that "Europeans are concerned about social and environmental conditions in production sites around the world" (2015, p. 18). As such, Europeans should be assured that the products they buy are fair and ethical (2017a, p. 8).

On the other hand LDCs are 'impeded' by "weak social and environmental policy frameworks" and "unsustainable exploitation of natural resources" (2012, p. 5). LDCs

are facing issues with "adapting their economic systems to changing global climate conditions and threats to their natural resource base" (Ibid p.18). Furthermore, 'emerging economies' are 'multiplying environmental challenges' as "megatrends, such as urbanisation, economic and trade integration and changing consumer patterns are transforming societies and economies" (2019, p. 59). As such the type of 'othering' portrayed in the first section of the analysis is evident also here. The EU are invested in solving the 'issue', the LDCs need help with the issue, and third parties (emerging economies) are portrayed as part of the issue.

Turning briefly to the actual policies, the EU aim to 'foster' sustainable growth in developing countries (2012, p. 14). Some examples are to "inform farmers about innovative ecological agricultural practices, environmental issues and effective use of resources"(2019, p. 59). And to train producers and technicians on environmental management, sustainable production and quality management (Ibid p.57). It could be argued that the reoccurring usage of words such as 'informing', 'training', and 'fostering' sustainability in developing countries, implies that the EU has the type of understanding needed. This reinforces the picture that the "issue" of sustainability is an issue of and for developing countries. The most prominent and repeated efforts to secure sustainability are however more direct trade-policies. This includes 'safeguarding' European environmental standards by having highly protective rules for imports and exports (2015, p. 20) and secondly, to facilitate trade of 'green technologies' by removing barriers (Ibid p.23). Again, these polices are framed as part of the 'universal values' package and positioned as neutral. However, their nature is political, as it assumes that ecological sustainability is enabled in and *through* the current trade system.

This show, not only the reoccurring theme of the EU as strong and helpful, the LDCs as in need for help, and the portrayal of third parties as 'part of the problem' or 'unwilling to help' but also largely puts the environmental responsibility, and the need to change on developing countries. By framing the environmental issues along these lines, the EU obscures the fact that their consumption plays a large part in creating them, albeit that many of the detrimental effects are most notable in 'developing' countries. This framing is also ahistorical as it implies that if the EU is *now* implementing high 'environmental standards', it erases the fact that the growth in the developed world has been fuelled by highly 'unsustainable' development, largely at the costs of the developing countries. Furthermore, the EU's solutions to the environmental issues remain optimistically modernization-oriented and techno-fetichised by implying that 'green technology' is going to enable sustainability.

5. Conclusion

The analysis has outlined how the EU's portrayal of themselves is largely one where they are both strong and good, giving them potential to 'help' developing countries. In creating their 'self' as such, the union largely creates the 'other' of developing countries as weak and helpless, as well as third parties as 'less eager to help'. This position of 'the strong and benevolent EU' is one that could be understood as legitimizing and strengthening their role as global 'normative' actors. It is linked to the 'universality claim' in the manner that, without this position of power, the EU could not have the hegemonic power to position their ideals as 'neutral'. Positioning EU ideals as neutral in turn, supports the EU as a 'normative' power, creating a reinforcing cycle. From this position, the EU legitimizes their efforts to impose these norms on others. As such, it could be argued that the strong EU is needed for the 'universality' of their norms, and in turn that their power to implement trade policies for 'sustainable development' is contingent on the strong and normative EU.

As already emphasised, the Union *is* from an EUE perspective enhancing their time-space appropriation by expanding and deepening their trade relations. The analysis has illuminated how the EU deepen their trade relations, not only by classic lowering of tariffs, but also by pushing 'normatively' for structural domestic alterations in developing countries. The analysis furthermore suggests that time-space appropriation in the analysed documents are discursively reaffirmed through a process of othering, where policies embedded in a 'culture of growth' are largely positioned as the 'neutral' (and only) road to development. The anthropocentric and neoliberal ideas that fuel the continuation of time-space appropriation are further strengthened by the EU's view of sustainability. Portraying the developing countries as those who need to 'go green' obscures the fact that the countries within the European Union are a part of this environmental degradation. Instead of discussing their own responsibilities, they offer their 'help' to enable 'sustainable production' in developing countries. This is oftentimes through a 'package' of policies and norms that comes with conditionalities to structurally alter the domestic landscapes to enhance trade. As such, the help to 'go green' is intertwined with deepening of trade.

This analysis further suggests that the 'dual' framing of trade could function to obscure inequalities. Since free trade itself has in many places of the world not enabled development, the union often reside to domestic failures to explain the cases of 'less development' and push for discussed domestic alterations. This framing does not only

‘legitimize’ further intrusion and ‘altering’ of developing countries politically and culturally, but also work to portray inequalities as a ‘ladder of development’. From a critical EUE perspective then, the unions undertakings could be considered not a process of ‘tilting trade’ or ‘harness globalization’, but rather a way to obscure that free trade under current power relations is unequal, ultimately reinforcing time-space appropriation. In this process, other perspectives are oftentimes either silenced, or penalised as in the case of the emerging economies. As such, it could be argued that the Western knowledge construction that obscures time-space appropriation is reinforced in the EU ‘trade for development’ discourse through processes of silencing and ‘othering’ alternative perspectives.

Having said all this, this analysis is limited to the discourses portrayed in the selected documents, and regarding the ‘reach’ of the discourses, and regarding the actual effect it has on ‘securing’ the EU’s time-space appropriation, it says little. However, considering the hegemonic historical, political, and economical power of Europe, it seem likely that these discourses have actual material effects. By critically deconstructing the assumptions and ideologies intrinsic in EU policies, the hegemonic discourses and policies portrayed as ‘neutral’ has been to some extent recontextualized.

5.1 Suggestion for further research and concluding notes

This thesis has pointed towards the fact that EUE theory could be aligned with postcolonial research in a fruitful way, to understand how western power constructions play a role in obscuring time-space appropriation. This thesis does however draw on very ‘broad’ and overarching structures and could only briefly deconstruct the discourses at play. As such, more research beyond the scale of a thesis is needed to establish these links. Further research could also benefit by a smaller scope, focusing more in depth on ecological issues, as well as on important identity and gender-related issues which due to the scope where unfortunately largely overlooked in this thesis. Such focus could possibly more clearly draw the links on how time-space appropriation manifests itself in relation to issues of identity and culture. Further studies would also benefit from examining ‘alternative’ knowledges. A strengthened connection with the field of political ecology could possibly be one fruitful way to do so.

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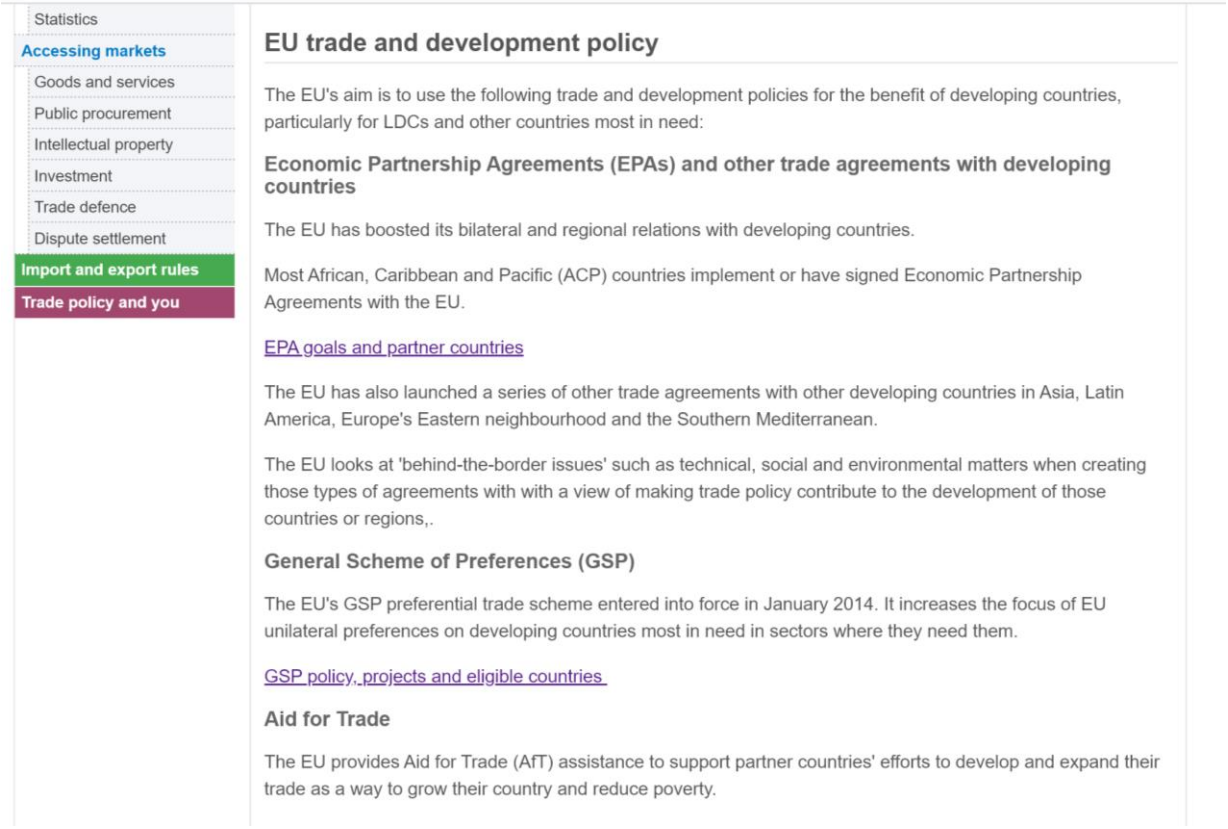
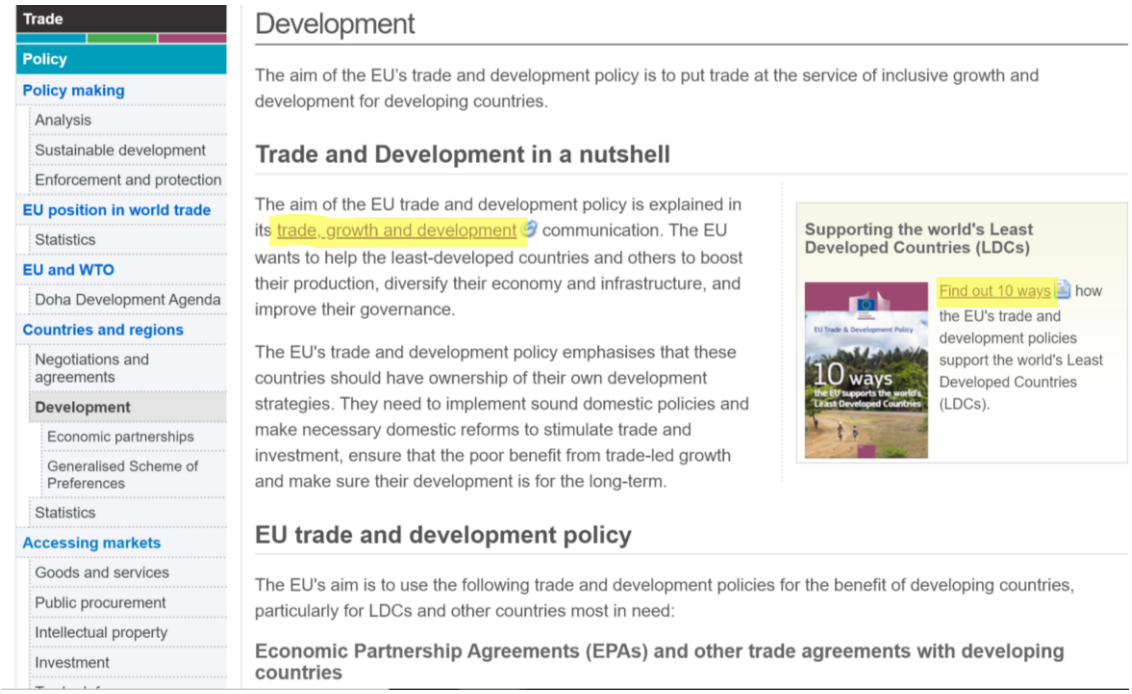
7. Appendices

Appendix I



https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/

Appendix II



https://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/development/

Appendix III

(European Commission, 2016, p.1)