Power, Intersectionality and the Politics of Belonging

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Foreword

The paper: *Power, Intersectionality and the Politics of Belonging* was presented by professor Nira Yuval-Davis as a keynote speech at the National Gender Conference for the Danish Association for Gender Research 2011. The conference was hosted by FREIA: The Feminist Research Centre at Aalborg University April 30. The conference was titled: *Power and Mobilization – locally, nationally and globally.*

Nira Yuval-Davis is Professor and Director of the Centre on Migration, Refugees and Belonging, East London University. She is the author of the influential book: *Gender and Nation* (1997), which has been translated into many different languages and she has co-edited*: Women, Citizenship and Difference*, Zed books 1999. Her new book is entitled: *The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations* and is published by Sage Publications, 2011.

The second key-note speech was given by Myra Marx Ferree and entitled: *Framing Inequalities in the US, Germany and the EU: Race, Class and Gender as Dynamic Intersections*. Myra Marx Ferree is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for German and European Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She is the author of the influential book *Shaping Abortion Discourse: Democracy and the Public Sphere in Germany and the US* (Cambridge University Press 2001), and *Global Feminism: Transnational Women's Activism, Organizing, and Human Rights*, 2006, co-edited with Alli Mari Tripp on New York University Press. Her new book is entitled: *Varieties of Feminisms*, Stanford.

FREIA is proud to be able to present Nira Yuval Davis' work for the community of gender researchers in Denmark and we are confident that this text can also serve as an inspiration for a broader audience of scholars working on issues related to power and intersectionality.

On behalf of FREIA
Birte Siim
Professor in Gender Research in the Social Sciences

Power, Intersectionality and the Politics of Belonging

Nira Yuval-Davis

This discussion on power and mobilization is based on my forthcoming book (*The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations*, Sage 2011) which focuses on issues on the intersection of the sociology of power and the sociology of emotions.

Politics involve exercise of power and different hegemonic political projects of belonging represent different symbolic power orders. In recent years, the sociological understanding of power has been enriched by the theoretical contributions of Michel Foucault (e.g. 1979; 1991a) and Pierre Bourdieu (e.g. 1984; 1990). Traditionally, power was understood and measured by the effects those with power had on others. However, feminists and other grass roots activists, following Paolo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), promoted a notion of 'empowerment' in which people would gain 'power of' rather than 'power on'. While this approach has been used too often to cover intra-communal power relations and the feminist 'tyranny of structurelesness' with which Jo Freeman (1970) described the dynamics of feminist politics, the notion of empowerment does fit alternative theoretical approaches to power which focus on symbolic power.

Max Weber's classical theory of power (1968), which differentiated between physical and charismatic powers, those dependent on individual resources and those emanating out of legitimate authority, has been supplemented, if not supplanted by other theoretical frameworks which sought to explain what is happening in the contemporary world where social, political and economic powers have become more diffused, decentered and desubjectified. The most popular of these new approaches have been those by Foucault (1979, 1986, 1991a) and Bourdieu (1977; 1984; 1990). Foucault constructed a notion of a 'disciplinary society' in which power increasingly operates through impersonal mechanisms of bodily discipline and a governmentality which escapes the consciousness and will of individual and collective social agents. Under such conditions, power as was formerly known, starts to operate only when resistance occurs.

However, as Ciaran Cronin (1996:56) points out, while Foucault's genealogical perspective of power is of crucial importance in understanding contemporary politics, it is too radical and monolithic, and therefore 'it is impossible to identify any social location of the exercise of power or of resistance to power'. This is where Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power, while sharing some of

Foucault's insights, such as the role of body practices as mediating relations of domination, can serve us better. The subject for Bourdieu is both embodied and socially constituted. His theory of practice (in which there is constant interaction between the individual symbolically structured and socially inculcated dispositions of individual agents which he calls '*habitus*' and the 'social field' which is structured by symbolically mediated relations of domination) offers a more empirically sensitive analytical framework for decoding impersonal relations of power.

Symbolic powers are of crucial importance when we deal with political projects of belonging, although more often than not, they are the focus of contestations and resistance. Adrian Favell (1999) defined the politics of belonging as 'the dirty work of boundary maintenance'. The boundaries the politics of belonging are concerned with are the boundaries of the political community of belonging, the boundaries which, sometimes physically, but always symbolically, separate the world population into 'us' and 'them'. The question of the boundaries of belonging, the boundaries of the Andersonain (1991[1983]) 'imagined communities', is central in all political projects of belonging. The politics of belonging involve not only the maintenance and reproduction of the boundaries of the community of belonging by the hegemonic political powers (within and outside the community) but also their contestation, challenge and resistance by other political agents. It is important to recognize, however, that such political agents would struggle both for the promotion of their specific position on the construction of collectivities and their boundaries as well as using these ideologies and positions in order to promote their own power positions within and outside the collectivities.

The politics of belonging also include struggles around the determination of what is involved in belonging, in being a member of such a community. As such, it is dialogical (Yuval-Davis & Werbner, eds, 1999) and encompasses contestations both in relation to the participatory dimension of citizenship as well as in relation to issues related to the status and entitlements such membership entails.

It is for this reason that we need to differentiate between belonging and the politics of belonging. Before discussing this in a little more detail, however, it is important to discuss why intersectionality and the epistemology of the situated gaze is so central to it.

Intersectionality

Epistemologically, intersectionality can be described as a development of feminist standpoint theory which claims, in somewhat different ways, that it is

vital to account for the social positioning of the social agent and challenged 'the god-trick of seeing everything from nowhere' (Haraway 1991:189) as a cover and a legitimisation of a hegemonic masculinist 'positivistic' positioning. Situated gaze, situated knowledge and situated imagination (Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002), construct differently the ways we see the world. However, intersectionality theory was interested even more in how the differential situatedness of different social agents constructs the ways they affect and are affected by different social, economic and political projects.

I do not have time here to get into the history of various inter- and intra-disciplinary debates on how to approach intersectionality. Instead, I shall just mention three main points that characterize my approach to intersectional analysis. Unlike many feminists, especially black feminists, who focus on intersectional analysis as specific to black and ethnic minorities women or, at least, to marginalized people, I see intersectionality as the most valid approach to analyze social stratification as a whole (see my paper in Lutz & al, 2011). Intersectional analysis does not prioritize one facet or category of social difference. However, unlike those who view the intersection of categories of social difference in an additive way, I see them as mutually constitutive. As to the question of how many facets of social difference and axes of power need to be analyzed – this is different in different historical locations and moments, and the decision on which ones to focus involve both empirical reality as well as political and especially ontological struggles. What is clear, however, is that when we carry out intersectional analysis, we cannot homogenize the ways any political project or claimings affect people who are differentially located within the same boundaries of belonging.

Belonging and the politics of belonging

It is important to differentiate between belonging and the politics of belonging. Belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling 'at home'. As Ghassan Hage (1997:103) points out, however, 'home is an on-going project entailing a sense of hope for the future'. (See also Taylor 2009). Part of this feeling of hope relates to home as a 'safe' space (Ignatieff, 2001). In the daily reality of early 21st century, in so many places on the globe, the emphasis on safety gets a new poignancy. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that feeling 'at home' does not necessarily only generate positive and warm feelings. It also allows the safety as well as the emotional engagement to be, at times, angry, resentful, ashamed, indignant (Hessel, 2010).

Belonging tends to be naturalized and be part of everyday practices (Fenster, 2004). It becomes articulated, formally structured and politicized only when it is threatened in some way. The politics of belonging comprise of specific political

projects aimed at constructing belonging to particular collectivity/ies which are themselves being constructed in these projects in very specific ways and in very specific boundaries (i.e. whether or not, according to specific political projects of belonging Jews could be considered to be German, for example, or abortion advocates can be considered Catholic).

As Ulf Hannerz (2002) claims, home is essentially a contrastive concept, linked to some notion of what it means to be away from home. It can involve a sense of rootedness in a socio-geographic site or be constructed as an intensely imagined affiliation with a distant local where self realization can occur.

Belonging

People can 'belong' in many different ways and to many different objects of attachments. These can vary from a particular person to the whole humanity, in a concrete or abstract way, by self or other identification, in a stable, contested or transient way. Even in its most stable 'primordial' forms, however, belonging is always a dynamic process, not a reified fixity – the latter is only a naturalized construction of particular hegemonic form of power relations. Belonging is usually multi-layered and – to use geographical jargon – multi-scale (Antonisch, 2010) or multerritorial (Hannerz, 2002).

To clarify our understanding of the notion of social and political belonging, it would be useful to differentiate between three major analytical facets in which belonging is constructed[1]. The first facet concerns social locations; the second relates to people's identifications and emotional attachments to various collectivities and groupings and the third relates to ethical and political value systems with which people judge their own and others' belonging/s. These different facets are interrelated, but cannot be reduced to each other.

Of course not all belonging/s are as important to people in the same way and to the same extent and emotions, as perceptions, shift in different times and situations and are more or less reflective. As a rule, the emotional components of people's constructions of themselves and their identities become more central the more threatened and less secure they become. In most extreme cases people would be willing to sacrifice their lives – and the lives of others - in order for the narrative of their identities and the objects of their identifications and attachments to continue to exist. After a terrorist attack, or after a declaration of war, people often seek to return to a place of less 'objective' safety, as long as it means they can be near their nearest and dearest, and share their fate.

[1] As will become clearer further on in the chapter, these facets can be reconstructed and reconfigured in many different ways by different political projects of belonging.

Ethical and political values

Belonging, therefore, is not just about social locations and constructions of individual and collective identities and attachments but also about the ways these are assessed and valued by self and others and this can be done in many different ways by people with similar social locations and who might identify themselves as belonging to the same community or grouping. They can vary not only in how important these locations and collectivities seem to be in one's life and that of others, but also in whether they consider this to be a good or a bad thing. Closely related to this are specific attitudes and ideologies concerning where and how identity and categorical boundaries are being/should be drawn, in more or less permeable ways, as different ideological perspectives and discourses construct them as more or less inclusive. It is in the arena of the contestations around these issues where we move from the realm of belonging into that of the politics of belonging.

The Politics of Belonging

In my book I discuss what I consider to be the major political projects of belonging in the contemporary world. The first one to be discussed is citizenship. I argue that citizenship should not be seen as limited to only state citizenship but should be understood as the participatory dimension of membership in all political communities. Moreover, I argue that it is impossible to understand state citizenship without analyzing the multi-layered structures of people's citizenships that include, in intersectional ways, citizenships of sub, cross and supra-state political communities. However, I also argue that in spite of this and in spite of the reconfigurations of states as a result of neo-liberal globalization, different state citizenships (or their absence) and the rights and entitlements associated with them, can (still?) be seen as the most important contemporary political projects of belonging, mobilizing people in popular resistance campaigns as well as determining to a great extent a global system of stratification.

Central to my argument in the book is the claim that the political project of states and that of nations overlaps only partially and is hegemonic only within specific locations and in specific historical moments. It is for this reason that nationalism and related ideologies are constructed in the book as an autonomous political project of belonging from that of citizenship of states.

Nationalist ideologies usually construct people, states and homelands as inherently and immutably connected. The fluidity and mobility of globalized economy, people's migrations and political/religious/social movements which have all transcend national and ethnic borders and boundaries (in spite of various attempts by states to control or contain them), have also deeply affected

nationalist political projects of belonging as well as the ethnocisation of many states. It contributed to the rise of political movements which embrace the conviviality and richness of multicultural national lives. However, it has also, and in a growing intensity, contributed to the rise of and the emotional power of autochthonic movements which claim possession of territories and states because 'we were here first'.

This is the other side of the growing legitimacy of the notion of indigeneity, which conversely has proved to be a potent tool for claiming rights of racialized minorities who survived colonization and settlement of Europeans in various parts of the world. Their struggles, although different from those of other racialized minorities of people who immigrated to those and other western countries, can be analyzed, on the one hand, as some forms of nationalist political projects of belonging. On the other hand, however, they can also be seen as part of the global rise of cosmopolitan political projects of belonging which rely on human rights discourse to claim their entitlement for individual and collective rights.

Another rising cluster of political projects of belonging are linked to religion. These can be linked to particular nationalist and ethnic movements or constitute parts of cosmopolitan global movements. However, some of the most important political projects of belonging of our times are religious fundamentalist (or absolutist) movements which have arisen in all major religions and are part – especially some Muslim and Christian fundamentalist movements - of the global 'clash of civilizations' discourse which has come to replace the cold war as a dichotomizing discourse of the globe.

Although there have been feminist political projects focusing on all major political projects of belonging – citizenship, nationalism, religion, cosmopolitanism (Yuval-Davis, 2011) I consider 'ethics of care' to be more specifically a feminist political project of belonging. It relates more to the ways people should relate and belong to each other rather than to what should be the boundaries of belonging. Nevertheless, in the last instance, the question of boundaries cannot really be avoided once we start questioning who cares for whom and what are the emotional and the power relations which are involved in this interaction.

Virginia Held (2005) claims that the care social and political model developed out the mother-child relationships model guarantees mutual equality and respect among people. In reality, however, although children can wield a lot of emotional power on their parents and others who love them, they do not have the same power as the carer adults and can easily be deprived and abused in many ways. Pointing out, as the feminists who developed the political project of

'the ethics of care' all do, that everyone at certain times of their lives becomes dependent on care, can be the normative basis for the development of 'ethics of care' as a necessary element of social and political solidarity, but cannot guarantee it. It is for this reason that Martha Nussbaum (2001) argues for an approach to compassion in public life that operates at 'both the level of individual psychology and the level of institutional design' (ibid: 403). Although she recognizes that some emotions are at least potential allies of, and indeed constituents in, rational deliberation (ibid: 454), she extends her analysis to include the recognition that public institutions play a role in shaping possible emotions (see also Perry 6 et al, 2007), as well as the role individuals play in creating institutions according to their own values and imagination. Those, in their turn, influence the development of values such as compassion in others.

Nevertheless, in order to be able to influence, let alone construct, public institutions, emotions such as care and compassion are not sufficient, unless there is power to make them affective. It needs to be recognized, for instance, that while caring for others is the opposite of neo-liberal ethics which does not recognize notions such as 'public good' or 'public interest' and feminists have developed 'ethics of care' as an ideological and moral alternative to this, it can be argued that the adoption of 'ethics of care' by women, especially those who work in the care sector, facilitates and oils, rather than obstructs and resists, the smooth working of globalized neo liberalism which depends on local and global chains of care.

As Martin Luther King Jr, stated 'What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive. And love without power is at its best power correcting everything that stands against love' (quoted in Gregory, 2008:195).

Care and political projects of belonging

'Power at its best'. Without power as a resource to, at least, resist if not affect positive change, the normative values of care and love of feminist 'ethics of care' can have very little social and political influence and can, at best, be perceived as utopian. However, as Joan Tronto (2005) has shown, using excerpt of Thomas More's *Utopia* on denizens, situated gazes can delineate boundaries of recognition and care even within Utopias. What is most important to recognize, however, is that not every combination of power and care/love would be compatible with feminist 'ethics of care' political projects of belonging or with that of Martin Luther King, Jr.

While feminists focused on care and love associated with traditional gendered western femininity as it is constructed in women's roles in family and society, we need to be aware that the heteronormative constructions of 'femininity' and

‘masculinity’ as complementary opposites, as is constructed in hegemonic discourses on these roles, have detrimental effects on women’s powers and autonomy, let alone completely excludes the experiences and values of sexual minorities.

At the same time it is clear that even in such hegemonic discourses care is not exclusive the property of womanhood. There can be no clearer sign in such hegemonic discourses that men care about their community and society than their traditional readiness to perform the ultimate citizenship duty - to sacrifice their lives and to kill others for the sake of the nation. Moreover, as Cynthia Enloe (1990) pointed out, fighting for the nation has been often constructed as fighting for the sake of ‘womenandchildren’. More concretely, it has been shown that men care not only for the notions of home and homeland but for the other men in their unit with whom they are fighting (Kaplan, 2006; Yuval-Davis, 1997, ch.5). One of the main worries of military commanders about including women in combat military unit has been that their presence will disturb the male bonding which is at the heart of military performance. On their side, women as carers are not only constructed as the biological and cultural reproducers of the nation, but are also the men’s ‘helpmates’ – their roles in the formal and informal labour market has been usually defined according to the range of duties demanded from the men, fulfilling, in addition to their traditional reproductive duties, all the tasks the men left when called to fulfil national duties in times of war and other crises (Yuval-Davis, 1985). Caring, in its different gendered forms, therefore, has been at the heart of the performativity, a well as narratives of resistance, of national belonging.

Nowadays, in many states, serving in the military is not any more a male citizenship duty. Just when women started to be allowed to join the military formally in more equitable manner, the military was transformed from a national duty into a form of a professional career, like other agents of national external and internal security. This is also a time in which usually in these states, women bear less children and the national population as a whole starts to age.

This is also the time in which women come to participate in higher and higher percentages in the national labour market, just when, due to neo-liberal globalized economy demands, the nature of service work itself changes and becomes more demanding. This is the time when the ‘care gap’ appears, not only in the domestic sphere, but in the national sphere as well and when the growing dependence on migrant and immigrant workers in various sectors of the economy but especially the care one, raises issues of racialized boundaries of the nation and the various inclusionary and exclusionary political projects of belonging – secular and religious - and the emotions associated with them.

However, maybe even more importantly, this is the time in which in many countries, especially in the West, the percentage of citizens who care enough to vote in the elections falls beyond any previous known rate of the population, especially among younger generations who have grown up under the transformed state institutions as a result of globalized neo-liberalism. Neo-liberal morality of the 'selfish gene' seems to be celebrating, as people cannot see any relationships between engaging in the state and their own interests and concerns. A cynical illustration of this reality has been the demand – from all major political parties in the UK, for instance - to agree for savage cuts in state benefits and services and/or freezing workers' salaries, when the profitability of banks and most of the incomes of the highest earners are largely not been affected or significantly interfered with. Of course, the distance – if not contradiction - between the care demanded from citizens, driven by feelings of entitlements (Squire, 2007) of states and the interest of those who rule states can take also very different forms, such as when in ethnocracies, citizens who belong to non hegemonic minorities are still demanded to show loyalty and care to the state which frames of reference is constructed in terms excluding their collectivities.

The probably obvious, and yet groundbreaking at its time, element in Benedict Anderson's theory of nationalism in his book *Imagined Communities* (1983) has been a recognition that nationalism, although modern and correlative of the age of enlightenment, is not based on rationality. Like other 'modernist' theorists of nationalism (e.g. Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Althusser 1971), Anderson linked the rise of nationalism to a particular stage of the rise of industrialisation and capitalism (print capitalism in his case), and saw it as replacing religion. In this respect, he was wrong, as we can see that most contemporary nationalist ideologies incorporate, rather than fully replace, religious belonging. However, he was right to emphasize the passion which is at the base of the nationalist sentiment in which, like religious or familial attachment, there is no actual rational reason and self interest involved.

As Anderson (ibid) argues, this care is not based on any notion of self interest, and this is where it gets its strength from, as it is a substitute construction of 'the sacred'. 'The sacred', constituting the heart of the religious sphere, then, inspires probably the strongest notions of loyalty and sacrifice. The notion of martyrdom is widely spread in various religions, especially the monotheistic ones. The notion of absolute sacrifice is not limited to sacrifice of self but also of those the self cares most about, as is illustrated in the stories when a father is prepared to sacrifice his son (Abraham and Isaac) as well as a mother her children – at least

in the Jewish tradition in the story of Hanna and her seven children[2] where she preferred them to be killed rather than to betray the Jewish faith.

One of the factors contributing to the growing strength of religious movements all over the world is that religious movements and organizations are often the only ones who put time, energy and funds in caring for the poor, the homeless, the slum neighbourhood, especially after the growing privatisation of the welfare state and the collapse of socialist and communist movements.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that there are growing secular global social movements concerned with war, poverty and global warming which transcend borders and boundaries, sharing common human values rather than ethnic, national and religious belonging in cosmopolitan practices and discourses of global and human care.

In discussions of familial, national and religious sentiments, it is sometimes taken for granted that people would not be prepared to sacrifice their lives for any more abstract – or cosmopolitan – cause. And yet we know that strangers and outsiders volunteered to fight for various socialist revolutions – Che Guevara probably embodies this sentiment more than anyone else - and in the Spanish civil war in the 1930s, for example, the international brigade had an important role to play, ideologically and militarily (Richardson, 1982). In recent years the international solidarity movement in support of the Palestinians[3] for instance, has also been politically important as other similar organizations in other militarized conflict zones, such as Iraq and Afghanistan[4]. Although some of the volunteers have religious motivation, for others it was the visceral cosmopolitan sentiment of caring and identification with oppressed strangers and the need to fight for their human rights to be recognized.

Feminist 'ethics of care' morality does not ground its ontological base in membership in specific national, ethnic or religious communities but on transcending familial relationships into a universal principle of interpersonal relationships. We need to explore, however, what, if at all, is the relationship between the discourse of 'ethics of care' and collectivity boundaries. Such exploration should not be carried out only in relations to feminist ethics of care but also in relation to other similar moral philosophies which put 'love' at the basis of the good society.

As illustrated by Donovan and Adams' work on animal welfare, (2007) there is one basic similarity which is assumed in all ethics of care theories which is, to

[2] http://www.jewish-history.com/occident/volume7/jun1849/hannah.html
[3] http://palsolidarity.org/
[4] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_shield

use Alison Assiter's words (2009:101) that 'all human beings are needy and all suffer' (ibid:101).

Following Kierkegaard's call to love all human beings and Levinas' insistence that care and love should not be mutual or conditional, she also argues that 'sometimes, loving another will involve respecting their differences from oneself to the extent that one is able.' (ibid:102). The position expressed in the above quote raises two issues which are of fundamental importance to feminist and other emancipatory politics of belonging. Firstly, what criteria should be used to decide when such difference should or should not be respected, and secondly, how does one determine their ability to respect such differences. I would like to examine these two issues via examining transversal feminist politics (Yuval-Davis, 1994, 1997, 2006; Cockburn &Hunter, 1999).

Care, belonging and feminist transversal politics

Transversal feminist political movements are one form of cosmopolitan dialogical politics. The participants, while being engaged with 'others' belonging to different collectivities across borders and boundaries, act not as representatives of identity categories or groupings but rather as advocates, how they are reflectively engaged in 'rooting' and 'shifting' and how their strength lies in the construction of common epistemological understandings of particular political situations rather than of common political action. It was also mentioned that transversal politics, unlike 'rainbow coalitions', depend on shared values rather than on specific political actions, as differential positioning might dictate prioritising different political actions and strategies. Most relevant to our discussion here, it was described how transversal politics encompass difference by equality and while continuously crossing collectivity boundaries, the transversal solidarity is bounded by sharing common values.

Shared values as the basis of solidarity and cooperation is generally rejected by ethics of care feminists. The bond of mothers to their children and of carers to their dependents is not that of shared values but that of love and need. The ethics of care feminists and others might share the value of helping the needy, but there is no such a demand for the needy to necessarily hold such values. This is an asymmetrical politics of solidarity based on the Levinas principle.

Transversal politics, on the other hand, are based on the symmetrical politics of the Buberian 'I-You' approach. But the symmetry and reciprocity is not that of commercial interest, as Levinas claimed in his critique of Buber, but of the reciprocity of trust. While one might be engaged in defending the rights and/or helping to fulfil the needs of any individual and collective human beings whatever their values, common political belonging depends on shared values,

although these shared values encompass intersectional individual and collective differential positionings. This trust, based on common values, also differentiates transversal politics from the Habermasian (Habermas et al, 2006) deliberative democracy approach[5].

This is of crucial importance because in this way the transversal perspective helps us to judge which differences matter when and where, and to differentiate between care and compassion towards the oppressed, whoever and wherever they are, and that of accepting them all as long term potential political allies in any case of political mobilization[6]. Southall Black Sisters in London, for instance, are very active in the defence of women of all ethnic and religious communities from domestic violence and abuse, rejecting any cultural and religious justification of such acts. At the same time, they are not the political allies and oppose those who have sought to solve domestic violence caused by migrant men by deporting them from Britain – after all, men of all classes and ethnic communities commit the crime of domestic violence but are not punished by deportation. Racist solutions should not be the answer to sexist problems and SBS would not establish a transversal political alliance with those who do not share their anti-racist values.

However, although Southall Black Sisters have been an effective campaigning organization in many ways and even managed to overthrow attempts by politically hostile local authority to stop their funding, they do not have the power to stop such deportations.

Examining feminist ethic of care and feminist transversal dialogical politics brings us back to the question of power and its relations to ethics and to the words of wisdom of Martin Luther King quoted earlier that –

> 'What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive. And love without power is at its best power correcting everything that stands against love.' (quoted in Gregory, 2008:195).

[5] In the importance of trust in public political life and the ineffectivity of accountability as its replacement in public culture, please see Onora O'neil's 2002 BBc Reith lectures http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/reith2002/

[6] Recently there have been major debates and political crises in two major human rights organizations, Amnesty International in London and the Centre for Constitutional Rights in the USA when major feminist activists working in both organizations accused them of crossing the boundary of defending human rights victims and championing them as if they are not only victims but also human rights defenders and thus giving their views political legitimacy please see http://www.human-rights-for-all.org/ and http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/nov/15/international-criminal-justice-yemen

I would argue that a feminist political project of belonging, therefore, should be based on transversal 'rooting', 'shifting', mutual respect and mutual trust. It should be caring, but should differentiate clearly between caring towards transversal allies and caring towards the needy. Above all it should not neglect to reflect upon the relations of power not only among the participants in the political dialogue but also between these participants and the glocal carriers of power who do not share their values who need to be confronted, influenced, and when this is not possible – resisted.

Concluding remarks

Politics of belonging is about the intersection of the sociology of power with the sociology of emotions, but it is the normative values lens which filters the meaning of both to individuals and collectivities, differentially situated along intersectional glocal social locations.

However, it is not, or not just, ideological and emotional 'consciousness raising' which homogenizes discourse, but specific relations of power. But power, in order to be effective in the long term, has to be internalized and naturalized. The problem of feminist, as well as other emancipatory political movements of belonging, is how to gain power enough to change society, without internalizing, on the way, at least some of the assumptions about 'what works' which, at the end, would have them co-opted. The case of 'gender mainstreaming' is but one example, but there are also many others[7].

I would like to conclude by quoting St. Lukes, who predicted that 'The Wretched will inherit the Earth', which some, like Anat Pick (2010) would claim is the religious formulation of the mission of the Left. However, she also claims that this is an impossible mission, as granting power to the powerless without just transfer rather than a transcendence of relations of power is a contradiction in terms except in extraordinary and very short moments of grace (eg the 18 days of resistance of the Egyptians masses during February 2011). While I find this warning sobering but valid in many ways, this view also involved a homogenous construction of power which I take exception to, ignoring the complexities of different systems of power which have different systems of checks and balances which might be mobilized, to a lesser or greater extent in the containment, contestation and redistribution of power and other social resources. On a more basic level this view of power of the powerless ignores the insights of Bourdieu which views power as constituted by constant interaction between the symbolically structured and socially inculcated

[7] See, e.g. AWID, 2004; Walby, 2003; Yuval-Davis, 2005.

dispositions of individual agents and the social field structured by symbolically mediated relations of domination.

So – is our mission impossible? Probably. But we must carry on in the Gramscian way – with the pessimism of the mind and the optimism of the will. As the Zimbabwian women's slogan says – 'If you can talk, you can sing; if you can walk, you can dance'. As my friend Helen Meekosha has shown – you can dance even in a wheelchair.

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