20. Tackling with Temporalities, Cultures and Locations of 'Gender' and 'Development': From Global Sisterhood to Queer Dystopias

On the Politics of Accommodation - the Ontological Challenges of Gender and the Sexual in Development
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There have been several waves in discourse of and about Development that have sought to identify, name and address the colonial dynamics of power inherent in relations of Development. These have come about as either critiques (Development as an 'anti-politics machine'), as reformist moves ('Participation' and 'participatory methods'), or as historicisation (through post-colonial studies, subaltern studies). The latest in these attempts is the notion of 'decolonizing development'. But what does it mean to 'decolonise' a relationship that is precisely the continuation of colonial intervention into the political economy, society and culture? Is this verb an impossible imperative, conceptually an oxymoron? My argument in this paper is that if this phase of critical thinking in relation to Development is to be meaningful in any way, if it is to be anything more than a watered down repackaging of the political impulse of post-colonialility, the shift it entails must be ontological. I do this in the specific context of imaginations, discourses and practices around gender and the sexual.

The paper draws on reflections on a series of experiences of working as an academic, activist and Development practitioner, in the west and in India, on issues relating to gender and the sexual. At the heart of relationships of Development, I argue, lie tensions of incommensurability between histories of being, and the challenges of translation between these. Moving between asylum appeals in the UK, funding proposals in Scandinavia, management of large scale research programmes in institutes in the UK, governmental 'Transgender welfare boards' in India and the mutations of gender and sexual identity in the engagements with the Law, I argue that what is at stake in these spaces is the ability to work with multiple modes of being. For the large part, in these and other spaces, the very possibility of this multiplicity is erased through what may be called a 'politics of accommodation', where radical difference is reduced to alterity, and this alterity deployed as a mechanism of reinforcing, rather than questioning, western notions of gender and the sexual within binaries and notions of 'sexuality-as personhood'. I look at the mechanisms through which this politics of accommodation is carried out, focussing in particular on the argument that understandings of gender and the sexual emanating from experiences in the global south are 'too radical'. Finally, as an instance of what an ontological shift might look like I offer the notion of 'sexualness' as an alternative to the framework of 'sexuality-as-personhood' which dominates the Development industry's engagement with the sexual.

Feminizing Autonomy? On Resistance/s against Neoliberal Development in South Asia
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The importance of becoming autonomous from state and its institutions and to build non-hierarchical, local forms of organization, decision-making and political participation has been

increasingly highlighted in a wide variety of social movements of, and in, the neoliberal era. This is connected to ever-growing skepticism towards mainstream politics controlled by political and economic elites, as well as movements experiencing increasingly aggressive mechanisms of state control, surveillance and violence. Besides state and its institutions, many movements have become ever more critical of international institutions and NGOs as they are considered 'safety guards' of the neoliberal system and state power. Particularly strong critique has surfaced among social movements that struggle against displacement, dispossession and impoverishment caused by neoliberal development. In theoretical debate, these phenomena have been interpreted and conceptualized from various perspectives. While some, for example, argue that movements that collaborate with institutions are not "properly" political or radical, and thus consider them conformist, co-opted and de-politicized; others claim that by not allying or engaging with institutional actors, movements give up the possibility of counter-hegemonic contestation of neoliberalism. In my paper, I critically reflect on these theoretical discourses, empirically building on my research with social movement activists in India, Nepal and Bangladesh where women's participation and political engagement has increased and intensified in a broad spectrum of movements. This has been referred to as 'feminization of resistance', corresponding to the fact that it is the bodies and labor of women that constitute the heart of these struggles, and which, as a phenomenon, is intimately connected to feminization of poverty: neoliberal policies have had a devastating effect on women across the world. This paper analyses and brings forward especially feminist activists' views on autonomy, institutions, NGOs and political parties/political system in the context of their struggles against neoliberal development.

Global sisterhood and anti-sexual harassment in post-2011 Egypt
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While mythication of women's lives in the Middle East was central to the colonial mission, different kinds of logics guide today's encounters between representatives of NGOs or INGOs and the 'locals' who need to be helped. The 'local culture' is imagined, represented, and classified according to 'objective' measures of human development. Often away from lived realities with all their complexities, the knowledge on Arab societies, their needs and desires, is produced. This reification justifies all sorts of interventions often concealing material interests. The proliferation of domestic and international NGO's, often following the market logic and essentalized understanding of the Arab/Islamic culture, resulted in various campaigns seeking to help Arab and Muslim women. In the aftermath of the Egyptian revolution, we observed new trends in women's activism that rely on the notion of global 'sisterhood'. These projects are collaborative initiatives, often co-produced by international institutions and actors, NGOs, and domestic elites. They blur the analytical boundaries between the local and the global, and call our attention to actors and actions that do not fit neatly to one of these sides. This paper aims to scrutinize the dialectics of some of these projects with a specific focus on campaigns aiming to tackle sexual harassment. We ask how do the local and the global intersect in these projects? Who uses and benefits from these projects? What do they tell us about the local struggles and power dynamics? In order to answer these questions, we draw on our work in post-2011 Egypt, the coverage of these projects in the media and online spaces.

Women- and gender equality related issues in development policy and practice. Views from Finland and Poland.

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The objective of this paper is to present the initial findings of the doctoral research on development policy and practice that address women- and gender equality related issues. It explores case of Finland-long committed to gender issues donor, whose problems with translation of policy objectives into practice have been already pointed out; and Poland, a young donor country, who has financed a significant number of projects that targeted women and girls in developing countries. The research looks at how women's and gender issues are conceptualized in development policy. It investigates how gender oriented objectives are aligned with other development sectoral/ geographical objectives, and finally how the policy objectives are translated into actual development interventions. The data includes analysis of publicly available documents and expert interviews with officials from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland; The paper will focus mainly on the findings from Finland and briefly from Poland.

Finland's case: The paper will present an analysis of development policy programs (DPP) from 2004 till 2016 that looks particularly into how women and gender equality have been talked about and integrated into broader development paradigm presented in each DPP, and how it has changed from document to document. It then will turn to the practical part and investigate how the policy has been translated into practice by analyzing expert interviews along with documents such as guidelines and manuals.

Poland's case: The government of Poland does not promote gender equality and women's rights in its development cooperation beyond what is expected from a OECD DAC member and what stems from commitments to MDGs (in the past) and now SDGs. Yet, many funded projects targeted women as their main beneficiaries. In the analysis of the Polish case I try to answer questions: why Polish ngos target women in their projects, what issues were addressed, do those projects promote women's rights and gender equality?

Multi-speed Europe: What does this leave gender? The curious case of Greece.
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Since the arrival of the financial crisis in our continent, the voices calling for a two-speed or multi-speed Europe have grown louder than ever. Various solutions and policies have been suggested, neglecting however that the current situation is the result of certain political paths the European Union has willingly walked down for several decades. Even though it took us few years to realize it, nowadays it's common knowledge that the financial aspect of the crisis is just the tip of the iceberg. Even within the core of the so called "old Europe" underlies a deep social, political and humanitarian crisis with direct or indirect effects to our values and principals. The response of the European Union to all this, is the adoption of a multi-speed policy where countries develop – whatever that means – according to their economic mostly growth. However, this classification among the EU countries is not random. We can clearly talk about micro and macro segregation which starts from the structure of cities and expands to certain regions. As a result, we have the ex-soviet countries - and the rest of the eastern European ones -, together with all the Mediterranean states on the south, trying to catch up with the development of the central and northern nations. In order to follow the leading states such as Germany, they are prompted to adopt even harder neoliberal

policies which has led to exactly the opposite results; there is now a huge turn to conservatism, with the church regaining power and as a result interfering with state issues. That's important, because human and labor rights – and not only – are sacrificed continuously in the name of economic growth. As a result, in few of these countries, the agenda and public discussion about gender has not only been frozen but in some cases even regressed to a previous stage. Through the example of Greece, we will try to understand the dynamics of all the above and further discuss if a multi-speed Europe can promote or demote the gender agenda.

Gender in the 19th century: Birth and Rise of an International Feminist Consciousness
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This paper aims to analyze how a network of contacts developed among women in Europe and North America over the course of the nineteenth century and laid the groundwork for feminist consciousness. Those women created virtual communities through communication, support and a shared ideology. They saw the borders within Europe as bridges rather than barriers to improving their status. This "matrix" extended through England and the continent and included Scandinavia and Finland: Feminists like Anna Doyle Wheeler in Ireland, Fredrika Bremer in Sweden, Frances Power Cobbe in England.

This network blossomed because of increased travel opportunities, advances in women's literacy and education. Technological advances, transformations in early publishing, international post enabled women to engage in a variety of pursuits to create virtual communities in which a feminist consciousness began to emerge. Completion in 1866 of the first reliable transatlantic telegraph cable link strengthened a well-established tradition of transatlantic female communication.

By the turn of the century, these connections culminated in the establishment of international women's organization particularly the 1888 International Council of Women.

Thus, forged across boundaries of nationalists, language, ethnic origin, and even class, the European connections formed the beginning of an international women's movement.