



Somalia the Orient?

A Discourse Analysis of European Construction of Somali
Identity

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Abstract

This thesis focus on European construction of Somali identity. Using a discourse analysis in combination with Edward Said's concept of Orientalism, this study examines the three main European Council Documents that set the foundation for the EU's military and political intervention in the Horn of Africa in general, and Somalia specifically. The analysis investigates how Somalia is being imagined within these documents and how this European identity construction can be understood as an Orientalist discourse. The outcome of the analysis show that the construction of Somalia within this limited scope, the European discourse can indeed be read as an Orientalist discourse. In the analyzed documents Somalia is generally constructed as a dangerous, possibly threatening physical entity, which is juxtaposed to the EU which is identified as a realm of peace and compliance to universal norms and values. Hence, this discourse is implying a certain hierarchy in which Europe has a more privileged position than Somalia. Furthermore, the analysis concludes that the European response can be also read as based on a liberal peace discourse which carries the risk to perpetuate Orientalist stereotyping and the construction of Orientalist identities.

Key words: Orientalism, Discourse Analysis, Identity, European Union, Somalia

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1 Introduction

1.1 Statement of Research Problem

Violent conflicts and disputes can be found everywhere in the world. In recent decades wars have transformed into so-called “New Wars”, defined as internal conflicts within a country, rather than countries themselves fighting over territories (Kaldor, 2012). With these transformations, concepts and ideals of an international responsibility to intervene in situations of conflict, or to protect Human Rights and promote democracy, have been on the rise in the field of international politics after the Cold War (Karlsrud, 2019). However, the so called ‘liberal peace’ has come under criticism by scholars and civil society (see: Jabri, 2016; Lidén, 2011; Darby, 2009). Liberal peacebuilding is based on the assumption that the root causes for crises and conflicts are the absence of liberal state or governance structures and lack of compliance to said international norms and values. Therefore, as an approach to conflict resolution, liberal peace promotes Western values such as democracy, human rights and International (Humanitarian) law (Navari, 2013, pp. 41-42). Furthermore, the liberal discourse sets liberal values as norms or role models that every country should aim to achieve. However, this implies a certain hierarchy in which states that have adopted said norms are assigned a privileged position as more ‘developed’ or ‘progressive’ implying that the states that have not adopted these norms are considered ‘underdeveloped’ or ‘backwards’ (Lidén, 2011, pp. 58,59).

Positioning these states as backwards, or underdeveloped, can then be used to legitimize intervention in the name of assisting or helping countries to develop, or to fulfil a moral obligation to free a population from oppression and suffering. The U.S. invasion of Iraq is a good example of such a line of argument (Navari, 2013, p. 41).

The lens through which this study will approach abovementioned research problem is through Edward Said's conception of "Orientalism", in which such a separation and juxtaposition of us/them, civilized/uncivilized/ can also be found. Edward Said's book, *Orientalism* (2003) analyses post-enlightenment literature to investigate how Europe imagined the Orient and how a specific, overarching Oriental identity was constructed. Said argues that this imagined identity was then used politically to justify and normalize western dominance and superiority which served as the basis of European colonialism in the East (Said, 2003). Arguments of an Orientalist representation of 'the other' as inferior and in need of Western rescue can be seen as well in today's debate on Western humanitarian interventions, in which the subject or the target of intervention is portrayed as a threat to the liberal order, as a failed, weak, or rogue state in need for civilization. These representations are used as legitimization for the international community to go in and 'set things right'. The concept of 'right', as mentioned above, is based on Western philosophy on governance, democracy, freedom and neo-liberalism. Literature of postcolonial scholars, then, questions, for instance, the Eurocentric hegemony that legitimizes such 'top-down' interventions (Lidén, 2011; Darby, 2009; Jabri, 2016).

This study will utilize Edward Said's concept of Orientalism to investigate the European Union's (EU) identity construction in the three main guiding documents of its response to the crisis in Somalia and the Horn of Africa in general. Further, it will utilize the method of discourse analysis to explore how the EU is imaging and constructing a Somali identity. As a research subject, the case of the EU poses an interesting research example of the promotion of liberal peace and regional society based on universal norms and values as discussed above.

1.2 Aim and Research Question

In accordance to the research problem outlined above, the aim of this research is to gain further insights into the European identity construction of Somalia and the Horn of Africa as well as into how the EU implicitly imagines itself through this construction. The overall research question of the thesis reads as follows:

How is Somalia imagined in the European Union's response to the crisis in the Horn of Africa, and how can the European identity construction of itself and Somalia be understood as an Orientalist discourse?

To further operationalize this question this thesis will answer the following guiding questions:

How is an imagined geography or spatial identity constructed?

How is a temporal identity constructed?

How is an ethical identity constructed?

It will further answer how these constructions imply a certain hierarchy.

1.3 Relation to Peace and Conflict Studies

Orientalist stereotyping can be interpreted as a form of Galtung's idea of cultural violence, in which negative stereotypes are ascribed to each other to legitimize actual direct and structural violence in the form of, for example, European colonialism (Galtung, 1969). The field of Peace and Conflict Studies has as its objective to research violent and non-violent conflicts as well as structural and cultural systems of violence. Hence, an investigation of how an identity construction in the field of foreign policies can be understood as following such forms of violence, is a highly relevant inquiry. Furthermore, the analysed material Within this study provides the foundation for the EU's military and civil interventions in the Horn of Africa and Somalia specifically. Therefore, the discursive identity construction of both will impact and guide European action and military objectives on the ground.

1.4 Thesis Outline

I will start by providing a very short overview of the Somali civil war as well as some current challenges that motivated international organizations to engage in the region in chapter two. That chapter is followed by a brief overview of literature in the field of identity construction in foreign policies as well as of the debate about

European identity in global politics in the third chapter. Thereafter, the guiding theory as well as the thesis' methodological framework are presented in chapter four and five, followed by an analysis presenting and discussing of the research findings. The thesis concludes by outlining to what extent European identity construction can be seen as an orientalist discourse and a brief discussion of the impact of liberal discourse and how it relates to the idea of Orientalism as investigates in these pages.

2 Background

This section provides a very brief overview of the three main concerns of the EU in the region. Namely, the struggling state institutions and authority, the rise of militant Islamist movements, and piracy off the Somali coast.

2.1 The rise and collapse of the Somali state

In 1960 the former British colony of Somaliland and former Italian colony of Somalia achieved independence and formed the Somali Republic (Hesse, 2011, p. 1). During the Cold War, Somalia's alignment changed quite promptly from no-alignment, to aligned with the Soviet Union to finally more leaning towards the West.

In July 1976 Mohamed Siad Barre, who was the president at that time, changed the Somali constitution and established a one-party system based on scientific socialism and principles of Islam (Hesse, 2011, p. 5).

After the Cold War, Somalia lost its significant as potential ally and, hence, the interest of the great powers. With the lack of foreign aid and funding, Barre lost control of the army and the government, accordingly, weakened. To keep himself in power, Barre made increasingly use of authoritarian means to retain public order (ibid.).

In January 1991, however, Barre got overthrown by a coalition of clan-based opposition groups. Later that year in May, Somaliland declared itself independent from the rest of the republic and established the Republic of Somaliland (ibid.). From December 1991 the country got torn apart and pulled into a clan-based civil war.

International engagement in the crisis began in early 1992 when the United Nations began engaging in brokering a ceasefire in Mogadishu between two of the main belligerents. A limited UN peacekeeping mission, UNOSOM, was later

deployed, however, it was incapable of reducing the violence or to address the severe famine (Bradbury & Healy, 2010).

The Somali civil war started during a time of change within the international community engagement. Accordingly, Somalia became a testing ground for international cooperative actions in form of military and humanitarian interventions. Thus, the UN peacekeeping mission got reformed, restocked to then around 30,000 international troops and redeployed as UNISOM II. Despite its size, however, this mission again was not able to reduce hostilities or to disarm conflicting parties. Moreover, UNOSOM has been criticised for contributing to the war economy, initiating proliferation of fractions, and supporting warlord power structures.

After UNOSOM's defeat and withdrawal from Somalia, an international disinterest in the region followed and with that a decline in foreign aid. Correspondingly, local political structures, such as customary laws, that came to a hold during the intervention, resumed. In some communities, so-called Sharia Courts were used to resolve violent conflicts and disputes. These institutions produced a form of governance structure as replacement for an actual central government. This form of governance was able to improve the security situation tremendously to the extent that by the late 1990s the situation in Somalia was described as neither war nor peace (Bradbury & Healy, 2010).

Increased Islamic benevolent spending, though, stimulated the growth of religious organization such as mentioned Sharia Courts but also Islamist movements (ibid.).

The Djibouti peace agreement in August 2000 achieved a political breakthrough as it brought forward a transitional government based on the 4.5 system. This system fixes a proportional representation of Somali clans in which an equal number of seats is allocated to the four main clans and the half seat belongs to minorities or women (Bradbury & Healy, 2010, p. 13).

After 9/11 and the following climate of insecurity, Somalia, as a considered failed state, reappeared on the international communities' radar as a potential safe haven and breeding ground for international terrorists. Plus, the Somali transitional government's reputation suffered as well, as, due to growing influence of the Islamic Courts and charities, the public became more suspicious of the governments

links to militant Islamists (Samatar, 2011; Bradbury & Healy, 2010). So, the transitional government did not fulfil its purpose to unite the country.

2.2 Rise of militant Islamists

An important aspect of the past one and a half decades of the Somali civil war have been the rise of a number of Islamist movements which seek to establish a Islamic state in Somalia (Bradbury & Healy, 2010, p. 14).

As mentioned above, the influence of Islamic courts grew, and they formed the Islamic Court Union (ICU). The ICU provided security and governance structures in competition to the struggling transitional government, which decreased the government's authority (Pham, 2011, p. 81). When negotiations over an agreement failed, Ethiopian forces entered Somalia in 2006 and fragmented the ICU. As a result, the more radical branches of the Islamic Court Union, including Al-Shabaab, reorganized and continued their insurgency, increasing their fight against the Ethiopian forces (Ibrahim, 2011, p. 36).

Throughout 2007 and 2008, Al-Shabaab expanded their territory and achieved military successes. By January 2009, Al-Shabaab managed to make the Ethiopian forces withdrawal from Somalia (Ibrahim, 2011).

Although Al-Shabaab has since then been reduced in size and strength, the group is still active in its recruitment efforts and territorial control (Bradbury & Healy, 2010).

2.3 Piracy off the coast of Somalia

After the collapse of the Somali state, including its military capacities, international fishers started fishing in unregulated Somali waters, as well as dumping toxic waste. These activities depleted the local fish stock and as response, Somali fishermen formed armed groups to fight the illegal fishing competition and polluters. Occasionally, Somali groups would hold foreign fishing boats hostage for ransom, however, these activities became a lucrative trade and form of income in a region

severely affected by poverty. Hence, these activities became a profitable way for unemployed youth to support their families (Shortland, 2010, p. 3; Shortland & Percy, 2011).

International organization became aware of the situation and expressed concern about the negative impact these illegal activities had on global trade and energy supply. In response, the EU deployed its Navy mission Atalanta in 2008 to trace and counteract piracy as well as provide protection to international cargo ships and aid deliveries to Somalia (European External Action Service, 2020).

3 Previous Research

This chapter provides first an overview of previous research in identity construction in foreign policies, followed by an outline of the debate on Europe's identity in global politics.

3.1 Identity Formation in Foreign Policies and Intervention

The role of discursive identity construction is on the rise in international relations and foreign policy research. Post-structuralist analysis of identity formation in international politics views identity construction as a process that always involves a construction of both a 'self' and an 'other'. A common phenomenon in international politics is, for example, the construction of the field of international politics as anarchic and a threat to one's own security opposite to the representation of domestic politics as peaceful, structured and harmonic (Elman & Jensen, 2013; Hansen, 2006, p. 30).

In his study about military identity formation in Afghanistan, Friis (2012) analyses the identity construction of the U.S. intervention in Afghanistan. He traces the changes in the construction and subject positioning of the enemy in regard to the self, the U.S. military. He argues that in the conventional approach in the beginning of the American intervention, the 'other' was regarded as a fixed entity characterised as evil and static, unable to change, out of reach of political or ethical redemption. These characteristics, he argues, were used and needed to legitimise and normalize a military operation with the main objective to eliminate as many enemies as possible (*ibid.*). He then compares the initial approach with the updated COIN approach, which shifted the focus from engaging with the enemy wherever it might be to merge the territory already captures and winning the local's trust.

This approach, Friis says, recognized the other as a more fluid entity with the possibility to develop and become more like the 'Self'. The COIN approach which was considered a more sensitive approach, focused on winning hearts and minds of the population instead of alienating them (Friis, 2012). The constructed other here mainly regarded Afghani civilians, however, the enemy, the Taliban, was still located outside and regarded a secondary position.

Although the COIN approach was considered to be more inclusive, it still clearly distinguished between the military self and the Afghani other, reason being a blurred conception of the enemies confuses the self-identity and could undermine military effectiveness (Friis, 2012).

Such constructions of an 'us' and 'them' are done, as Khalid (2017) argues, along gendered and racialized lines. The racial division is done by separating the world in to a civilised (western) and barbaric or uncivilised (the rest) parts, here juxtapositions such as developed/underdeveloped, democratic/authoritarian, good governance/failed state are used to emphasise the distinction. The 'civilised' West is then often characterised by its commitment and tradition to human dignity, liberty, and self-determination (Khalid, 2017, p. 51). Accordingly, the other is characterised as somewhat backwards. Ascribed backwardness can, for example, be reflected in images of religious extremism and fanatics. In the example of Afghanistan, the Taliban were ascribed an extreme low moral standard, a religious fanatic without human traits. Such representation positioned the Taliban as the extreme other to the United States' military that would, hence, fight a primitive, underdeveloped, enemy with an outdated interpretation of Islam. The portrayal of the Taliban as tribal including stories of Taliban rule with oppression of women and banning of music were already predated the U.S. intervention (Friis,2012).

Gendered representation of others in intervention politics often characterises the 'Self' as masculine, describing it as rational, wealthy, and powerful. The other, then, personifies "brownness, blackness or yellowness shackled by superstitions or fundamentalism ... and exhibits irrationality, poverty, and powerlessness" (Khalid, 2017, p. 48). Within the same construction of 'we are men', others are infantilized, described as object in need of rational education and structures (Khalid, 2017, p. 46). These observations indicate a first idea how such binary subject positioning could look like in foreign relations.

These distinctions often imply and construct a certain hierarchy in which the self has a more privileged position over the other. The above-mentioned characterization of the other as childlike, fits into the discourse of democracy as a universal system that would benefit all people in which, as Khalid claims, nations that have not transitioned to western liberal democracy form a lower class of immature peoples that need external guidance. These constructions positioned the west as a privileged norm every state should strive to achieve, additionally, it positioned the western states in a paternalistic position over the other (Khalid, 2017, p. 46). In the same notion outlined in the research problem, Khalid also criticises the development of ‘responsibility to protect’ and the ‘humanitarian narrative about ineffective states’ that create an international order which generally privileges the global north (Khalid, 2017, p. 52). She points out, that in such an international system, power is concentrated in the hands of selective states, which are then able to selectively legitimize and practise interventions (Khalid, 2017, p. 52).

3.2 European identity in international relations

In the field of international relations and political theory there are two traditional and leading theories to explain state behaviour and its approach to and engagement in global politics: realism and liberalism.

Realism is considered as a rather pessimistic approach to international relations and global cooperation as it builds around power, fear and anarchy. Here, the main motivation for a state to engage in an international sphere is to secure its own survival (Elman & Jensen, 2013)

In liberalism, however, global cooperation and democracy are seen as the vital tools to ensure a state security and well-being. A liberal motivation to engage in global politics is often based on the idea that liberal states do not fight wars against other liberal states. Accordingly, a main goal of liberalism is to spread liberal democracy, constitutional rule as well as encourage liberal institutions to ensure state security (Navari, 2013).

The identity of the EU in its foreign policies is often described as unique in regard to the Union’s predominantly use of soft power to engage in global politics.

However, this has been argued by scholars such as Rogers (2009) and Hyde-Price (2004) to be due to the identity of the EU as soft power is rooted in its lack of military capacity, hence, soft power is the only form of power left for the EU to engage internationally. With its growing international military involvement in conflict management missions, however, it is up for debate whether a characterisation of the EU as normative, as more in line with ideas of liberalism, or global power, more connected to ideas of realism, is appropriate.

Commonly, an actor can influence others by the use of persuasion, offer rewards, threaten punishment, inflict non-violent forms of punishment, or use of force (Smith, 2003, p. 22). The different approaches can be linked to the contesting international identities of the EU. Generally, in the civilian, or normative, model, the EU's approach to global politics lies in the use of persuasion and negotiation, in a global power approach, the EU uses its economic, military, and diplomatic strength to pursue its national interests. The notion of Normative power Europe is seen as a discursive self-construction, rather than an objective concept (Diez & Pace, 2007, p. 1). This discourse, then, establishes the idea of the EU as a positive force, or force for good, in international politics through an othering process (Diez, 2005).

Normative power can be understood as a form of power that is neither military nor simply economic, but rather one that operates through ideas and opinions and can be compared to the US concept of 'hearts and minds.' Hence, it is a discourse setting power that is able to influence perceptions of what is seen to be normal or what is to be considered appropriate behaviour. Furthermore, it can be considered a hegemonic power, hence it is able to form the values and norms of others (Diez, 2005, pp. 615-616). The concept of Normative power Europe describes the power that the EU possesses as a power to change the behaviour of others (Diez & Pace, 2007, p. 2).

In the field of conflict transformation, the EU links its aims to universal values, rather than self-interests and identifies these universal goods or as something that should be seen as the norm (Diez & Pace, 2007, p. 1). In regard to military involvement, Youngs (2004, pp. 417-418) argues that the EU's use of force will more likely be publicly supported in the name of defending European, or universal, values and be known among European citizens as missing 'dubious self-interests' of nation-led interventions. These forms of behaviour are part of the above stated

problem in which the EU actively establishes a global hierarchy in which European values are levelled as universal and hence as norms or appropriate behaviour and states that have not adopted such norm are considered 'abnormal' and, thus ranked lower in international hierarchy. Hence, EU actors consider the EU in conflict situation as the 'good guys.' The main purpose of this form of discourse is for the EU actors to create themselves as 'model citizens', contemporaneously disregarding their shortcomings (Diez, 2005, pp. 626-627; Diez, 2007, p. 2). Generally, the image of the EU as a force for peace is almost consensual among EU actors (Diez 2005, p.620). This could be problematic as strategic interests and norms cannot be easily distinguished, and a normative scope without interests is in itself unreasonable (Diez, 2005, p.625).

Recently, however, it has been argued that the EU's identity is shifting towards a more realist approach to international politics. The introduction of the European Union Global Strategy marks the establishment of a more internally focused global strategy. That means that the EU's external engagement will be more driven by internal benefits, mainly security interests (Pishchikova & Piras, 2017). Prioritizing internal safety, reflects realist understandings of global politics as anarchistic and dangerous, which results in a higher prioritisation of security forces and a move away from the understanding of the EU as a normative/ civilian power and a movement towards an identity as a global power (ibid.).

The identity of Europe as a norm setting power ties into the above described problematic construction of a hierarchy in which the states that do not follow Europe's norms are identified as abnormal and maybe less progressive. Furthermore, the idea of a more hegemonic European power to influence the norms of other states links to the goal and strive of liberal states to spread democracy and western values in order to protect their own security.

3.3 Research gap

These debates provide a first insight into how certain identities are used to guide political action via the use of, for example, soft power or in form of military interventions. While the identity construction in foreign interventions, presented here, uses predominantly American identity construction and the section of the

European identity tries to make sense of general European foreign policy engagement, this research aims to combine both. This research can, hence, provide a different perspective on how a European discourse about the East next to an American one and can offer new insights into the debate of the European identity and its approach to global politics; if the EU sees itself as a normative or rather a global power.

4 Theoretical Framework

As put forward in the research question, this research aims to explore if and how the European approach towards the crisis in the Horn of Africa, and Somalia specifically, can be understood through the lens of Edward Said's concept of Orientalism. Accordingly, this framework forms the theoretical basis of the research. Furthermore, discourse analysis is considered both as theory and as method, hence this chapter will first outline the general theoretical idea of discourse and will then turn back to Said's concept of Orientalism as discourse. The method chapter will further explain how the actual discourse analysis is conducted.

4.1 Discourse Theory

The underlying idea of discourse is that speech and writing do not objectively reflect reality, identities or social relations, but rather are actively creating and changing them. This notion reflects the poststructuralist idea that meaning, and identity are fluid and can never be permanently fixed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 6). Discourse is then understood as the attempted fixation of meaning in a particular field (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 26).

A discourse persistently tries to fix meaning of signs by relating them in a particular way to other signs (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 25). All signs within a discourse are moments that means that their meaning has been fixed through their difference from one another (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 26). A discourse is then formed by the partial fixation of meaning around, what Laclau and Mouffe call, nodal points. Nodal points are privileged signs around other signs are organized. Nodal points further serve as relational points through which the other signs obtain their meaning, and by that become moments. This is done by either linking it to the nodal point as equal or constructing it as different (ibid.). In the context of this research this could mean that the sign 'Somalia' becomes such a nodal point

through which then the sign 'European Union' also receives its identity by differentiating itself to the nodal point 'Somalia'. For example, if the nodal point 'Somalia' would be linked to the sign 'absence of rule of law,' the EU would then be linked to the sign 'presence of rule of law'. Hence, the EU would derive its identity from being the opposite of what is identified to be Somalia.

The other possibilities of interpretation that have been excluded from the discourse form the field of discursivity (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 27). Similar to the construction of moments, a discourse is always established in relation to the discursive field. In the context of this research this could mean that understandings of Somalia as progressive and the EU as backwards are suppressed and moved to the field of discursivity, hence, are seen as 'unthinkable' or 'unrealistic'.

Because a discourse is never fully fixed and threatened by the field of discursivity, texts and other articulations always either reproduce or challenge existing discourses because every expression actively reduces the possibilities of meaning, since it portrays the relation of signs in only one possible way; by that excluding alternative forms of interpretation and discourse formation (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 29).

4.1.1 Discourse theory in society

Identical to discursive meaning, society and identity are flexible and instable entities that cannot be fixed (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 33). For Laclau and Mouffe social and physical objects or reality does exist outside of discourse but our understanding and access to them is always filtered by systems of meaning and interpretations. Hence access is always filtered through discourse which is the entity that ascribes meaning to such objects (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 35). Just as signs in language, social actions and identities also derive their meaning from their relation to other actions (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 35-36). A commonly used example here is the construction of the concept of women. The concept of 'woman' is given meaning by relating it to terms like 'emotional', 'motherly', 'seductive', 'simple' which is then fixed by relating it to the constructed concept of 'man' which might be created by linking it to the terms such as 'rational', 'intellectual', or 'strong' and 'independent'. Such relational identity construction if referred to as subject

positioning, which means that a concept is given meaning and identity by juxtaposing it to other concepts (Merlingen, 2012, p. 191).

Power and objectivity are an important aspects of discourse theory as they are the driving force that creates knowledge, identities, and defines how groups or individuals are related. Power can also be understood as being a productive force as it produces the social sphere in a particular structure. The concept of objectivity in discourse theory then describes an action or identity that seems to not to stem from a relation of equivalence and difference to something else but rather as something naturally occurring (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 27-38).

Identity in discourse theory can be understood as a discursive representation given to a certain subject. Which only means that identity, same as society and signs in language, is discursively created through 'chains of equivalence' in which signs are organized and linked in terms of sameness and opposition to other chains. This process defines what a subject is and what it is not for example the concept of woman/man as demonstrated above. Basically, identity is always designed relationally which means that a subject is something because it is contrasted to something else that it is not and just as discourse the interpretation of a subject is always changeable (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 43).

Generally, discourse in society can be seen as similar to hegemony because both concepts represent a fixation of signs, moments, and identities. (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 48). Moreover, discourse and hegemony can also constrain political action because they establish rules and fixed meanings that legitimise certain actors and actions as appropriate and others as inappropriate. In this context identity can be understood as a result of political action that forms the basis of future actions (Mole., p. 3, 15). In other words, identity discourses allow the definition of what is true and false, or what is rational and irrational, which then creates boundaries of thinkable, sayable, and doable political and social actions (ibid., p.19).

Through that, discourse is able to determine normal and abnormal forms of behaviour while making the limitations seem to be naturally occurring (ibid.). The power of discourse lies in the truth-norm-effect which, for instance, serves as framework to legitimise interventions in the name of correcting and normalising 'rogues.' More interestingly, however, to make such policies seem as logical and morally sustainable (Merlingen, 2012, p. 192).

4.2 The Discourse of Orientalism

To support discourse theory in order to conduct a discourse analysis, a complementary theory is desirable to guide and support the interpretation process of the analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). In this research, Edward Said's concepts of Orientalism is utilized in this regard.

According to Said (2003), the European access and understanding of the East has always been filtered by the discursive imagination and ascribed identity of the East, which Said calls Orientalism. Similar to the process of group formation as outlined above, the West brought the Orient and Orientals into existence by traveling and discovering the region but mainly by talking about it. Hence, articulations, in e.g. the form of travel stories, link signs of discourse, and in this case the Orient, in only one possible way, hence, produced and created a specific image and identity of the Orient. So, by linking the Orient to signs like 'exotic' or 'barbaric' other possible interpretations of, maybe a progressive Orient, were suppressed and moved to the field of discursivity. Thus, the discourse of Orientalism had been created.

In his book *Orientalism* (2003), Said looks into the identity construction of Europe and the East through their juxtaposed relationship. That means that Orientalism looks into how the construction of each identity was done by likening the idea of East and Europe to, as described above, chains of equivalence and differentiation. So, the Orient was linked to signs and moments of barbarism, overarching religion, or women.

In the same fashion as signs and moments are fixed in discourse, see previous section, Europe was constructed by differentiating it to what it was not, namely the constructed Orient. Hence Europe's identity was then one of rationality, civilisation, and enlightenment.

The power of the Orientalist discourse to make the construction of the East as backwards and inferior to seem natural and objective can be seen in times of colonialism, where the Orient's objectively perceived backwardness was used to legitimize western political and physical authority in the East and to characterise colonialism as a civilising mission (Said, 2003, p. 206).

To further describe Western attitudes towards the East, Edward Said establishes two complementary concepts: latent and manifest Orientalism. Latent Orientalism describes the beliefs and assumptions about the Orient that form the hegemonic discursive assumptions. The most significant assumption is the idea of European superiority over the East in form of the idea that Europe is more civilized and more rational. This view served as the ongoing justification for Western intervention and presence in the Orient. These views created a static Orient, an empty page, ready for European creativity, as well as a European as active creator and the Orient as passive, incapable of doing things itself, in need of European rescue and reconstruction (Said, 2003, p. 206).

Manifest Orientalism describes the “various stated views about Oriental society, languages, literatures, history, sociology, and so forth” (Said, 2003, p. 206). In contrast to latent Orientalism, which barely changes over time, the concrete textual evidence of manifest Orientalism changes in accordance to political and economic circumstances. Whenever a change of the discourse, that is Orientalism, occurs, it will be visible in manifest orientalism, whereas latent orientalism is rather constant.

Latent and manifest orientalism together create the discourse of Orientalism as it is described in the beginning of this section. To briefly recapitulate, this is an idea heavily based on Foucault’s interpretation of discourse as a system of ‘knowledge’ that gives certain subjects ‘true’ meanings, but in doing so, delimits and filters contradictory knowledges about these subjects. This understanding reflects the notion of the discursive hegemonic power as mentioned above. The power to create knowledge and objectivity, which make identities and signs to appear as detached and natural and not as discursively constructed. In Orientalism then, Said examines how the scientific knowledge production about the Orient combined with European culture was able to manage and produce the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively.

He found that throughout history, the unchanged latent orientalist assumption about the East is that the Orient is a place that requires Western attention and modernisation (Said, 2003, p. 206).

4.2.1 Identity formation and Orientalism

According to Said, the way the West created the Orient was to set itself apart and secure and strengthen its own identity as the complete opposite of the East, following the above outlined discursive form of identity construction through linking and differentiating. In the discourse of Orientalism, the west was linked to a chain of equivalences which was then differentiated and opposed to the Orient's chain of equivalences. Hence East/West identity formation is a binary relationship in which the Orient is the ultimate 'Other' to the European 'Us' (Said, 2003, pp. 3,4).

Reoccurring images, Said identifies, are the representation of the Orient as somewhat backwards, totalitarian, a space without history or cultural variation. Furthermore, the Oriental person was portrayed as solid, unsolvable, overly religious and completely opposite to Western rationalism. The Oriental was connected to undesired elements in Western society such as the insane, the poor, or the criminal (Said, 2003, p. 207). Additionally, the Orient was often characterized as feminine implying weakness a lack of rationality and in desperate need for help, guidance, and rescue. Additionally, this type of presentation entailed sexual undertones such as interpretations of the (female) Orient as naturally seductive, passive waiting for male penetration or intervention. Oriental women were seen as fundamentally weak and incapable of thinking and lacking agency; the Oriental men represented her (Said, 2003, p. 6).

Moreover, Said points out that Orientals were considered not as people but as a problem that needed to be fixed or taken over (Said, 2003, p. 207). In the same way, a common portrayal of the Orient always positioned the Orient or its people as passive objects and the European as an actor who was questioning, interpreting, and rescuing them (Quinn, 2017, p. 42). In line with this narrative, the Orientalist perceived himself as a hero selflessly saving the doomed people of the Orient. These portrayals implied that the Orient lacks the ability of self-help or to make 'necessary' changes themselves (Quinn, 2017, pp. 44,70; Said, 2003, p. 121).

All in all, these narratives helped the West to justify their colonialism by claiming that European presence was needed so that the Orient could reform, progress, rebuild and rediscover itself (Said, 2003, pp. 39,86,345).

4.2.2 Orientalism Today

In 'Orientalism Once More' (2003) Edward Said argues that the general understanding of Arabs and Islam has not really changed after the publication of his book first published in 1978. The event of 9/11 has rather reinforced orientalist sentiments in the United States. Said argues that there have been calculatedly aggressive attack on the Arab and Muslim societies for their backwardness, their lack of democracy, and abrogation of women's rights that one forget that such ideas about modernity, enlightenment, and democracy are man-made and not simply found or discovered (Said, 2003, p. 871). The West, or in Said's argument the United States, created a sense that the people in the East are not like the West, and if they would embrace or at least respect 'our' Western values, there would be no war (Said, 2003, p. 872), which, in Said's eyes, are "the same clichés, the same demeaning stereotypes, the same justifications for power and violence" (Said, 2003, p. 873). Even further he argues that Empires always use say in their official discourse that they are different and that is their self-less mission to enlighten, modernize, and bring democracy, however, this argumentation masks "the destruction and misery and death brought by the latest mission civilizatrice" (Said, 2003, p. 873).

To conclude, Orientalism, and its Western-Islam binary, is still around and one can further argue that the current discourse around terrorism can be interpreted as a form of an Orientalist discourse.

As stated in 4.1, all articulations always either challenge or reinforce a specific discourse. In the case of this research, this means that the EU will either reinforce or challenge an orientalist discourse. Based on Said's argument on latent orientalism, the hypothesis for this study would be then that the selected articulations of the European Council, will rather reinforce than challenge such a discourse.

5 Methodological Framework

This chapter will first provide a short overview of its research design, which is followed by explaining the analytical approach in form of a discourse analysis in more detail.

5.1 Research Design

This qualitative study is interested in how the EU system is constructing a Somali identity and not evaluating to what extent the claims about Somalia are true or not. Hence, the chosen method of a discourse analysis is appropriate.

Correspondingly, this research takes Said's argument on modern time's Orientalism as its point of departure and, hence, investigates how the EU's response to the current situation in the Horn of Africa and their construction of a Somali identity can be understood as following a tradition of Orientalism.

As discussed in section 4.1, identity construction is done by creating meaning of a sign through linking it to chains of equivalence and differentiating it to other constructed identities. This process can be investigated by tracing such combinations of meaning in their chains of equivalence and, thus, determine how a discourse ascribes an identity to a specific subject. This means that this study will investigate the chains of equivalence linked to the sign 'Somalia' and, hence, trace how and what discursive meaning the EU ascribes to Somalia. Simultaneously, by fixing Somalia via opposing it to the image of the EU, this analysis will also show how the EU is ascribing meaning to itself.

Orientalism can guide the research process by helping to categorize and understand discursive statements in the material. Therefore, the concept of Orientalism will shed light on what kinds of chains of equivalence and differentiation for the EU and Somalia fall in line with an orientalist discourse which might challenge it.

In order to limit the scope of the research, I have chosen to not conduct a full discourse analysis including rhetorical and linguistic devices as well as syntax and grammatical factors. Furthermore, I have chosen to limit the scope to only one case and its three main guiding documents. Hence, the findings in this research are only valid for this particular case and discourse.

5.1.1 The problem of reliability

An epistemological assumption within the field of social constructivism is that there are no objective claims of truth in the field of social sciences. Rather there are multiple, equally valid and subjective claims of understandings of social occurrences. As already outlined in the previous chapter on discourse theory, objectivity is socially constructed and the field of academia is constantly taking part in the battles of hegemony in orders of certain discourses (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 48). Accordingly, academic knowledge production, as any form of articulation, can either challenge or reinforce a hegemonic discourse, but is always reducing possibilities of meaning by limiting the possible linkages to only one thinkable way of interpretation (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 29). This research will not differ from that. And, since, from this perspective, there is no objective or natural truth, the researcher's own truth or reading in the analysis becomes one possible truth in understanding the ascribed Somali identity. Furthermore, discourse analysis as many qualitative ways of inquiry rely on the researcher's interpretations during the data analysis (Rose, 2016, p. 215).

A way to approach this issue is the concept of reflexivity, which advises the researcher to reflect their own biases and what might have influenced the interpretation and starting research question. This is done by continuous reflection and argumentation of methodological choices made during the research process (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 118). This form of transparency also gives the research its validity because it enables the reader to trace the researcher's biases and to determine the research outcome as usable or not.

In line with this argument, I do acknowledge, and I am aware, of my biases as a Westerner and citizen of the EU as well as being a part of the discourse that is analysed in this research. Moreover, by outlining my methodological approach to

this research in the following of this chapter, I will provide transparency to my research process and how the data has been analysed.

Furthermore, I find myself to agree with many points theorists of postcolonialism, such as Edward Said and his idea of Orientalism, are raising and I do believe they offer new interesting angles to approach the social world in general and global politics specifically. This is why I chose the concept of Orientalism as my guiding theory. The use of theory is thus a means to explain and guide my positioned approach to the material and provide transparency in my line of argument.

5.2 Analytical approach

Meaning is constructed through the discursive juxtaposition between a preferred concept on the one hand and a rejected one on the other, which forms a relational conceptualization of identity, constructed along two dimensions (Hansen, 2006).

Methodologically these formations can be examined by focusing on the construction of three interlinked forms of identity, namely, spatial, temporal, and ethical. These can serve as analytical lenses that bring out the important political substance of identity construction and avoid summarizing openly indicated concepts of space, time and responsibility.

The goal of foreign policy discourse is to convey these three concepts in a way that they can feed upon and support each other.

To first gain an overview, the texts have been approached by collecting discursive statements in relation to the EU and/or Somalia. Then, overarching reoccurring themes or patterns throughout the three documents have been identified, which can be interpreted as the truths these discourse wants to convey and further shows a degree of intertextuality. This process was followed by linking the discursive statements to the theoretical framework which guided the subjective interpretation.

By linking this analytical frame to Orientalism and its concept of othering, one arrives at the guiding questions: Which Selves and Others are created? And how is

a difference between the EU and Somalia established via the construction of spatial, temporal, and ethical identity?

5.2.1 Spatial Identity (Imagined Geographies)

Spatial identity formations are easily recognisable in the construction of countries and regions such as the Balkans, the European Union, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East or the Orient. This idea of territorial bounded identity construction ties into Said's concept of 'Imagined Geographies'. Imagined Geographies create places through the creation of images and representations of certain places and regions in texts. These constructions give places a certain meaning which creates a feeling of a 'here' and 'there, a feeling of Otherness. By that physical places are characterized as different from the self, the idea of an exotic place can be an example for that. Here, clear geographical lines are drawn between the imagination of a region's Otherness and the idea of our 'normal' surroundings. By doing so, a sense of authority or superiority is produced (Hansen, 2006).

Furthermore, territorially bound identities are often filled with abstract political substance. Or abstract political subjects are given a sort of territorially constructed identity such as terrorists, international community, civilizations, or humanity.

For example, the discourse on the universality of freedom of the press or democracy creates a difference between the countries that have these ideas and the ones that are failing to do so, thus creating a spatial identity and hierarchy where the countries that have these universal ideas hold a privileged position. Furthermore, in this discourse, countries that have not adopted democracy or freedom of press are given a sense of possibility for change, hence they are also ascribed a fluid identity, which brings us to the second form of identity formation: temporal identity (Hansen, 2006).

In case of this study, the EU might characterize the region and Somalia as exotic or dangerous and create a clear physical distance between Europe and the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, by describing the region as potentially dangerous, this distant place is ascribed a certain value or meaning which creates a hierarchy between a considered safe EU and a dangerous Horn of Africa.

5.2.2 Temporal Identity

Abstract concepts of processes in time, such as development, (conflict) transformation, or repetition are important for analysing the identity construction in foreign relations.

An analytical concern here is how the temporal Other is positioned in relation to the temporality of the (Western) Self. Which means to look into notions that identify the other in vocabularies that are bound to time, movement, or non-movement in relation to the self. This could be, for example, the characterization of the other as advanced or backwards in relation to the self. Or, as developing or static and non-developing towards the self (Hansen, 2006).

Another concern is the ascribed Other's capability to change and 'progress'. Is the other seen as capable of transformation and, hence, worthy of the Self's political resources and engagement or is the Other seen as locked in its backward position and, thus, unworthy of the Self's time and effort (ibid.)?

For the case of Somalia this would mean that the EU could characterize Somalia as backwards and static, which may lead to the reaction of non-engagement. However, a characterization of a moving and developing identity could motivate the EU to engage more on the ground or raise the provision of aid.

5.2.3 Ethical identity

An analysis of ethical identity construction is concerned with the discursive formations of ethics, morals, and responsibility. This relates to the moral representation of events, for example wars as genocides or interventions as humanitarian and as a moral duty. Often these constructions entail an expression of moral responsibility of the Self to the Other. For example, the Self needs to intervene to save the people from suffering (Hansen, 2006).

The formation of such identities can be understood as a power move to transcend the underlying issue from a political/strategic sphere to a higher level of morality and goodness. Here, the Self has a human responsibility to rescue the poor and defenceless, sometimes even from themselves. In the case of Somalia, this could mean that the region's poverty and famine is used to create a moral responsibility to intervene and this intervention can further be expanded to serve

own political or economic interests, such as securing trade routes in the Gulf of Aden.

It is a common theme in foreign policy discourse to produce ethical identities, but some depictions of identity summon a moral force, a need to engage that, then, involves temporal and spatial identities of those answering the call to action and the ones being rescued.

5.3 Choice of Material

The material for this research are three official EU documents that are considered key documents within the EU in regards to guiding their response towards the Horn of Africa, generally, and Somalia, specifically. Two out of the three documents are Council Conclusions of the EU, which are agenda setting and guide European policies and their political engagement. The council defines the EU's overall political direction and priorities. It is, however, not a legislating institution. It, rather, sets the EU's policy agenda through Council Conclusions which identify issues of concern and actions to take.

The other document is authored by the European Commission and is a Joint Communication to the Council, which means it is an agenda setting recommendation from the European Commission to the Council. These three documents form, at the time of selection (April 2020), the current fundamental guidelines of the Union's engagement with, and its objectives in, the Horn of Africa. The selection has been limited to these three documents due to time consideration and the mass of data. Furthermore, other available council documents of Somalia and the Horn of Africa refer to at least one of the three selected documents and therefore, it seems justified to ignore these additional documents in this research.

6 Analysis

Applying Edwards Said's conceptualization of Orientalism, and discourse theory in general, this analysis will outline how the EU is imagining and constructing a Somali identity in its three documents which form the foundation of the EU's involvement on the ground. The three texts entail the Strategic Framework (2011), the Action Plan for the Horn of Africa (2015) and the EU Counter-terrorism Action Plan for the Horn of Africa and Yemen (2012). Utilizing on one hand, the idea that discursive identity construction is done through chains of equivalence and on the other the three analytical lenses described in section 5.2.1, this analysis will first outline how a geographical distinction between the Horn of Africa and Europe is drawn, followed by presenting how the Somali identity is positioned in relation with Europe and then show how Somalia's identity is morally constructed. As mentioned in the methodology chapter, the three analytical lenses of spatial, temporal and ethical identities are not mutually exclusive and do, most of the times, overlap. This means that they are constructed in a way to form a constant argument and feeding of one another which further fixes the discourse. For this analysis, however, many discursive statements in the text could have fitted two or even all three categories, but the statements have been analysed and sorted where they best seem fitting to support the argument that is made here, and in order not to be overly repetitive.

6.1 Imagined geography or spatial identity

In the discourse of the EU about the Horn of Africa, an imagined geography or spatial identity is created by first physically or geographically localising the region, second describing the environmental characteristics of the region, and third separating the region politically and morally, as a place different from the European 'Self'.

Geographically, the EU identifies the Horn of Africa by simply defining the countries that belong to this region, namely, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda, and where the region is physically located, between the Nile River and the Red Sea as well as the Gulf of Aden. Following the territorial delimitations, the EU then assigns certain attributes to the region's environment. The region is described as dry, affected by "recurrent drought" and "by extreme poverty", "structural food insecurity", and "desertification" (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 3,7; General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 18)

The political and moral separation is done in two ways. On the one hand, by a description of what is there and on the other by stating what is lacking in the region. The first portrays the region as unsafe, violent and threatening as well as a region with weak state institutions and failing governance. The latter distinguishes between countries that comply with perceived universal norms such as international humanitarian law, human rights, or democracy and others that do not.

The characterization of the region as an unsafe place is created by claims such as that the region has a legacy of violent conflicts, especially Somalia (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 6; European Commission, 2012, p. 9). Furthermore, these conflicts are described as being, "more violent", due to "small arms proliferation" and a present "culture of impunity" (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 14; General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 7). These factors are said to contribute to the escalation of perceived minor issues, such as disputes over resources and access to water, into more violent conflicts (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 7). Besides the characterization of the individual countries as suffering from increased internal conflicts the region is further characterized to be at "significant risk of inter-state conflict" (General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 7).

Moreover, Somalia is described as a place where "the absence of the rule of law or an administrative vacuum has permitted e.g. piracy and terrorism to flourish" (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 6,15). The piracy off the coast of Somalia is identified as to "negatively impact international maritime security as well as regional and international economic activities" (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 3).

Going back to the ‘flourishing’ terrorism (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 6), Somalia is further characterized as a place of increased radicalisation and mobilisation, especially of the youth, by political and religious forces (General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, pp. 2,4,7,8; Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 8). The terrorist groups that are based in Somalia, most famously Al-Shabaab, are said to “have expanded their influence to a point where they pose a danger to all states in the region and have been able to perpetrate grave atrocities” (European Commission, 2012, p. 5). The construction of Somalia as a place with flourishing terrorism is further underlined by outlining the occurrence of “increased terrorist travel between [Somalia and Yemen]”, and from “other radicalised youth from the Horn of Africa, including members of the Somali diaspora, [who] now seek to join jihadist groups in Iraq and Syria instead of Somalia” (European Commission, 2012, p. 5; General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 9). This identifies Somalia as a hot spot with “conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism” and hosting terrorist organisations (European Commission, 2012, p. 3). These identities tie into the construction of the Orient, as Said describes, as overly religious and ‘barbaric’.

Somalia’s perceived identity as a dangerous place is further enhanced by stating that Somalia’s problems in form of piracy and terrorism “have now reached a scale where they threaten international security, and directly, the interests of EU Member States” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 6). Likewise, it has been stated that there is a necessity to “ensure that the insecurity in the region does not threaten the security of others beyond its borders” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 5).

The perceived image of Somalia has been characterised as a “fragile area” (European Commission, 2012, p. 4). As such Somalia has been typified as a place with “weak or ineffective” administration, or over all with a “structural dysfunction” of state institutions, as well as “unaccountable” governance (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 6,8; General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, pp. 2,19). The image that the EU is constructing of the Somali state has been identified as unable to fulfil basic social functions and address radicalisation (General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 8). In line with that, the state has been further described as being “seen by the poorest sectors of society as distant and unresponsive to the needs” (General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 10). Even though this analysis is not concerned with actual reality, these aspects are real

experiences of Somali people, nonetheless, such articulation as discourse reinforce an image of Somalia as a ‘failed state’ that needs western attention to (re)build its lost stability and accountability.

The implied geographical separation based on values and morals as opposed to Europe is done by identifying Somalia as a place where international ‘universal’ values are not in place. Somalia has been identified as lacking democratic processes and a democratic way of life (European Commission, 2012, p. 7; General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 13). All three of the selected documents highlight the need to promote democracy and support the formation and work of civil society. Specifically, the state is described as making increased use of authoritarian means to obtain social order and restrict political freedom (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, pp. 8,10).

Furthermore, a moral geographical identity is constructed by characterizing Somalia as a place that is not compliant to International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights as well as lacking space for the media (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 14,24; General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 13). Such representations make it seem logical that Somalia is a place in need for “promoting respect for constitutional norms, the rule of law, human rights, and gender equality” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 14).

Following the theoretical idea that identity construction is done by linking and differentiating, the geographical construction of Somalia is done by linking Somalia first, to the characteristics of a desert, dry and prone to suffer from drought. Likewise, Somalia is linked to concepts of a failed state and a western understanding of unsafety and instability. Here Somalia is linked to concepts of a dysfunctional government, violence, and the lack of rule of law. These ideas are further fixed by differentiating Somalia from the EU. The EU is implicitly seen as a progressive, peaceful place with functioning governments and high respect for equality and universal laws. The creation of the spatial identity of Somalia in the three selected EU documents as a place rattled by violence and an instability that has the power to threaten international security, puts the EU in a superior position as an institution in the position of guiding and advising the region on how to establish stability and how to govern ‘correctly’. Furthermore, by pointing out the lack of compliance to supposedly universal values, which are also stated to be the fundamental values of the EU, creates a perceived moral hierarchy in which the EU

is positioned above Somalia. Accordingly, through these processes a geographical border is drawn between lawful, right, and progressive states in the West and violent, dysfunctional states with demanding environmental struggles in the East, which creates a clear separation between the European “Self” and the eastern “Other”.

6.2 Temporal identity

A temporal identity, as outlined in chapter five, identifies the other in vocabulary that is bound to time, movement, or non-movement in relation to the self.

As mentioned above, the EU documents analysed characterize Somalia as a region without compliance and respect to international ‘universal’ laws and norms. Besides the geographical identity that is created, the EU further identifies Somalia as backwards and ‘barbaric’ compared to the civilised EU which has adopted these norms as their fundamental values. Somalia is continuously presented as backwards in comparison to the EU, the main channel that is used to convey this message is the idea that the adoption of democracy as a form of governance is seen as progressive when compared to other systems of governance. In the Counter-terrorism Action Plan the EU states: “It [the Action Plan] should also support accountability and transparency in governance and institutions, supporting the separation of political institutions and law enforcement” (European Commission, 2012, p. 3), implying that the Somali state does not separate its powers, further and that the form of governance in Somalia should rather be understood as totalitarian. This perception is further supported by the observation that “increasingly repressive and authoritarian methods are used by state organs to maintain public order” (General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 8). Accordingly, it is stated in the European Action Plan that national criminal justice institutions are in need of “modernisation,[...] based on rule of law and full respect for international human rights” (European Commission, 2012, p. 6). The presentation of Somalia as a rather totalitarian state in relation to the democratic EU, puts Somalia in a backwards, or less advanced, position in the eyes of the EU.

Additionally, the EU also points out that the Horn of Africa “lacks regional organisation effective enough to mediate disputes and foster cooperation” (Council

of the European Union, 2011, p. 7) a situation which, in contrast to the EU as a regional cooperation peace project, is clearly perceived as disadvantage one and underdeveloped.

Additionally, traditional forms of life such as nomadism are juxtaposed to the notion of modern borders and presented as a challenge to security and stability, which implies that such ways of life are outdated and no longer adequate for, modern times (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 7).

“Given that the Horn of Africa and Yemen governments focused on one or more of these issues internally, prioritisation and implementation of the Action Plan will provide opportunities for deeper engagement and possible dialogue on security in the longer term” (European Commission, 2012, p. 4) This statement of the Counter-terrorism Action Plan presents Somalia in a similar manner as weak and lacking agency in contrast to the EU. It is implied that the states of Yemen and Somalia are most likely able to handle only one problem internally and need the agency of the EU to deal with the other problems even on a bigger scale as Somalia and Yemen are able to. Moreover, the Horn of Africa Action plan states that the administrative capacities are often too weak to deal effectively with challenges such as illegal migration (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, pp. 10,12).

By speaking about the challenges in Somalia such as poverty, instability, and unemployment as “persistent”, “chronic”, or having “little prospect of improvement” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 7; General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, pp. 2,7,8), the EU gives Somalia a static identity, incapable of developing or improving.

All in all, the EU links Somalia to concepts of lacking development in the form of economic and governmental structures. By constantly highlighting the importance to encourage the Somalis to participate in a democratic way of life and to leave political expression through violent extremism behind (European Commission, 2012, p. 7). The EU makes Somalia appear less civilised and irrational in comparison to the European self. Furthermore, in its Counter-terrorism action plan the EU outspokenly condemns terrorism “in all forms and manifestations” (European Commission, 2012, p. 3), which, in comparison to the continuous presentation of Somalia as a safe haven for terrorism, reinforces the idea of the EU as being more enlightened and morally superior. By that the EU’s self-image is linked to concepts of liberal, non-violent concepts of international politics and

cosmopolitanism. The EU, hence, sees itself to have left the path of violence and is rather engaged in a diplomatic way of politics.

Although the Somalia is constructed as rather backwards, it is implied that the EU perceives the region as able to change and overcome its static problems. This is done by pointing out that the region progresses, such as “considerable progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals” (European Commission, 2012, p. 5) This progress, however, is bound to the notion that such development is only going to happen when Somalia adapts to western modernization attempts, which means compliance with international universal laws and adopting a democratic state system, becomes more rational by moving away from violent extremism especially religious motivated extremism. Furthermore, it is implied that the EU is indispensable because it identifies itself to know what needs to be done to set off Somalia’s development.

6.3 Ethical identity

As outlined in the Methodology chapter, an ethical identity is often constructed by the representation of a certain issue as a moral problem. This is also true for Somalia. Here the challenges on the ground are presented as a “humanitarian disaster” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 13) or “humanitarian crisis” (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 2,3). Furthermore, the politics in the country are presented as oppressive and discriminative against particular groups as well as restrictive of basic human rights and freedoms (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, pp. 8,10; Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 4).

Such representations imply a moral obligation of the West to intervene and help the people that are suffering. Often the Western interventionist is painted as a selfless hero. Such a depiction can also be found in two of the documents in which the EU states that their main objective for an intervention was the EU’s “desire to support the welfare of the people and help lift them from poverty into self-sustaining economic growth” (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 2,4; General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 11). Such a narrative is supported throughout these documents in which it is often stated that the EU provides “need-based” humanitarian assistance to either “the people suffering” or to the “most

vulnerable populations” (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 10,13). Furthermore, the EU also portrays its objective of their presence in the country to be “to support the people of the region in achieving greater peace, stability, security, prosperity, and accountable government” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 4); hence, the EU presence is for the benefit of the people and the country itself. It has been stated, however, that the EU does have its own interests in being present in the region. These are the protection of its safe access to shipping routes through the Red Sea for its trade and energy (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 8), as well as the protection of its citizens from the “threats emanating from some countries in the region” (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 11; Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 11).

In line with the narrative of European heroism and the above-mentioned characterisation of Somalia as lacking agency and being static, Somalia is presented as to Orient in Orientalism as incapable of self-help and developing on its own without international, specifically western, guidance. This becomes evident in the continued highlighting of European impact and involvement in Somalia’s ‘journey’ towards a democratic state such as: “In Somalia the EU has firmly guided Somaliland region towards a sounder democratic process” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 10), or “the EU has made a decisive contribution to Somalia’s emergence from prolonged conflict” (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 5), or “in South Central Somalia the EU has played a key role in encouraging a path towards constitutional rule” (Council of the European Union, 2011, p. 10).

Furthermore, the EU characterises itself as being able to “enable them [former combatants] to reintegrate into society and develop livelihoods, as well as to “enable them [countries in the Horn of Africa] to reduce poverty, increase prosperity, ensure environmental sustainability, combat climate change and enjoy the benefits globalisation can bring (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, pp. 22,11).

Additionally, the EU sees a necessity to promote “critical thinking skills which are essential in the long term to tackle radicalisation” (General Secretariat of the Council , 2015, p. 20), which implies a lack of knowledge on the Somali part on how to counteract radicalisation and extremism. Furthermore, in the same statement the EU also implies a lack of critical thinking among the Somalis in general, implying that if otherwise, Somalis would not be recruited to or follow violent

movements in the first place. Moreover, the EU wants to “raise awareness of the cost of money-laundering and terrorist financing” (European Commission, 2012, p. 7), which can also be read as an attempt to educate the Somalis that money-laundering and terrorist financing is no appropriate behaviour, which implies a parental relationship between Europe schooling the infantilized Horn of Africa.

Although throughout the documents the EU highlights the importance of an intervention guided by local ownership, all of these ethical representations indicate a rather passive Somalia and an active EU. Thus, similar to the Orient, a Somali state is constructed as ready for European imagination (Said, 2003). This becomes clearer in a statement such as: “putting Somalia on a sustainable recovery path, while establishing security and effective governance at all levels is, therefore essential to tackle the terrorist threat emanating from the crisis situation in Somalia” (European Commission, 2012, p. 9). Furthermore, the EU clearly has their principles with respect to what is considered appropriate or legitimate action and since Somalia is dependent on European funding, the EU has more power to direct in what directions Somalia is supposed to ‘progress’. These circumstances then raise the question to what degree the European intervention is actually owned by Somali partners.

6.4 Conclusion of findings

To summarize, there are three main discourses to be found in the selected material. One that characterizes the Horn of Africa and Somalia as a dangerous, possible threatening physical entity, one that describes Somalia as underdeveloped but with a possibility to progress, and one that represents the situation in the region as urgent, as a ‘humanitarian crisis’. The latter also establishes the need for the EU to be involved. All three together create the EU as the entity that knows what to do to resolve the crisis in the Horn of Africa.

To briefly recapitulate, the Horn of Africa is identified as a region of diversity, violence, chaos, lawlessness, and inadequate traditions (nomadism undermining modern state sovereignty). Furthermore, as dry, lacking resources, overpopulated, a state in which the political evolution is not complete yet. Also, as a place of pirates and terrorists, in which it is difficult to use peaceful means to solve the region’s

problems. And most importantly for the EU and its member states, as a region that needs to be dealt with because it has the potential to threaten global security and economic activity as well as interests of European member states.

However, it has been pointed out that the region did make progress, although, not sufficient enough. Rather, the region still struggles with poverty and conflict. The missing state capacity or a functioning state in general, has been identified as the main issue. Hence, the lack of state capacity has been pointed out to be the root cause of the problems in the region.

Generally, the truths this discourse produces the idea of the Horn of Africa as a dry, poor, dangerous region with religious (mainly Islamic) violent extremism.

The third discourse, by presenting the situation morally, produces an EU which is concerned with the humanitarian situation in the region, has the desire to support the welfare of the people and to help lift them from poverty into self-sustaining economic growth (Council of the European Union, 2011, pp. 2,4; General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 11). Furthermore, it fixes the need for the EU to be involved by representing the people of the region as suffering and dependent on EU funding to survive. To additionally fix the need for an EU presence in terms of European interests, the region is described as posing a threat to international security and global economic activities. Hence, the EU needs to be involved to protect its citizens and geographical interests. On a moral level the EU establishes the need to be involved by stating that the Union is an actor who ensures that human rights and individual freedoms are respected and who provides at least some kind of structure to the chaotic region.

This identity is further fixed by depicting the positive impact the EU has and can have in the region, especially by describing the European contribution to a “significant reduction in piracy off the coast of Somalia through CSDP missions and Commission co-operation programmes that have bolstered partner countries’ maritime security capacity and their ability to bring pirates to justice” (General Secretariat of the Council, 2015, p. 5).

All three discourses together establish the EU as an actor that knows the answers to the region’s, long-lasting challenges. For the EU, the way out of the crisis is for the region to become more like the west, which means for Somalia to adopt global economic structures (a free market economy), a democratic system of governance, as well as a Western understanding of human rights.

Generally, it can be said that the EU's ideas, on what needs to be done for the region to end the crisis, are based on ideas of liberal peace which is based on the assumption that democratic states do not go to war against one another (Navari, 2013, pp. 40-41). Hence, the main goal for the EU here is to invest in state-building activities and encourage more regional cooperation promoting the European system as being a necessary step for peace, security, development and prosperity.

This becomes evident when taking a look at the positive things the EU has to say about the Horn of Africa. The EU positively points out that there has been a growing recognition among the countries that “effective management of common regional and transnational threats can only be achieved through cooperative law enforcement, arrangements, and a mutually respected rule-of-law framework aligned with international human rights obligations and standards” (European Commission, 2012, p. 5), and “[t]here is a growing interest from regional actors in promoting independent judicial systems, and fostering awareness in the strategic benefits of operating within a rule-of-law and human rights based counterterrorism framework” (European Commission, 2012, p. 5). The good things the EU sees as being important to point out are some signs of progresses that indicate a development of the region towards becoming more like the European self, such as opening to the option of adopting western principles of governance and adopting a regional cooperation model emulating the concepts of the Europe Union. In line with the idea of the norm-power effect as described in chapter four, this discourse is used to legitimise European interventions in the name of correcting the ‘rogue’ that is Somalia.

All in all, the discourse and hegemony analysed in this study makes it seem normal, natural and appropriate that the EU is engaged in Somalia to assist the country in its transition towards a democratic country. As well as, through its discourse the EU make it seem logical that a transition to a democratic state is the solution that will help Somalia or the region in general out of their violent crisis and these repetitions of Somalia form the basis of current and likely future political actions in the Horn of Africa.

7 Concluding discussion

This concluding discussion will first summarize the findings and answer the research question of how the European construction of a Somali identity can be understood as an Orientalist discourse. Second, this chapter will place this research in the wider debate on liberal peace.

7.1 The European Union, a modern Orientalist?

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, this research is set out to examine how the EU imagines and constructs a Somali identity through its three main Council documents. Edward Said's theory of Orientalism was used to guide the interpretation in a discourse analysis to uncover and recognize structures and statements in the EU texts as instances of an Orientalist discourse.

Based on these settings, the EU's response to the crisis in the Horn of Africa and particularly Somalia, can be understood to follow the tradition of Orientalism. In the selected material there are traces of, what Said calls, latent Orientalism which is outlined in Chapter four as the underlying hegemonic beliefs and assumptions about the Orient that form the foundation of discursive identity construction of the Orient (Said, 2003, p. 206). In the documents it is assumed that Europe is more advanced, more rational, and more civilised than the people in Somalia or the Horn of Africa in general. Such assumptions become visible by the repetitive contrast between the EU using civilian measures perceived to be non-violent, such as diplomacy, to engage on the ground on the one hand, and by the perception of increasing violence and violent extremism in the Horn of Africa, on the other hand (Council of the European Union, 2011). These notions are, furthermore, reinforced by the statement that it is difficult to solve disputes in Somalia with peaceful means, which create an image of people more prone to the use of violence than the 'civilised' West. The notion discussed above and separation between the West and

the East along the line of countries that have adopted ‘universal’ laws and obligations, such as human rights, and the ones that have not, create an image of a backward barbaric region which has not yet reached the European level of civilisation

Furthermore, in its Counter-terrorism Action Plan, the EU states that it wants to “promote madrassah¹ reforms” (European Commission, 2012, p. 7), which implies that the EU is critical of religious (Islamic) public education. These circumstances reinforce an image of an overly religious Orient juxtaposed to a more rational, secular thinking EU, where religion is perceived as something private and separate from the field of politics².

Additionally, Somalia and the Horn of Africa are repeatedly described as having the capability to threaten global security, as well as causing the need for the EU to protect its citizens. These narratives give the region a threatening identity and combined with its perceived backwardness, EU designs the Horn of Africa, similar to the image of the Orient in Orientalism, as a region that needs Western attention, modernisation, and redemption (Said, 2003, p. 206).

These narratives all echo static descriptions of latent Orientalism that Said discovered in his investigation of the discourse of Orientalism. Hence, it can be concluded that the EU is an organization that, in the documents and articulations examined here, rather reinforces, than challenges the discourse of Orientalism.

7.2 Influencing Discourse

During the analysis it became evident that the EU’s crisis response to the Horn of Africa can be best understood as being influenced by the discourse of liberalism and accordingly ideas of liberal peacebuilding. These influences are evident in the outline of the EU’s goals to achieve peace and stability in the region through the spread of democracy, which entails the building of democratic governance systems and institutions. Another channel through which the EU wants to attain peace and

¹ Madrassah is Arabic and refers to (religious) educational institutions.

² Which is contradicting in itself by the numerous Christian parties and tax benefits for churches but the overall sentiment of a separation between religion and state prevails.

stability is the idea of development and pushing the region into compliance with so-called universal laws and standards such as human rights and the International Humanitarian Law. A question that rises from this is if the EU's response to the Horn of Africa and Somalia itself can be understood as Orientalist as well because the wider discourse, the EU is basing its response on, can be seen as an Orientalist one. These observations pick up the discussion about liberal peace which was introduced in Chapter one of this study. This thesis will conclude by placing this analysis of the European approach back into the more general debate on liberal peace.

The European approaches to the crisis in the Horn of Africa are in line with the concept of Western-Liberalism, which has been criticised for being Eurocentric and Orientalist (Hobson, 2012; Lidén, 2011; Darby, 2009). It has been brought forward that post-Cold War liberalism enables European or Western countries to retake its paternalistic position over the East, which it lost in the era of post- and anti-colonial movements after WWII. Here, one interpretation could perceive the notion of the universalism of Western values, such as free-market societies and democracy, is used to mask European civilisation missions as an attempt to help and rescue failed Eastern states (Lidén, 2011). The underlying idea is that the spread of western norms is a progressive move that will benefit all people. In this discourse the concept of 'failed states' replaces the notion of savage or barbaric states and a standard of governance replaces the idea of an appropriate form of civilisation as suggested in the 19th century (Lidén, 2011, pp. 58,59). This form of discourse also creates identities in from of spatial, temporal and especially ethical constructions which were also found in this study where Europe creates a physical difference between itself and Somalia and establishes an image of violent, overly religious, and undemocratic Somalis.

Hence, modern liberal interventions are more focused on 'developing' and building the nature of a legitimate state than reforming an alleged 'savage' culture (Hobson, 2012, p. 287).

This is not to deny the good intentions, but to criticise the hierarchy and power imbalance that is created within this discourse between liberal democracies and countries that do not follow this model. In this hierarchy liberal democracies are positioned on top in an unquestioned role model position which legitimizes violence

and invasions into ‘failed’ Eastern states by Western democracies in the name of a good cause and spread of democracy (Lidén, 2011, p. 59).

Moreover, this discourse creates a double-standard according to which liberal democracies’ sovereignty is respected, but the sovereignty of non-democracies is presented to be only recognized if the countries treat their citizens in accordance with liberal values and standards. Furthermore, such received ‘outlaw states’ that do not respect human rights must be condemned and corrected through sanctions and/or humanitarian intervention in which it is a liberal-state’s duty to assist the states on their path back to civilisation (Jabri, 2016, p. 154). It is here that liberal states acquire their “paternalist role of teaching savage societies civilized values as well as providing aid and assistance to build a more robust set of political institutions” (Hobson, 2012, p. 293). The double standard becomes visible when western states become outlaws because, according to Rawls it is not acceptable for liberal states “to go to war against, or intervening, each other” (Rawls in Hobson, 2012, p. 294) because that would be contradictory to the liberal principle of non-interference. And according to Hobson:

Such a double standard returns us to the Eurocentric notion of the bipolar formal hierarchical conception of world politics, whereby civilized Western states treat each other with dignity and therefore respect each other’s sovereignty, while Eastern despotic states and failed states are deemed uncivilized and therefore granted only conditional sovereignty (*Hobson, 2012, p. 295*).

Such ideas legitimise western neo-imperialist endeavours and reinforce the construction of Orientalist identities in which the East is characterized as a place that needs to be saved and brought to light by the West as well as the paternalistic relationship between the West and the rest. Such a relationship is problematic because it denies the East any agency of self-help and suppresses the production of challenging ideas and knowledge.

These tensions are also present in the EU’s approach towards Somalia. Here, in relation to Somalia, the EU has a more privileged position which is used to explain its presence in the Horn of Africa. These conditions create a form of hierarchy that can be interpreted by others, e.g. Somalis, as a resurrection of a colonial relationship between Europe and Africa. The role of academia, and Peace and Conflict Studies especially, could be, however, to reveal possible different interpretations of such a relationship and, thus, promote a more productive form of communication.

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