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Globalisation at the Crossroads

Rethinking Inequalities and Boundaries

Places of poverty and powerlessness: INGOs working 'at home'

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Abstract

The search for sustainable transformatory development practice, which distances itself from colonial binaries and representations has been the focus of decades of scholarship (Friere 1972; Ferguson 1990; Cooke and Dar 2008; Dogra 2012; McCourt and Johnson 2012). Recent research suggests that INGOs are central in this regard, whether in their governance structures (Fowler 2012), the way they fundraise and advocate (Yanacopulos 2016), manage and disseminate knowledge (Narayanswamy 2016), engage with others (Moyles 2012) or re-think their approach to programme design (Crooks and Mouradian 2012). This paper moves these debates forward by providing empirical evidence of the value of domestic programming in this 'project'. Drawing on three case studies of Oxfam GB, Islamic Relief and Oxfam America, the paper finds evidence of INGOs' search for a programme strategy, which moves minimising the violence of 'othering' from theory to practice.

The paper is based on a larger research project, which considers the three INGOs' decisions to establish domestic poverty programmes. It uses data collected in 2010-2011 from 41 semi-structured interviews with INGO staff and partners and corporate and archive documentation. A three-dimensional approach to power (Gaventa 1980) is used to explore the factors that drove the decisions and what this reveals about their conceptualisations of development, drawing tentative conclusions about what this means for a transformative development practice.

Findings indicate that these domestic programmes incorporate dimensions of a development practice, which: make visible a theory of poverty as powerlessness, distances it from the violence of 'othering' and is grounded in an ethic in which everyone matters. These findings point the way forward to an approach to development in which its spaces, actors and practices are challenged and opened to new interpretations. If development practice and intervention design can incorporate considerations of the invisible power of myths and symbols, an

ethical transformatory, decolonized development practice may be possible.

Keywords

INGOs, power; othering; ethics; transformation.

Panel: Postcolonialism and Development: Bridging divides in theory and practice (361)

DRAFT PAPER

Introduction

The search for sustainable transformatory development practice, which distances itself from colonial binaries and representations has been the focus of decades of scholarship. Recent research suggests that INGOs are central in this regard, whether in their governance structures, the way they fundraise and advocate, manage and disseminate knowledge, engage with others or re-think their approach to programme design. This paper moves these debates forward by providing empirical evidence of the value of domestic programming in this 'project'. Drawing on three case studies of Oxfam GB, Islamic Relief and Oxfam America, the paper finds evidence of INGOs' search for a programme strategy, which moves minimising the violence of 'othering' from theory to practice. Before setting out the paper's scope, a brief summary of the origin of these three domestic programmes follows.

Oxfam GB (OGB) established its UK Poverty Programme (UKPP) in 1995 after a series of internal consultations starting in 1976. The process was characterised by widely differing views between staff, Trustees and volunteers (Blake, 1991). Discussions at the 1994 Assembly for OGB stakeholders focussed almost entirely on this issue, preparation for which may have been the source of very negative media coverage in the summer of 1994¹. By 2010, the UKPP extended across the themes of a decent living, respect for people living in poverty and gender and race equality. Its focus was on capitalising on 'our place as domestic arm of international organisation as our unique selling point in the UK context' (Oxfam GB, 2006, p. 13). Spending on the UKPP is not disaggregated in any of Oxfam

¹ For example, The Daily Mail (3 September 1994) carried an article entitled 'Stick to the Third World 'insulting' Oxfam told'. The Mail on Sunday (4 September) and Daily Telegraph (5

GB's annual reports but other sources enable a total programme expenditure from 2006 to 2013 to be estimated at £8.9 million (International Aid Transparency Initiative, 2014). At the time of writing the OGB's UK programme has a team of 9 people in England with separate teams in Scotland and Wales, led by Head of UK Programme, working on challenging economic inequalities, women's access to decent work and food banks.

Islamic Relief UK's (IR) domestic programme has its roots in work by Islamic Relief US in 1995 at the festival of *Eid el-Fitr*² in Los Angeles when IR US partnered with a local clinic in an *Eid* celebration and toy distribution. From 2004, a series of ad hoc grants were provided to individuals in need in the UK. In 2006 a survey was undertaken of individual donor funding preferences, which indicated they would not be interested in funding work in the UK (Kheriji, 2010). This led to a pause in the plans for a more strategic domestic programme until reinvigorated by the organisational review in 2009, which froze the domestic programme budget at £250,000 for two years. The first strategic partnership under IR's newly launched domestic programme, emerging out of the organisational review, was with Mosaic³ and their *Inside Out Appeal*, for work with Muslim offenders (Malik, 2011, Freeman, 2011). The review also committed to a more structured and resourced community development programme in the UK for which there would be a dedicated member of staff reporting to a new Head of Programmes. A part time Head of UK Programmes was recruited in 2012 and a UK Programme Coordinator in 2016 with strategic priority given to developing domestic programming throughout Islamic Relief's global network by 2016 (Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2016, p. 45).

The Oxfam America (OA) domestic programme was established in 1992 with a US Regional Office and its own Director to run the programme. There was a three-part rationale for the new programme, according to a report of the *Completing the Globe* seminar for all of Oxfam International's domestic

² This is the festival marking the end of Ramadan.

³ Mosaic was founded by Prince Charles to work with young people from deprived communities. IR and Mosaic signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2011.

programmes⁴ in 2001 (Bennett, 2002). Firstly, it was a response to the growing conviction that poverty was caused by systemic issues and should be understood from a truly global perspective. Secondly, Oxfam had much it could contribute from its global experience to addressing the interconnected issues of poverty, hunger and marginalisation faced by communities in the US. Finally, it was a response to the accusation of inconsistency by southern partners. The programme establishment was made possible by a donation from a major donor who, after hearing from the Executive Director that they were thinking about starting a US programme, agreed to a large donation to endow the start up (Hammock, 2010). Early work of the OA domestic programme funded civil rights organisations around issues of access to income and jobs (Sinclair, 2012). There were 5 staff working on the programme until Hurricane Katrina in 2006 when it increased to 12. By 2009 12% of total OA programme expenditure was on the US domestic programme, decreasing to 9% in 2010 with work in the four states of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and North Carolina on the Decent Work Programme, post-Katrina Gulf State Recovery and anti-poverty work.

The paper first sets out the debating terrain around transformatory development, demonstrating how it has become the focus of efforts in policy, practice and theory to distance development from its postcolonial critiques. While acknowledging the breadth of these debates (from the boundaries of what development studies is, across to aspects of project management), this paper focuses on international development NGOs (INGOs), situating them at the heart of efforts to find a transformatory development practice. INGOs have been subject to severe criticism for their overly simplistic and reductionist representations and conceptualisations of development, as well as how they 'do' development. I argue that this is a deeply problematic and at times uncomfortable location for INGOs whose staff are often acutely aware of the 'double bind' of development, which while working with deeply held aspirations hopes of communities, operates through practices that 'banalize' these hopes (de Vries, 2008).

⁴ Representatives of Oxfam Community Aid Abroad (Australia), Intermon Oxfam (Spain), Novib Oxfam Netherlands, Oxfam America, Oxfam Canada, Oxfam Hong Kong, Oxfam GB and Oxfam International attended the seminar, 13-15 June 2001.

The second section of the paper outlines the methodology used in this empirical study of three INGO domestic poverty programmes established by Oxfam GB, Islamic Relief and Oxfam America. It introduces the approach to power used in the data analysis, based on John Gaventa's three-dimensional approach. Section three sets out the research findings and offers empirical evidence of domestic programmes as a **specific strategic device for INGOs to signal their 'postcolonial distancing'**. It draws conclusions about the ways in which INGO domestic programmes offer the potential to bridge the divide between development (practice and theory) and its postcolonial critiques.

The link between these critiques, the existence and nature of a 'transformatory' development and the related challenges for INGOs are first explored here.

Postcolonialism, transformatory development and INGOs

The postcolonial critique of development revolves around the **continuities and discontinuities between the 'colonial encounter'** and development studies, its practice and theory (Kothari, 2005, p. 51). These are well-rehearsed arguments (Escobar, 1992, Ferguson, 1990, Crush, 1995), which are summarised here in order to draw out the context in which the search for a transformatory development practice by INGOs is situated. The first of three threads of these continuity debates is around the **origins of development theory and practice**. Empirical evidence, for example, traces clear linkages between the way colonial indirect rule worked with intermediaries and local politicians and the emergence of 'participatory management' (Cooke, 2008). Likewise, Cowen and Shenton (1996) locate the origins of the concept of development in industrialising Europe's notion of 'trusteeship'. These examples aim to reveal continuities previously concealed, a process Kothari refers to as 'obscuring a colonial genealogy' (2005, p. 50).

The **representation and treatment of 'the other'** in development theory and practice is the second domain of colonial continuity. Recent scholarship reveals the way that online platforms and INGOs represent those living in poverty using

two-dimensional and counterproductive caricatures: the passive victim, smiling woman, worthy men (Schwittay, 2015) or innocent children and deserving 'Third world' women (Dogra, 2012). Through these devices people and countries become 'development categories' (Shrestha, 1995) and 'othered' objects of development devoid of socio-political contexts (Mitchell, 1995). Central to the attempt to re-theorise development is the question of the 'distant other' as its object. Considerable attention has been paid to the basis of the obligation to this 'other' in the context of development assistance (Gasper, 2008, Shaw, 2005, Pogge, 2005, Kuper, 2002, Reidy, 2004, Appiah, 2006, Singer, 2009, Miller, 2010).

The third thread of continuity between the colonial encounter and development is **approach to knowledge**. *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (Sachs, 1992) encapsulates this set of postcolonial critiques. Terms such as 'poverty' and 'development' carry with them deep histories and sets of assumptions that belie their supposed technical neutrality, and privilege some types of knowledge over others (Rahnema, 1992b, Esteva, 1992). Development knowledge has often hidden behind this 'neutrality' and become dominated, in practice, by technical interventions that have lost their potential for radical change (Ferguson, 1990, Fernando, 2011). Theorists such as Bourdieu have demonstrated the power that unspoken assumptions and embedded practices can wield, both symbolically (the ways reality is perceived) and through real effects (1977, 1999). Others have taken up these debates at the level of real effects and offered alternative approaches to knowledge in development work (Chambers, 1997, Powell, 2006). A recent study explores, for example, the use of NGO documentation centres in India, concluding that they fail to respond to the 'contextual embedded nature of existing Southern knowledge systems' (Narayanaswamy, 2016, p. 124).

Testament to this scholarship, insisting on the pre-1945 origins of development theory and practice, is the fact that few today would dispute this continuity. The focus of the debate has shifted to what these origins mean for development today. **Do these roots imbue the very notion and practice of contemporary development inherently oppressive, violent and exclusionary? Or can it be**

redeemed by better and more appropriate practice? These are the preoccupations of development ethics.

Development ethics literature has its roots in critiques of approaches to development as economic growth, which queried both the 'means' and 'ends' of development (Seers, 1969). Goulet prefers the term 'liberation' over 'development', as it captures the goal of 'existence itself: to provide all men with the opportunity to lead full human lives' (1971, p. x). He argued that 'development ethics' was a new discipline that moved development away from its roots in the discipline of economics, considering broader questions of values. Goulet's framework specifically addressed three questions: what is ethically desirable development? What are the ethical means of achieving it? What are the ethical dilemmas that arise from the practices of development (Goulet, 1997)?

The focus of development ethics continues to be on identifying and refining the 'means' and 'ends' of development, their foundations and relationship with each other. Sen and Nussbaum, for example, ground their ethic of functioning and capability in human experience rather than an external metaphysics and argue that development ends are what humans intrinsically value (cited in Crocker, 1992). Development ethics also queries the nature of development itself, asking, for example, whether it is intrinsically violent and exclusionary and, if so, can development practice ever fulfil the promise of its ends (Goulet, 1971)? Much of the literature on NGO practice focuses on development 'means', asking, for example, whether or not projects can ever achieve sustainable change (Hira and Parfitt, 2004, Kerr, 2008), whether practices of participation are sufficiently inclusive (Rahnema, 1992a, McGee, 2002) or whether and how NGOs can ever plan for socially progressive ends (Ferguson, 1990, Escobar, 1992, Choudry and Kapoor, 2013, McCourt and Johnson, 2012).

Demonstrating that 'emancipatory' or 'transformatory' development is possible and can respond to each of these critiques has become the goal of many who argue that development practice is not inherently characterised by violent 'othering' (Moyles, 2007, McCourt and Johnson, 2012, Moyles, 2012). These

approaches have diverse labels - 'emancipatory' (Parfitt, 2009, Parfitt, 2013), 'another' (Hettne, 1990, p. 471) or 'alternative' (McCourt and Johnson, 2012, Parfitt, 2013). This search for a development in which its means do not confound or 'banalize' its ends is considered futile by some (Bebbington et al., 2008, de Vries, 2008). Others insist that individuals can and should act in response to their transnational responsibilities to others (Miller, 2010), especially those who have benefitted from the human rights-deficit of others bypassed by global institutions (Pogge, 2005).

The argument for individual agency and the use of pragmatic judgement in development practice is used as further evidence that development ends and means are not incompatible. McCourt and Johnson (2012) identify the space for action by individuals in the 'constrained autonomy' of managers. They also argue that ends and means are constitutive of each other, requiring development agency staff to exercise their practical judgements to achieve both in everyday practices.

Working differently within this context will involve the continuous exploration of power relations, trying to stay with the otherness of others, through negotiation, reflection and further negotiation, so that there is greater co-creation of the end and means of development. (p. 553)

Likewise, Moyles (2012, p. 544) suggests that there is the potential for contingent practices, 'reducing the physical and psychological spaces between developers' and beneficiary communities, thereby enabling the dispute between managerialists and aid-rejectionist radicals to move forward. There is much here which resonates with INGO domestic programmes, particularly the search for a development practice that is characterised by 'alterity' (Parfitt, 2010) and reciprocal obligations (Dallmayr, 2002), rather than the violence of exclusion (Gulrajani, 2011).

In the light of these concerns and debates, there is clearly an immediate attraction for INGOs who wish to distance themselves from nineteenth century understandings of trusteeship (Cowen and Shenton, 1996), also characterised as 'what can 'we' do for 'them'" (Banuri, 1990 cited in Cowen and Shenton, 1996, p. 453). Even amongst a set of deeply critical studies of 'NGOization', there is

evidence that NGOs can be forces for *and* against radical transformative politics (Choudry and Kapoor, 2013). The question left is then, what might this transformatory development practice look like in the hands of INGOs?

There is a rich literature, which probes the legitimacy deficit of INGOs (Edwards et al., 1999, Thaut et al., 2012, Collingwood and Logister, 2005, Pallas et al., 2015, Walton et al., 2016, BOND, 2015). At the heart of much of this debate is the question: can INGOs ever be part of a truly transformational development, addressing the three threads of postcolonial critique examined above? INGOs are also criticised for instrumentalising their relationships with *domestic* publics through the need to fundraise. Research undertaken by IPPR and ODI concluded, for example, that beyond fundraising campaigns, there was very little engagement of the UK public by INGOs, possibly contributing to their weak understanding of the complexities of aid and development work (Glennie et al., 2012). The dilemma of INGOs is to be situated at the nexus of this tension between the need for resource and for an informed public. One study concludes that:

NGO attempts to articulate alternatives is strongly circumscribed by being embedded within a neoliberal aid and by needing to draw support from constituencies in the North whose lives are defined by highly commodified forms of consumption’ (Yanacopulos and Bailie Smith, 2008, p. 313)

Prescriptions for INGOs in responding to these critiques include changing the way they: govern and structure themselves (Fowler, 2012, Elbers and Schulpen, 2014); engage with the public in the global North (Yanacopulos, 2016); manage and disseminate knowledge (Narayanaswamy, 2016), and approach their programme design (Njoroge et al., 2009). In a direct call to INGO staff to reconsider how they reflect on relationships with others with whom they work and are in relations of power, Moyles advocates for ‘trying to stay with the otherness of others...so there is greater co-creation of the ends and means of development’ (2012, p. 553). This puts INGOs right at the heart of the debates explored above, drawing together postcolonial critiques of development around colonial continuities in knowledge, power and othering while searching for a practice which avoids these forms of ‘violence’. Their domestic programmes

offer one window into these considerations.

Fundamentally, the postcolonial critique focuses on the practices and theories of development that have stripped it of considerations of power, with INGOs at the centre of this dilemma. This is the starting point for this paper, enabling an analysis that is driven by frameworks of power. There have been a variety of responses by those involved in the practice and study of development to the expressed need for development studies to engage with issues of power. From the perspective of practice, Oxfam GB's publication, *From Poverty to Power* (Green, 2008), is an explicit articulation of Oxfam's approach to poverty as powerlessness. There is now a realisation that for development studies research to engage with power it needs to acknowledge its history and current reality as a political undertaking, rather than stripped of its memory and political content (Lewis, 2013, Olukoshi, 2007, Tvedt, 2007). The next section of the paper outlines how this research attempts to develop and use an analytical framework which foregrounds power.

Methodology and approaches to power

The paper is based on a larger research project, which considered the decisions of Oxfam GB, Oxfam America, Islamic Relief UK and Save the Children Denmark to establish domestic poverty programmes. It focuses on the first three of these INGOs, using data collected in 2010-2011 from 41 semi-structured interviews with INGO staff and partners along with over 150 archive documents. A three-dimensional approach to power (Gaventa, 1980) together with Bourdieu's theory of practice (1977) is used to explore the factors that drove the decisions and what this reveals about their conceptualisations of development, drawing tentative conclusions about what this means for a transformative development practice. The empirical data provides the evidence-base for this paper.

As demonstrated above in the summary review of literature around postcolonialism, transformatory development and INGOs, it was important for this study to select a framework, which offers a disaggregated understanding of the ways that power can work in practice and within the context of INGOs. Two

approaches create an integrated framework for considering power in this research: the concepts of *habitus*, field and *doxa* from Bourdieu's theory of practice (Bourdieu and Nice, 1977, 1991, 1999) and Gaventa's three-dimensional approach to power (1980, 2006).

The use of Bourdieu's theory of practice in this investigation is based on a four-part rationale. Most fundamentally, the theory offers explanatory and analytical potential in understanding INGO domestic programmes and what may otherwise remain unseen and unrecognized. For example, the study contends that the INGOs' theory of poverty, development ethic, anxieties about the future and institutional practices constitute the organisational *habitus*. The concept helps us explore how these dispositions work within an organisation to maintain or disrupt the *habitus*, revealing its constructed and constructing nature through a process of 'rupture' and 'reconstruction of genesis' (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 4).

Secondly, the conceptual 'tools' of *habitus*, field and *doxa* offer a robust engagement with issues of power. *Habitus*, as noted above embodies both structured and structuring power. In addition, the structuring process of a field such as 'international development' can bring about an alignment between the way issues are described and understood and the way they are. The real and practical effects of this 'ontological promotion' (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 376) are evidenced in Moyles' study of donor and government impacts on INGO behaviour (2007). The structuring capacity of both *habitus* and field can also be seen in the '*doxa*' or a universe of the 'undiscussed' and self-evident (Bourdieu and Nice, 1977, p. 166).

Thirdly, Bourdieu's notions of 'border zones' between areas of specialism and *doxa* offer considerable analytical possibilities when applied to the field of international development and the domestic programmes of INGOs (1994). They are immediately attractive when considering why INGOs choose to work domestically. For example, we can query what might sit within the *doxic* universe of international development and what the implications are of moving its boundaries. It is particularly useful when considering ideas perceived as

counter-intuitive, such as INGOs having domestic poverty programmes. The paper's approach to these concepts is that the organisational *habitus* of INGOs is situated within the field of international development which is itself located within a *doxic* universe of unspoken assumptions and unasked questions.

Finally, this research builds on recent work within development studies, which makes use of Bourdieu's theory of practice. This includes analysis of: the World Bank's vocabulary of development (Cammack, 2002); NGO-funder relations (Ebrahim, 2005); development studies itself (Bebbington, 2007); the socio-economic context of international NGO behaviour (Moyle, 2007), and how humanitarian agencies make decisions (Krause, 2008). In choosing to work with the concepts of *habitus*, fields and *doxa*, the study concurs with arguments for the 'pragmatic deployment in empirical research' (Wacquant, 2014, p. 118) of Bourdieu's range of concepts, rather than taking on the multiple dimensions of his theory of practice.

Gaventa's model of power was developed in his early research in the Appalachian Valley in the United States (1980) and later as the 'Power Cube' approach (Gaventa, 2005, Gaventa, 2006, IDS, 2011). The Power Cube looks at the types of power and the spaces and places in which they are exercised (Pantazidou, 2010). Although there is considerable potential application of the entire power cube approach to this study, the focus here is on the *types* of power. The model distinguishes between three levels of power, referred to as a 'three-dimensional approach' (Gaventa, 1980, pp. 11-13).⁵ At the first level surface mechanisms, such as resources, allow a person or group to assert power over another. Rules and agendas can shape or control a person or group's ability to participate at the second level of power. Myths and symbols exert power, at the third level, by shaping perceptions and meanings of the limits and possibilities of action. VeneKlasen and Miller re-work the dimensions to highlight their degree of visibility, defining them as visible, hidden and invisible power (2002).

The study uses this three dimensional approach to power, alongside Bourdieu's

⁵ Gaventa's approach was informed by Steven Lukes' (1974) work on power.

theory of practice, forming a conceptual framework to explore issues of power in INGO domestic programmes. There is an epistemological 'fit' between the two theoretical approaches, with Gaventa acknowledging Bourdieu's approach to power in shaping 'the boundaries of participatory spaces, what is possible within them, and who may enter, with which identities' (Gaventa, 2006, p. 26). There is evidence of recent research on power across different sub-literatures of development studies making active, if not explicit, use of these different levels of power, but little making comprehensive use of all three dimensions. For example, a study of global debt and its implications for global power politics uses visible dimensions of power to assess changing power relations (Antoniades, 2013). These dimensions, such as levels of external debt and the currency in which it is held, are the formal criteria by which those in power make decisions. This global debt study makes no acknowledgement of other aspects of power, whereas an assessment of voting reforms in the World Bank, 2008-2010, looks behind the apparent shifts in voting power (Vestergaard and Wade, 2013). It illustrates the work of hidden power through which influence is maintained by 'manipulating agendas and marginalising the voices and concerns of less powerful groups' (Pantazidou, 2010, p. 38). The mechanisms of invisible power by which conceptions are shaped and issues placed beyond debate are demonstrated in an analysis of the Conservative Party's Green Paper on international development. It suggests that in creating a cross-party consensus on legislating for 0.7% of national income to be spent on ODA, development is a self-evident good 'beyond politics altogether' (Sharp et al., 2010, p. 1126). The realm of what is considered 'self-evident' becomes the *doxa*.

Research findings

The research findings discussed here, grounded in empirical data, focus on three themes as they relate to the postcolonial critiques aired above. Firstly, we explore an analysis that indicates that the domestic programmes of these three case study INGOs incorporate dimensions of a development practice, which make visible a theory of poverty as powerlessness. Secondly, we consider how the domestic programmes distance the INGOs from the violence of 'othering' and

from colonial binaries and representations. Finally, we argue that there is empirical evidence that these domestic programmes are grounded in a transformatory development ethic in which ‘everyone matters’.

Making visible poverty as powerlessness

Oxfam GB’s global work has for many years been grounded in a theory of poverty as powerlessness, which rejects notions of single-dimension material poverty. For example, the Oxfam India Strategic Plan 1992-95 plan reflects an understanding of poverty that cannot be captured by ‘traditional economic indicators of income and expenditure’ (Oxfam India Trust, 1992). OGB’s Strategic Plan for 1994/95 – 98/99 specifically refers to poverty as:

...more than the absence of material goods or basic services; it is also a state of powerlessness in which people are unable to control virtually any aspect of their lives, unable to participate in society (Oxfam GB, 1994)

A preliminary programme evaluation of an Oxfam programme in Western Orissa, India (OXWORP), states that ‘Poverty’ according to OXWORP’s analysis is social, economic and structural (political) powerlessness’ (Alderson, 1979). By 1995, OGB’s Director provided a remarkably similar definition of poverty to assist staff in responding to public questions about establishing the UK Poverty Programme (UKPP):

Poverty...is a state of powerlessness in which people are marginalised and excluded from society, unable to control virtually any aspect of their lives, and unable to make positive changes in their circumstances – whether they live in the UK or Brazil. (Bryer, 1995)

Our research findings show us that the INGOs’ theory of poverty was one of the drivers of their decisions to establish domestic programmes. This was a disposition, which structured the organisational *habitus* of OGB, Islamic Relief and Oxfam America. The other constituent elements or dispositions of this *habitus* were: the organisations’ development ethic, institutional practices and concerns about their future as INGOs. One of the most conspicuous ways in which OGB, for example, demonstrates its theory of poverty is to make visible the non-economic dimensions of poverty through its work in the UK, challenging notions of absolute poverty which are common (Griffiths et al., 2006, Oxfam GB,

nd.). The UKPP makes its theory of poverty as powerlessness visible in action and is able to demonstrate this approach much more clearly than Oxfam GB can do in a developing country context, as issues of resilience, power and opportunity are not hidden or overwhelmed by the issue of basic needs (Wareing, 2010).

But why is it important to INGOs to make visible their theory of poverty? And how do they achieve this? All three case study INGOs experienced tensions between their organisational understanding of poverty and that of their domestic public supporters. Oxfam America, for example, commissioned the *Louisiana Human Development Report* in 2009, which commented on the impact of Hurricane Katrina on public perceptions of poverty.

Americans were shocked by images of poverty and racial segregation in August 2005, but it is important to keep in mind that sharp disparities similar to those laid bare by Katrina are hiding in plain sight across the United States. (Burd-Sharps et al., 2009, p. 8)

These tensions are evidenced particularly starkly in the discussions around OGB's decision to establish the UKPP in 1994-95. A multi-dimensional approach to poverty, which incorporates power and powerlessness, articulated, for example, in the OXWORP programme, put OGB at odds with some public, staff and Trustee opinion. One Trustee wrote to the Chair against the Council proposal for UKPP citing as his principle objection the stark difference in levels of material poverty between 'the most disadvantaged people in the world and the position we have in Europe' (Adriano, 1995).

The discussion document produced for OGB to consider the UKPP describes the UK public's understanding of poverty as 'irretrievably basic' with the very term 'poverty' described as 'controversial' (Bennett, 1994, p. 9). The internal OGB concerns about public opinion and the gulf between it and their theory of poverty was made visible in media coverage about the possibility of Oxfam expanding its UK work. Most of the media response to UKPP in 1994 and 1995 revolved around the tensions between different understandings of poverty, as

discussed above. *The Guardian* broke the story on 2 September 1994 with the headline ‘Britain joins Third World as Oxfam moves to help nation’s poor’. *The Times* juxtaposed Robert McNamara’s definition of poverty and the situation in the UK, as they saw it:

‘a condition of life so degraded by disease, illiteracy, malnutrition, and squalor as to deny its victims basic human necessities’. This formula well applies to the skeletal figures who haunt our television screens when famine strikes overseas. It bears no relation to Britain, where even the poorest can rely on free healthcare, clean water, comprehensive education and the absence of war.

(Laurance, 1994)

The gulf between INGOs’ approach to poverty and that of their supporters, which the above reveals, is deeply problematic. It reflects the view, already cited above, that INGO attempts to find alternative approaches to development are constrained, rather than helped, by their own supporters (Yanacopulos, 2016). Examples from the three case study INGOs below, illustrate how their domestic programmes attempt to address this issue, making visible a theory of poverty, which is fundamentally about powerlessness, rather than lack of income or material goods. These are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 A model of three-dimensional power to understand the realities of poverty as powerlessness

Power dimension	Data on realities from 3 INGOs
First: over resources (Visible)	Coping strategies, assets, time, income, debt, flow of outgoings, food prices, cost of fuel, cramped housing. Classes in a cold portakabin, poor housing, unemployment. Insufficient earning power to provide for families.
Second: over rules and agendas (Hidden)	Dealing with state agencies, care workers, benefits system, post-code discrimination, government policies (eg. care system), agendas and services, making their voice heard, ‘tea & tuck’ 15mins at 5.30pm ⁶ , transport services, credit ratings, disability.

⁶ This is the term used by low-paid care workers in Scotland who are allocated 15 minutes per elderly client for a home visit to ensure they have eaten and are safely in bed.

	<p>Disproportionate experience of deprivation across domains of education and housing. Vulnerability of young Muslim offenders.</p> <p>Undocumented migrants. Lack of legal protection against unsafe working conditions, inadequate housing, unfair wages.</p>
Third: over myths and symbols (Invisible) power	<p>Public perceptions of poor people, discrimination and marginalisation of some groups, nobody cares, poor self-image, people paid to speak to you, dignity, fear of dealing with government bureaucracy and of society itself.</p> <p>Islamophobia. Need to demonstrate Muslim communities' good citizenship credentials. Articulation of community dignity, confidence and maturity.</p>

Non-economic dimensions of poverty and its relationship with powerlessness are the focus of most UKPP partner work. For example, exclusion from decision-making is highlighted in the work of UKPP partner, Church Action on Poverty, in participatory budgeting in Manchester, Salford and Birmingham (Hall, 2005). The centrality of dignity and voice to work with people experiencing poverty is vividly brought to life by ATD Fourth World's programme *The Roles We Play*. This exhibition explores identities beyond their poverty such as human rights activist, poet and campaigner (ATD Fourth World, 2010). UNISON Scotland's work with women on a fair pay campaign enabled low-paid women to campaign for better pay. It also provided them with platforms, such as the Scottish parliament and a Fawcett Society conference, to be heard and sometimes challenge uncomfortable gender power dynamics within UNISON (Hunter, 2010).

UK partners clearly have common understandings of poverty with OGB but are very sensitive to the hostile environment in which they work. In the UK, use of the word 'poverty' is problematic and there is scant acknowledgement of its

relationship with power (Glennie et al., 2012). Even some OGB staff and Trustees feel conflicted about their understanding, which is conveyed to perceptive partners. By using a three-dimensional model of power (Gaventa, 1980, Gaventa, 2006) a deeper exploration is possible of the types and levels of power in operation. Identifying powerlessness, across all three dimensions, as a daily reality for people living in poverty in the UK enables OGB to explain its theory of poverty in a way that makes the issue of power tangible and visible. The analysis concludes here that the UKPP's ability to illustrate how poverty and powerlessness are connected is a considerable asset to OGB and is a constitutive element of a potential new organisational *habitus*.

One of the distinctive elements of Islamic Relief UK's theory of poverty and organisational *habitus* is its location at the nexus of three sources of authority and legitimation: Islamic belief and tradition; international development norms and practices, and the UK Muslim communities. Whereas Petersen characterises the binary tension in IR's work between 'sacred and secular' or '*umma*⁷ and humanity' (2011, 2012), the evidence in this study points to a third dynamic in their work – their roots in the UK Muslim communities, particularly from the Arab world and south Asia. Acknowledgement of the disproportionate deprivation levels of Muslim communities in the UK is at the heart of the domestic programme (Kheriji, 2010, Finella, 2005, Change Institute, 2009a, Change Institute, 2009b, Chouhan et al., 2011). Muslims are, for example, more likely to suffer from the double-exclusions resulting from poor housing and Islamophobia (Perry and El-Hassan, 2008). They are disproportionately represented in the most deprived communities (Centre on Migration Policy and Society, 2008). An IR member of staff at the time recalls:

I remember visiting a mosque in Birmingham where they were teaching Arabic in a portakabin in the cold. IR says surely it can help these communities, which have made IR, when we have raised so much money from them for work elsewhere in the world. (Saeed, 2012)

⁷ This is the Arabic term for Muslim community.

The responsive 'Hardship Fund' allowed small grants of no more than £10,000 to be given to organisations in the UK for capacity building 'in line with strategic objectives' (Malik, 2011) and for individual cases of hardship⁸. A Funding Committee awarded the grants based on an understanding over time that priorities were youth, women, interfaith and community cohesion (Kheriji, 2010). In 2009, tackling poverty and deprivation in the UK was one of the main drivers for IR to establish a more strategically focused domestic programme, working with: deprived communities; disadvantaged young people; BME communities; BME women; grassroots community organisations, and individuals in economic hardship (Awan, 2010). These beneficiary groups reflect the need to address poverty as powerlessness in all three dimensions. Grants address areas of visible resource deprivation such as the cold portakabin, thus acknowledging first-dimensional power. But they also address issues of second-dimensional power encountered when working, for example, with young Muslim offenders in prison to ensure they have appropriate support through mentors.

In addition to the need of the Muslim communities for support to overcome income deprivation, the data shows a need to be perceived as good and active citizens of the UK. This can be observed in the interfaith and community cohesion priorities for the Hardship Fund and in some of the 64 grants given in 2010. The 'good citizen credentials' of Muslim communities were highlighted, for example, in support for the Lord Mayor's Special Olympics in 2009 and the Faith Encounter programme in 2010. Other institutional grants assisted community organisations in their own responses to international disasters, such as the £25,000 for Doctors Worldwide response to floods in Pakistan. Many provided small amounts of sponsorship for community events run by, for example, Oldham Muslim Centre and Balkan Muslim Society. Others were for community development or awareness raising work (Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2011). IR's theory of poverty is, therefore, rooted in part in the exclusion, deprivation and vulnerability of Muslim diaspora communities in the UK. Evidence from this programme suggests that the wider significance of the UK Muslim communities

⁸ None of the informants from Islamic Relief were able to confirm when this Fund began to operate.

wanting to work 'at home' is the dignity of a whole, if diverse, community not just of the individual (Freeman, 2011). This addresses directly third-dimensional power in the need to overcome myths and reshape conceptions of the Muslim communities in the UK. This is further reflected in understandings of the maturing of the UK Muslim communities. After years of organizing and fundraising for Islamic Relief and participation in other community work, many Muslim supporters were confident to articulate the needs of their own communities and put together proposals and responses (for example, to the floods in the west of England in 2007). This is a core part of the business case for the IR domestic programme (Malik, 2011).

The Oxfam America's (OA) domestic programme is unequivocal in its explicit use of the word 'poverty', in contrast to the UK-based INGOs. The original rationale for the programme was a belief that the systemic forces that caused global poverty and hunger were the same worldwide. This is reflected in the vision of the domestic programme, managed by the US Regional Office (USRO), which identifies globalisation as one of the causes of poverty.

Poor rural communities [will] meet the challenges posed by a rapidly changing global economy with strategies that enable them to be the authors of their own future. Rural communities are able to access the means for sustainable livelihoods and actively participate in policy design and implementation, while preserving the values and traditions of their culture. (Oxfam America, 2010)

This vision captures the three dimensions of powerlessness, which OA wants its domestic programme to address. For example, OA's research report *A State of Fear: Human rights abuses in North Carolina's tobacco industry* (2011), draws attention to the fact that most workers are undocumented migrants from Mexico driven by their need to earn enough to provide for their families in Mexico but now facing violations of their rights to fair wages, safe working conditions, adequate housing and collective bargaining. These two struggles highlight the powerlessness of these workers across the first two dimensions of power. The report concludes with a call for more than just legislative reform but a 'fundamental restructuring of the exploitative industrial structure that denies

tobacco farmworkers the most basic rights' (Oxfam America, 2011, p. 5). This suggests that the workers' are powerless in the third-dimensional sense. Their exploitation needs to be revealed, and people's perceptions of the workers ruptured in order for their situation to be addressed.

OA's response to Hurricane Katrina and the devastation it brought to the State of Louisiana is a further example of how OA brought its theory of poverty as powerlessness into the public domain. OA's early interventions called for release of appropriate levels of Federal funding to support local initiatives around housing and employment opportunities, targeting low-income communities (Boyd, 2 - 8 March 2006). However, in its later report, *Forgotten Communities on the Gulf Coast*, it focuses on second and third dimensional powerlessness, reprimanding Federal and State agencies for their slow response, badly targeted disaster assistance policies and rendering communities invisible and left behind (Pipa, 2006). The situation of the fishing communities in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, for example, whose towns were entirely submerged by Hurricane Katrina is described as follows:

...their plight received scant attention from the media. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the American Red Cross followed suit. Both refrained from venturing too far down the peninsula. Displaced locals struggled for weeks to get good information about the status of their hometowns...Today, hardly any state or federal funds have assisted the recovery of independent fishers...now their ability to continue lies imperiled. (Pipa, 2006, p. 8)

The examples provided from the domestic programmes of Oxfam GB, Islamic Relief UK and Oxfam America give insights into the significance for INGOs of making visible their theory of poverty as powerlessness and how this is achieved. It is clear that this involved tackling the issues of where and for whom international development work happens, with the potential for conceptual disruption. The paper now turns to consider findings from the study in relation to distancing INGOs from the violence of 'othering'.

Postcolonial distancing

The study found that each of the three domestic programmes deployed

strategies, which consciously queried and blurred the binary lens through which INGO work is frequently conceptualised. This effects a distancing from practices which wield third dimensional power in shaping how whole communities are perceived, thereby 'othering' them. The argument made here is that this process is more than symbolic, having real effects. These distancing strategies are evidenced in the way the INGOs identified who and where the poor are and their particular domestic programme practice. To set the context, Table 2 contrasts the views of the three INGOs and the media of who the poor are.

Table 2. Who are the poor? Contrasting the views of domestic programmes and the media

INGO views	Media views
People on benefits Living on council estates	Victims of 'Latin American miracle'
Economically vulnerable eg cockle-picking gangs Living in London and north of England	Women labourers in Santiago's textile sweat shops The ragged, starving, desperate peoples of Africa, Asia and South America
Homeless BME women Migrant workers Asylum seekers	Those in desperate poverty in the developing world The skeletal figures who haunt our television screens when famine strikes overseas
Women in catering or care jobs Home workers	Beggars
Indigenous white working class Unemployed	A starving woman seeking food for her children
Families with children in care	People, wretched through years of slow starvation, scratch the earth for a few pathetic grains of wheat.
Bonded labourers Small farmers	Poor devils in a refugee camp on the Zairean border
BME Women	Starving in the Sudan... small farmers in Bangladesh.
Young offenders	
Disabled and their	

families	
Undocumented migrants	
Agricultural workers	
Care workers	
Hill and upland farmers	
Staple food producers	
Muslim communities in diaspora	
African Americans	
Fishing communities	

A notable theme emerging from the analysis is how Oxfam GB has used the UKPP to distance itself from criticisms around colonial continuities. Oxfam’s history is articulated ironically by one member of staff, as ‘white men in shorts out there doing stuff’ (Bronstein, 2010), capturing vividly the organisation’s self-consciousness about its roots. The need to respond to criticisms of Oxfam GB as an organisation going into other countries and telling them what to do without addressing poverty ‘at home’ was felt acutely by Oxfam staff and cited by current staff as one of the reasons for the UKPP establishment. Indeed, two tipping points in the UKPP process are referred to in interviews. The first is the moment when in the Council meeting in April 1995 a Trustee who later became chair said ‘if we don’t do this...we’re going to be promoting an us and them view of the world’ (Bronstein, 2010, Oxfam GB, 1995b). The second key moment, testified to by archive documents and interviews, was the impact of Stan Thekaekara’s intervention at the People’s Assembly⁹ when he challenged Oxfam’s perception of itself and the world, seeing poverty as an issue ‘out there’ (Seshan, 2010, Idrish, 2010, Levy, 2010, Bunting, 2010). Stan worked with tribal communities in south India and had been to the UK in 1994, invited by the Directory of Social Change, to look at community work (Thekaekara, 2000). His experience visiting

⁹ The 1994 meeting for Oxfam Trustees, staff, partners, volunteers and supporters.

the Easterhouse Estate in Glasgow, seeing the impact poverty had on people was the same as that in India, helped change the terms of the debate.

The empirical evidence points towards two types of 'othering' from which OGB wished to distance itself in its practice and both of these were mobilised in support of the UKPP. The first considers the poor as either deserving or undeserving, and the second suggests that the process of development is oriented towards distant, other people. The data on the former comes from the UK, which shows that in 'othering' the poor as undeserving, there is a refusal to engage in the details of poor people's lives, or to acknowledge the three dimensions of power encountered by the poor (Kenningham, 2010, Herbert, 2010). This includes the third-dimensional power of myths, which demonise poor people (Roberts, 2010, Bronstein, 2010, Bennett, 1994).

An approach to poverty which divides the poor into the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' has been central to the UK policy context for centuries, going back to the Poor Law Act of 1601 (Alcock, 2006, Bennett, 1994).¹⁰ OGB's need to distance itself from this approach is central to the UKPP debates (Bunting, 2010, Kidder, 2010). Data highlights that the frequent distinction between the 'deserving' and 'undeserving' poor results in undignified 'othering'.

Some people don't like giving to poverty in this country, they'll give to cancer sufferers and hospitals and things like that but poverty is ... The Daily Mail idea that poverty is so conflicted almost, it's about lazy people not getting off their bottoms. (Anon., 2010a)

The UKPP is seen as mechanism by which this can be addressed, bringing in understanding of equal access to rights, justice and dignity from its work in the global south.

And clearly there is a huge job to say that if you are poor in this country it's not because you are undeserving or because you've done something wrong, it is because the structures are against you, just in the same way that people

¹⁰ The 'undeserving' concept was also linked to the notion of the 'underclass', which became a politically potent debate following an article in the *Sunday Times* in 1989 by Charles Murray. The debate demonstrates the highly party-politicised domestic political context in which the UKPP debate took place and the extent of the 'pathological' approach to poverty in the UK (Alcock, 2006).

might think that you are the deserving poor if you happen to be in Mali or India. There's a huge amount of work to be done there. (Kidder, 2010)

Third-dimensional power, in which myths and symbols influence the way issues are perceived, is central to OGB and its partners' analysis of the causes of poverty. The lack of control over how 'the poor' are perceived, leading to stigma, indignity and 'othering' is seen to perpetuate poverty. It is also seen as the root of many inequalities by which people are 'othered'. This analysis is articulated in intervention strategies, which seek to address this form of power. The purpose of the exhibition *The Roles We Play* is to highlight the identities of people living in poverty in London beyond their poverty, thus according them dignity (ATD Fourth World, 2010). Much of the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) research undertaken by OGB in the UK has integrated considerations of the dignity of poor people into the research methodology (ATD Fourth World, 2008, Carter, 2010, Herbert, 2010).

The understanding of who is, or can be, poor, is made explicit by OGB's UK Poverty programme and brings the 'poor' much closer. It is, therefore, deeply disruptive of the binary opposition inherent in the notion of the deserving and undeserving poor or a sense of 'them and us' (and illustrated in Table 2).

As observed above, Islamic Relief's organisational *habitus* and its domestic programme are located at the intersection of three domains of practice and sources of authority: the Muslim communities in the UK; Islamic belief and practice, and international development. What is also observed in this multiple-domain model is the work of third-dimensional or invisible power through myths and symbols. Although there may be evidence beyond this case study of the domain of Islamic belief and practice wielding this power to shape consciousness and perceptions, this is not prominent in the data here. However, the undisputed *doxa* of the international development domain contains within it myths and symbols that are beyond the debates between orthodox and heterodox opinion (Bourdieu and Nice, 1977, p. 168). This study argues that IR's institutional practices wield third-dimensional power by shaping conceptions about what the 'international development' sector is and does. IR both mobilises

and resists these myths in domestic programme debates. For example, in Trustees' concerns that the domestic programme will distract it from its 'core' business of overseas work and in individual donors' unwillingness to fund UK work, despite it being favoured by some religious opinion, the analysis sees the perpetuation of 'myth' that the international development work is only undertaken in the global south. Here the boundaries of the international development domain are maintained with no rupture to its *doxa*.

The evidence also points to the role of IR's domestic programme in resisting myths and reshaping perceptions about the Muslim communities in the UK. Ebrahim makes similar observations in the context of southern NGOs' capacity to shape funder discourses (2005, p. 154). The study notes how the domestic programme and the whole of IR's work are situated within a context of post-9/11 myths about Muslim identity and citizenship and symbols of its marginalization. Through grant making to interfaith initiatives, strategic partnership with Mosaic on work with youth offenders and involvement in emergency response to floods in the UK, for example, IR seeks to associate itself with the non-Muslim voluntary sector and 'mainstream' organisations in the UK¹¹. As a senior member of staff notes, one of the advantages of having a domestic programme is the 'Improved perceptions of Muslims in the non-Muslim populations' (Anon., 2010b).

If international development work undertaken by INGOs is currently conceived as a combination of development and humanitarian work, the data suggests that the OA domestic programme consciously ruptures this understanding in order to work as a 'global agency' and 'change the value proposition' (Sinclair, 2012). The programme mobilises third-dimensional power to challenge and re-shape perceptions about the work an INGO undertakes. This work is undertaken by careful re-framing of debates and issues. There is evidence that re-framing work is partly driven by the need to build new constituencies of support, activism and finance in the current programme (Sinclair, 2012, Oxfam America, 2010) and at

¹¹ Petersen (2011) also notes a strategy of association in which IR attends party conferences, reports on meetings with Ministers.

its conception.

..the program must be designed strategically with great attention given to the symbolic value of the groups and activities being funded. The choices should emphasize the connections between the structural causes of poverty and hunger in the North and South. (Hammock and Hirschland, 1992, p. 25)

However, the research suggests that this is also part of two wider debates. The first is about the most effective, appropriate and ethical way for INGOs to undertake 'development interventions' in the future. The second debate asks what is the ultimate purpose or 'end' of international development: for what and for whom does it work? Is it a development which addresses 'the problem' of a distant other by resource transfers from the global north (Bunting, 2010, Oxfam GB, 1995a)? This is the narrowest conception of what development can be (Goulet, 1997), or what has recently been termed 'development *for* the poor' (Ballard, 2013). It is an exclusionary approach, distinct from emancipatory understandings of development that work towards global justice (Parfitt, 2013, Thekaekara, 2010). OA's domestic programme functions to re-work the development ethic and re-shape the domain of international development, disputing its *doxa*. The programme shifts understanding of international development from a two-part model, balancing development with humanitarian work, to a model in which international development is about *comprehensive social action*. This echoes the starting point of the domestic programme, articulated as a belief that 'the separation of poverty and hunger into domestic and international components is no longer valid' (Hammock and Hirschland, 1992, p. 1). The domestic programme, therefore, mobilises symbolic third-dimensional power to re-shape understandings, practices and, therefore, OA's organisational *habitus* and the domain in which it works. This is further evidence of the dynamic generative nature of the *habitus* (Lizardo, 2004).

The empirical evidence from our three case study INGOs above suggests that while development continues to address issues of power and powerlessness in only the first two dimensions (resources; rules and agendas), development means are the inevitable undoing of development ends (Cowen and Shenton,

1996, pp. 448-449). However, the incorporation of considerations of third-dimensional power into development practice, reduce the violence inherent in development practice, thus allowing for an ethical development practice. Having discussed how the three INGO domestic programmes mobilise a theory of poverty as powerlessness and distance the INGOs from postcolonial 'othering', the paper turns to its final consideration. It argues that a further mechanism by which the domestic programmes represent postcolonial discontinuities is through their assertion of a development ethic in which everyone matters.

An ethic in which everyone matters

One of the objectives of the larger study on which this paper is based was to understand whether ultimately INGO domestic programmes are an indication of a broad inclusive ethic of 'everyone matters'. This section holds that there are both normative and empirical arguments, which demonstrate that this ethic is an asset of INGO domestic programmes. The normative argument itself rests on the empirical data so far presented and leads to a tentative conclusion as to how INGOs could respond to critiques of their role and the changing landscape of development. Thus, empirical analysis above demonstrates that the current binary distinctions, or 'othering', currently embedded in the field of international development, are a barrier to the achievement of ethical transformatory development. The analysis above also provides evidence of the differentiated capacity of the domestic programmes to challenge the organisational *habitus*. Islamic Relief's domestic programme, for example, presents no real challenge to the organisational *habitus* as both are situated at the nexus of three sources of legitimacy. However, Oxfam GB's domestic programme, likewise Oxfam America's, is potentially disruptive to the traditional organisational *habitus*. Institutional practices with their simplistic binary divisions of 'othering' are part of this *habitus* and a characteristic of the field of international development in which it is situated.

If there is sufficient evidence for that a transformatory development practice is possible, the ability of INGOs to achieve this will be circumscribed by their capacity to reconstruct their organisational *habitus* to foreground power in their

theory of poverty and minimise ‘othering’ practices and other postcolonial continuities. The domestic programmes of the case study INGOs mobilise third-dimensional power to allow subtle shifts in understandings of what this practice could look like, making visible a development ethic in which everyone matters, without the exclusionary ‘violence’ of othering. However, the potential of OGB and OA’s domestic programmes to model an ethical and emancipatory development practice cannot be realised without rupture to the existing organisational *habitus*. This scenario suggests that an ethical development practice is possible in the context of a newly configured organisational *habitus*.

The UKPP models a programmatic focus on inequalities through which the ‘everyone matters’ ethic is operationalized. This approach extends across vertical and horizontal inequalities, which are manifested both globally and locally and interconnected. The vertical inequalities between individuals in the UK and beyond have received attention recently due to their effects, for example, on the health, education and work prospects of individuals and the wellbeing of societies as a whole (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010, Piketty, 2014, Dorling, 2014). The effects of horizontal inequalities, those that impact on particular groups in society, are shown to have relevance to countries in the global North and South (Stewart, 2002) and at a global level in the case of inequalities experienced by Muslims (Stewart, 2009). The UKPP’s focus on inequalities is grounded in the organisation’s theory of poverty, which, as noted above, is related to powerlessness. It is an approach that fundamentally rejects universal applications of absolute notions of poverty. Powerlessness is a key driver of poverty regardless of social, economic and political contexts. As Stan Thekaekara observed when visiting a housing estate in Easterhouse, Glasgow:

But as the week went by we began to see beyond the televisions, refrigerators and cars. Amazingly, similarities between the people of Easterhouse and the Paniyas of the Nilgiris began to emerge. Though the face of poverty was completely different, the impact was exactly the same.

(Thekaekara and Thekaekara, 1994)

Vertical inequalities are made visible and addressed in OGB’s London partner ATD Fourth World’s work to support families caught up in the care system who find it difficult to understand the system and their rights within it. Likewise,

work with people living with debt highlights the multiple inequalities that can make up a life in 'poverty' – whether income, educational opportunities, housing, access to financial services or powerlessness in the face of corporate interests (Church Action on Poverty, 2009, Church Action on Poverty, 2011). These inequalities have a clear association with dignity. This is the focus of UKPP work such as *Something for Nothing* which aims to change negative attitudes to people living in poverty in Britain (Oxfam GB, 2010), the work to encourage more positive media reporting of refugees and asylum seekers (Oxfam GB, 2007), and to provide platforms for people in poverty to speak about themselves with dignity (ATD Fourth World, 2010). The interconnections between the vertical inequalities with which Peak District hill farmers live and the global political economy is vividly illustrated by the UKPP research which investigated farming lives using the Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA), connecting their livelihoods with EU legislation and global food security (Anon., 2010a, Jarman, 2010, Ponder and Hindley, 2009).

Work to address the horizontal inequalities experienced by specific groups, such as low-paid women, black and minority ethnic (BME) women, migrant workers, also exposes the processes through which people become powerless. This includes combatting gendered attitudes to work by UNISON Scotland, while also campaigning with the union for fair pay (UNISON Scotland and Oxfam GB, nd., Hunter, 2010). Oxfam America and Islamic Relief likewise address inequalities in access to livelihoods for Louisiana fisher communities and to decent housing for Muslim families. Fundamentally, each of these areas of work assert powerfully that everyone matters, focussing on groups of people who have generally been vilified in the popular media, to maintain their equitable access to rights and dignity. So, for example, the UKPP undertook research on the exploitation of migrant labour following the death in 2004 of 23 cockle pickers from China in Morecombe Bay, as part of a three-year Big Lottery grant (Oxfam GB, 2009). Oxfam America highlights the exploitation of Mexican migrant workers in the tobacco industry (Oxfam America, 2011). These pieces of work explicitly link the issue of migrant and labour rights in the UK and US to the global political economy. In the case of OGB, this is placed in the context of:

...a significant shift in the nature of work in the UK over the last 30 years. Globalisation, by making the markets for goods and services more competitive, has heightened the need for economic and social policies that foster competitiveness. It has also put a higher premium on workplace practices that support flexibility and adaptability, often at the cost of workers' rights and security. (Poinasamy and Fooks, 2009, p. 5)

A press release on the growing inequalities in the UK issued to coincide with the UK budget in March 2014, entitled *A tale of two Britains*, set concerns about lack of voice for the UK poor within a context of global inequalities.

...a similar picture of a rapidly increasing gap between rich and poor can be seen in most countries across the globe. The entire wealth of the world is divided in two: almost half going to the richest 1 percent; the other half to the remaining 99 percent...This widening inequality is creating a vicious circle where wealth and power are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, leaving the rest behind. (Oxfam GB, 2014)

The examples cited above provide empirical evidence of the way in which the domestic programmes operationalize an ethic of 'everyone matters' through their focus on inequalities. Thus, this study makes the normative argument that if 'othering' practices are to be avoided, INGO work needs to be grounded in an ethic in which 'everyone matters'.

However, this process also requires disruption of the existing *habitus*. A development ethic in which everyone matters is not necessarily perceived as an asset by an organisation that is so closely defined by and associated with the domain of international development. Although the UKPP may be evidence of OGB's capacity to rupture its organisational *habitus*, the organisation may choose not to exercise it. Moreover, the domestic programmes reveal the extent to which work in the UKPP exposes OGB to 'the same risk' as its southern partners (Oxfam GB, 1995a), involving it in the day-to-day tensions, trade-offs and debates of domestic politics. Although, as argued above, this is fundamental to OGB's theory of poverty, it moves development work beyond the popular conception of 'poverty alleviation' and OGB's 'international development' identity. Oxfam America's domestic programme has challenged its organisational *habitus* to such an extent that its domestic work is now categorised as

'comprehensive social action' rather than 'international development'. Islamic Relief's domestic programme, as noted above, does not offer the same challenge to its organisational habitus. The issue here is not whether INGOs can be engaged in political activity, for example as charities registered in England and Wales. Recent studies have confirmed they can (Miller, 2012). Rather, the domestic programmes *reveal* the essentially political nature of development to INGO supporters, or their 'sleight of hand'. An OGB UK partner describes this as follows:

...as if people have been happy to fund and support Oxfam in the UK, on the basis of, 'There's terrible things happening abroad - we'll give you lots of money. Go away and fix them.' And what Oxfam does is then go away and do a variety of things, some of which is disaster-relief, but huge amounts of which are actually very radical - very radical, politically radical interventions.

(Hunter, 2010)

Conclusions

This study provides empirical evidence of INGOs' search for a programme strategy, which makes an intentional break from postcolonial continuities. Domestic programming is an important facet of this strategy in which key elements are: making visible their theory of poverty as powerlessness; minimising the violence of 'othering', and operationalizing a development ethic in which everyone matters. This, of course, should not be overstated given the modest size of domestic programme budgets. However, the research is not simply concerned with symbolic power as a theoretical construct, working to shape organisational *habitus*, but with its 'ontological promotion' to real and practical effects in INGO practice (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 376). In addition, the programmes may offer empirical data as to what 'emancipatory' (Parfitt, 2009, Parfitt, 2013), 'another' (Hettne, 1990, p. 471) or 'alternative' (McCourt and Johnson, 2012, Parfitt, 2013) development might look like.

The study notes how power works within the INGOs' theory of poverty and that an understanding of the three dimensions of power facilitates a comprehensive

identification of poverty and is the differentiating factor between the approaches of the INGOs and their donating and supporting public. An appreciation of the invisible workings of myths and symbols in perpetuating poverty is what distinguishes one approach from the other. This is the work of third-dimensional power and is also present in 'othering' practices, which maintain rather than address power inequalities, for example, between the deserving and undeserving poor. According to the underlying logic of the UKPP debates, for example, this must be recognised and addressed if ethical development is not to be distorted by unethical 'means'.

The paper identifies the broader implications of this work, noting that third-dimensional power is active in the domestic programmes debates, mobilising and challenging the myths and symbols around questions such as: Who is poor? Where does development take place? What are appropriate development interventions for an INGO? These perceptions and preferences can, through their boundary work, maintain the status quo. Equally, arguments that make visible the third-dimensional power of myths and symbols can resist and challenge. Thus, there is an attempt in the domestic programmes of OGB and OA to expose the third-dimensional power of assumed organisational identity, to re-shape the organisation's *habitus*, with the potential to disrupt the *doxa* of international development. If it is the case that development applies to places of poverty and powerlessness in all countries and is not just concerned with the 'poor' who live in the global South (McCourt and Johnson, 2012), then the domestic programmes working on issues of exclusion and injustice in the global North may offer new ways of looking at the programming of development INGOs and reflect new broader understandings of what development is. These findings point the way forward to an approach to development in which its spaces, actors and practices are challenged and opened to new interpretations. If development practice and intervention design can incorporate considerations of the invisible power of myths and symbols, an ethical transformatory, decolonized development practice may be possible.

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